

# Funding Exchange *Funding Guidelines* - Effective 2008 -

## Funding Exchange Network

The Funding Exchange (FEX) is a network of 16 community funds across the country and the national office in New York City, all of which administer our own independent grantmaking programs. The network was formally established in 1979 to support member and emerging funds with technical assistance and special programs. Altogether, the national office and the member funds have distributed well over \$100 million, and have developed models of grantmaking that are used by many other public foundations today.

The Funding Exchange Network is supported by a partnership of activists and donors. The founding donors and community organizers coined the phrase "Change, Not Charity"™ because they believed in the importance of tackling the root and systemic causes of poverty and injustice. Most of the founding donors had inherited wealth which provided the seed money to launch nearly all the community foundations in the network.

A list of the 16 member funds is available on the home page of our website at [www.fex.org](http://www.fex.org). Please contact them directly for their applications, funding priorities and deadline information. We strongly encourage you to apply to a member fund if there is one in your area. Here at the national office, we also look to the member funds for information about the organizations that apply to us from their regions.

## National Grant Programs

### The Activist-Advised Programs:

The hallmark of the Funding Exchange is a commitment to grantmaking that involves the participation of community activists who work within and understand their communities, and bring an invaluable depth of analysis to the decision-making.

The Funding Exchange national office has three activist-advised grantmaking funds which make grants through its Annual Grantmaking Cycle: The Saguaro Fund, the OUT Fund and the Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media. For each fund, activist panel members support FEX staff by informing the process of setting criteria for evaluating proposals as well as advising the process of awarding grants to organizations that apply to FEX annually.

### The Donor-Advised Program:

The Donor-Advised Program invites progressive individuals and families across the country to establish "donor-advised funds" within the Funding Exchange National Office. Through these funds, donors are able to support a broad spectrum of community-based organizations challenging social and economic injustice. Grants made by the Funding Exchange through the Donor-Advised program are made under the advice of donors. **The Donor-Advised program does not consider unsolicited requests, proposals or letters of inquiry of any kind.**

### The Emergency Fund for Seizing Strategic Opportunities:

The Funding Exchange has an Emergency Fund for Seizing Strategic Opportunities through which qualifying organizations may receive grants of up to \$5,000 in support of a specific social justice project, event or initiative. This fund makes grants in response to political crises or opportunities, when a small amount of money can make a difference in educating or mobilizing for social change under time-sensitive circumstances. Please see our Emergency Fund for Seizing Strategic Opportunities guidelines and application instructions on our website at [www.fex.org](http://www.fex.org) under 'National Grant Programs'.

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# Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media

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## Introduction

Named to honor singer, actor and civil rights activist Paul Robeson, the Fund supports media activism and grassroots organizing by funding the pre-production and distribution of social issue film and video projects, and the production and distribution of radio projects, made by activist media organizations and individual media producers. The Fund solicits projects of all genres that address critical social and political issues, combine intellectual clarity with creative use of the medium and demonstrate understanding of how the production will be used for progressive social justice organizing.

The maximum grant award is \$20,000, most grants range between \$5,000 to \$15,000. **The Fund has one grant cycle a year, and the postmark deadline is May 15th.** See page 7 for important notes regarding this deadline.

## What We Fund

The Robeson Fund makes grants to radio projects in all production stages and to film and video projects in the pre-production or distribution stages only. We do not support production or post-production costs for film and video projects. Applicants may submit only one (1) project for consideration and may not be listed as producer or director for any other project submitted to the Fund during a single funding cycle. If you have submitted an application to the OUT or Saguaro Funds, you may not submit an application to the Paul Robeson Fund in the same year.

### Radio Criteria

The Fund is looking for audio projects that combine compelling content with creative use of the medium. The programming can be topical or historical, but should be designed to facilitate grassroots activism, expose issues that have received minimal coverage from mainstream media, or provide a progressive analysis or vision of current events. Specifically, the Fund seeks to help organizations, activists and audio producers create:

- 1) a pilot or demo for a series
- 2) a "special" or package of special programming
- 3) a series of short features or modules or
- 4) an on-going series (including live "talk shows"). Station or network-based producers may apply as independents as long as they are the originators of the programming concept and retain editorial and artistic control.

Programming supported by the Fund may be aired on a commercial or a public radio station, or be distributed through a regional, national, or satellite radio network. The audio product must be broadcast on air at least once. Broadcasting on the Internet can only be considered as an additional source of distribution, not a substitution for on-air broadcast. Acquisition or sale of the programming to a radio station, network or media organization is acceptable. The Paul Robeson Fund prioritizes projects that will increase and extend the use of social change media beyond the traditional distribution channels including non-broadcast and education use or other forms of community distribution.

### Film and Video Criteria

The Paul Robeson Fund priorities continue to be strategic in their funding of film and video:

- (1) **Pre-production:** support for film and video projects dealing with progressive perspectives on critical social issue themes. Non-traditional approaches to media production are encouraged. Pre-production costs are those associated with bringing a project to the point of being produced (work before actual production shoot).

**Pre-production criteria includes:**

- Acquisition of technical skills and training
- Research of topic
- Meetings and pre-interviews with consultants, experts or other key persons
- Researching or obtaining archival footage, still photos, etc.
- Research travel and/or location scouting
- Administrative costs related to research (telephone, postage, copying, etc.)
- Recruiting production crew or talent
- Preparing a fund raising trailer and/or other fund raising material
- Treatment, script or story board development other than for dramatic feature films
- **Distribution:** support for especially innovative film and video distribution initiatives that can extend the use of social change media to organizing or educational venues. The Fund's primary interest in providing distribution support is to help increase and extend the use of social change media beyond the traditional distribution channels. While recognizing that these traditional outlets (i.e. public television broadcast, theatrical release, film and video festivals, and distribution to educational and institutional markets through non-profit and commercial distribution companies) are valid and important, we are looking for creative initiatives that use media as a resource for organizing and empowerment among broad-based constituencies and groups working toward progressive social justice.

**Previous Robeson Fund grantees may re-apply for funding for the same project ONLY under these conditions:**

- Radio grantees may reapply each year for ongoing projects by demonstrating compelling reasons for additional funding of their production.
- Film and video grantees that have received support for pre-production in previous years may apply for a distribution funding.
- ALL grantees must submit a completed fiscal/progress report form for any previous grants. This includes an audio or video tape of any finished work, funded by the grant, to be included as part of the Paul Robeson Fund Library. *Reports should be sent to us, ATTN: GRANTS ADMINISTRATOR under a separate cover from any application submitted to the Paul Robeson Fund.*

## What We Do Not Fund

- Project budgets *or* projects of *organizations* with annual budgets of more than \$500,000.
- Production - Film, television and video projects that are already in the production stage upon application or enter into those stages during the course of an annual cycle (May 15th through the end of a given calendar year). We do not make grants that cover pre-production costs retroactively. If your project is *not* in pre-production during this period and you do not have pending pre-production activities for which any grant approved may be applied as late as the end of a calendar year, you should NOT apply for pre-production funds.
- Post-production - Film, television and video projects that are still in post-production when the application is submitted. If you are applying for Distribution support and your project is not a stage where you can submit a fine cut on which all postproduction has been completed along with your application, and no later than the May 15th postmark deadline, you should NOT apply for distribution funds.
- Media projects *other than* film, video and radio production (i.e. publications, photography, etc.).
- Film, video and audio installations, festivals, conferences, exhibits or special events.
- Organizational projects for internal or promotional use.
- Purely personal works or "human interest" stories with little or no social justice relevance or impact.
- Sociological and anthropological explorations which do not provide a strong progressive political analysis.
- Documentation that is primarily of cultural events, personalities or performances (dance, theater, music, visual arts, etc.) which does not provide progressive analysis or a social justice focus.
- Public television or radio station productions (except collaborations where independent producers maintain editorial and financial control).
- General operating expenses of distribution companies, non-profit media organizations or an artist's office, studio, or home.
- Script development for dramatic features or radio dramas.
- Student productions or other projects associated with a degree program and academic credit, or projects that receives direct financial support from the educational institution.
- Productions originating in countries outside the U.S. unless the production directly addresses U.S. foreign policy or impact, AND the distribution strategy incorporates (in significant part) organizing in the United States.
- Public Service Announcements.

**Additional notes:**

- A reminder that If you have applied to the OUT or Saguaro Funds, please note that you may NOT apply to the Robeson Fund in the same year. Remember that the OUT and Saguaro Fund application process and form are different and carry different requirements. The links to the Guidelines and the Grant Application Form required for both of these funds are on our website at [www.fex.org](http://www.fex.org) under the 'National Grant Programs' page as well as under the subsections/pages for the OUT Fund and the Saguaro Fund.
- Applications to Robeson are only accepted between April 15th and the May 15th postmark deadline. We do not consider out-of-cycle requests.
- All applications must either be POSTMARKED by the once-annual, May 15th postmark deadline, or, HAND-DELIVERED directly to the Funding Exchange office between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and no later than 6:00 p.m. EST on May 15th. If, in a given year, the deadline falls on a Saturday or Sunday, then this deadline is extended to the next business day (Monday). Note that we do NOT accept hand-deliveries on weekends.

## Step by Step Application Instructions

Provide all information in the spaces available on the Grant Application Form 2008, which is linked at [www.fex.org](http://www.fex.org) under the National Grant Programs Paul Robeson Fund page, and can be completed on-screen.

### PART I. Coversheet

**Section A - Funding Category and Contact Information.** At the top of the page, click on the drop-down field to denote the funding category for which you are requesting support. There are only three: Film/Video Pre-production, Film/Video Distribution or Radio. Provide the project title, and all contact information requested.

#### **Section B - Budget and Current Status**

Budget information - In the spaces provided, fill in the amount you are requesting from the Paul Robeson Fund; the total amount of funds raised to date; the total of all in-kind (donated, not purchased, services, facilities or materials) contributions; and the total budget of the production/project (including in-kind), actual and projected. The total project budget line requires the total sum of all pre-production, production, post-production, and distribution costs. If you are an organization, please also fill in your total organizational budget.

#### **Section C - Fiscal Sponsorship or Tax Exempt 501 (c)(3) Status**

You do not need a fiscal sponsor in order to apply for funding. However, you will need to provide documentation to support your 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status of your organization or fiscal sponsor in order to receive any grant monies. If you currently are a 501 (c )(3) organization or have a fiscal sponsor, please provide the information in this section and check the box indicating you are enclosing your 501(c)(3) letter. If you do not have tax exempt status or a fiscal sponsor, check the appropriate box. If you should be awarded a grant, we will allow you time to obtain a sponsor.

#### **Section D - (Radio applicants)**

Identify the running time and indicate whether this is a pilot, special, limited series, on-going series, or other. Check if you have attached a letter(s) of commitment between the producer and the organization(s) to collaborate on this project.

#### **Section D - (Film and Video applicants)**

Identify the running time of the completed production (distribution requests) or estimated running time (pre-production requests). Check whether this is 16 mm, 35 mm, video, or other.

#### **Section E - Description of Proposed Project**

In a clear and concise way and in the space provided, give a one or two sentence description of your project. This description is critical because it may be used for screening your application.

#### **Section F - Sample Work**

Sample material is extremely important in our consideration of your proposal. Applicants should use the sample material as an opportunity to show the best work of the participating producer(s). Therefore, include sample material that is the strongest and most impressive in content, form and production quality, and that meets the criteria below. If the producer(s) does not have a sample of a previously completed work or a trailer (this may include raw material or edited footage) from the proposed project, applicants must send a alternate, completed work by one of the key production personnel involved in the proposed project (cinematographer, editor, etc.).

**Radio Sample Work**

Submit one (1) audio cassette or compact disc of the producer's work, cued for at least 10 minutes of listening, that best represents the producer's talents and skills. If possible, submit a sample that is similar in content, genre and form to the proposed project.

**Video Sample Work**

**Your video sample work must be submitted on ½" VHS tape(s) format or DVD\*.** The tape must be cued for at least 10 minutes of viewing. For pre-production requests, the sample must either be a trailer for the proposed project or previously completed work. If possible, previous work should be relevant to the proposed project in content, genre and/or form. For distribution requests, you *must* submit the **completed** film or video (fine cut, answer or release print is OK) on VHS format. \*We accept DVD samples, however, panel members will view the first ten minutes of submitted DVD sample(s).

You may submit two tapes if and only if you are submitting a trailer that is less than 10 minutes. In this case, the applicant should submit the trailer and a previously completed work of at least 10 minutes. Indicate the title of sample work(s) you are submitting, the year it was made, its budget, the format used, and the applicant's credit on the sample. If the sample is a completed work, summarize its activist distribution history or any organizing involved or that resulted. You may also mention major festivals, broadcasts or screening history as well. In describing the sample work, give a brief description of the project and what themes or issues are being addressed. Include a brief description of the 10 minutes that are cued for the Robeson Panel to review. When assembling your completed application, **Label the *actual* sample(s) - as well as the cases—with the title of the project, its running time, and applicant's name.**

**Section G - Agreement**

Once your application is complete, please read the agreement, then sign and date the application.

**PART II. Narrative**

Be sure to complete each section, H-L, and do not exceed the maximum word or space allowed for each section.

**Section H - Project Summary (600 word maximum)**

Describe your project and its social justice goals. Address its themes, your approach to the subject, and why you chose this approach. Include why this issue is important to address. If other productions exist on your subject, explain why your treatment is different and why it is needed. Describe the visual and stylistic approach. Identify the people to be interviewed or used as experts for reference and background. Describe the nature and extent of the involvement of members of communities depicted in the production. Specify how this grant will be used.

**Section I - Fund Raising Strategy (300 words maximum)**

List sources of current funding (in-hand and pending). Explain your strategy for future funding with specific sources and amounts received and/or requested. The thoroughness of this strategy helps us determine your capacity to complete your project or meet your distribution goals.

**Section J - Distribution Initiatives (300 word maximum)**

**All applicants must complete this section regardless of whether you are applying for a pre-production or distribution grant. A well thought out distribution plan is vital to the success of your application.** This section must demonstrate how your project/production will be used as a tool for progressive social justice organizing. In completing this section, use the following guidelines to outline the distribution initiative:

- 1) Please be specific and concise in how this production will act as a tool for grassroots organizing, i.e., *How is it part of an organizing campaign?*
- 2) Specifically identify the audience(s) for which your project is intended; tell us how you plan to reach them and what you hope the audience(s) will do as a result of viewing your production. Tell us if you will provide educational materials such as study guides or tool kits to stimulate further dialogue or organizing.
- 3) Collaborations are strategic alliances between media makers (or producers) and organizations. If your project is a collaboration with a community-based organization, educational or health institution, or a network, identify it and explain why you've chosen this particular organization or network. Explain what advantage this collaboration provides. Describe your role as well as the organization's role in the collaboration. Briefly describe the organization's background and mission. **Please note that collaborations require a signed agreement between the producer and the organization, specifically stating who has editorial and distribution rights, which must be submitted with the application.**

## II. Narrative (Section J., continued)

4) Tell us if your project involves: a) an activity to be carried out by or materials to be used by a commercial or non-profit distribution company; b) television broadcast or theatrical release; or c) entry to film or video festivals. If any of the preceding apply, explain why support from The Paul Robeson Fund is needed, since the Fund is primarily interested in funding innovative grassroots distribution strategies. Also explain why these traditional methods are suited to reach your intended audience and what follow-up strategies will contribute to the social justice goals you seek. If a distributor has agreed to distribute your film or video, please provide a letter from the distributor to this effect.

### Section K - Key Production Personnel Sketch (300 word maximum)

Focus on the producer's experience and background, including experience with the issues being addressed and/or media activism. Summarize the experience and background of key production personnel. Include titles of past projects and list key awards. Also provide names and credentials of key consultants. **In addition, you must also provide a complete description of the key production and consultants' demographic composition. A description of each person's gender, race, sexual orientation, and economic status is essential, particularly as it relates to or is representative of the activist goal of your project.** Please also tell us what relationship the production team has to the issue or characters in the proposed project.

### Section L - Budget (one 8 ½" x 11" page)

Provide a total budget for your project that includes pre-production, production, post-production and distribution. Itemize and include in-kind as well as actual expenses. A complete budget also includes a list of income sources. Please also indicate how Robeson grant monies will be used. Your totals should match the figures on the front of your application. Should your project budget and income change significantly after May 15, please send a one (1) page update no later than July 1.

## Inquiries & the Grant Award Process

Funding decisions for the Paul Robeson Fund are made during activist panel meetings later in the year. **Your organization will be notified by mail BY NOVEMBER as to whether or not it has been selected to receive a grant.** Grants generally range from \$5,000-\$20,000. Because of the volume of applications, we are not able to respond to questions about the feasibility or status of projects. **We DO request that you keep us informed of any contact or address changes. Please email any such information to [grants@fex.org](mailto:grants@fex.org). Always reference the title your project as submitted on your application when corresponding with the Funding Exchange.**

If approved, your organization will receive a grant award package, which will contain a grant agreement form that must be signed and returned immediately to the Funding Exchange. A check will be sent to the organization, or its fiscal sponsor, if applicable, only after the original copy of the signed grant agreement form is received in our office. This process takes approximately four to six weeks.

Grant award packages also include a fiscal and progress report form. Organizations that have received prior funding *must* complete any and all outstanding reports in order to be considered for any additional funding. Reports should be sent **ATTN: GRANTS ADMINISTRATOR under a separate cover** from any application submitted.

## Promotional Activities

As a key resource to progressive radio, film and video makers and to media activism, the Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media is a unique funding source, its significance far outstripping its size. That's why we'd like your assistance in helping us to promote the Robeson Fund. If you receive a grant, you will be asked to:

- Cite **The Paul Robeson Fund for Independent Media/Funding Exchange** in the production credits, as well as in all promotional and publicity materials.
- Send us a copy of the completed work along with any promotional and educational materials.
- Include a copy of your finished work to be kept in the Paul Robeson Library.
- Notify us when there is a national broadcast or special screening.

The Funding Exchange retains the right to promote all funded video, film and radio projects as part of the Paul Robeson Fund collection. Promotional activities may include trailers, Best of Robeson Festivals, public access and other broadcasting, etc. The Robeson Fund may broadcast funded projects in whole or in part and will take every opportunity to promote the independent media makers as we showcase their work.

## Final Checklist

A reminder to provide all information in the spaces available on the Grant Application Form 2008, which, like this guidelines document, is linked at [www.fex.org](http://www.fex.org) under the National Grant Programs Paul Robeson Fund page. If for some reason you cannot use this application form in completing your application on-screen, you may duplicate the form, but it must be identical in all aspects to the original. Do not alter the content or layout, exceed the amount of words or space indicated, or use a font size smaller than 11 point. When finished, be sure to:

1. **Make six (6) sets of the completed application - collated and stapled - including:**
  - Coversheet and Narrative (PART I. & II.)
  - 501(c)(3) tax letter from fiscal sponsor or organization to which your project may be affiliated
  - If you are working in collaboration (see Section J., item 3.), include your signed agreement.
  - *For radio applicants only:* Any letter(s) of commitment from organizations or distributors assisting in the distribution or production of your radio project (See Section D. - Radio Applicants)
  - Be sure to *staple* each application set. No paper clips, binders or folders.
2. **Submit one (1) copy of sample work— dvd/cds or VHS tape - with application.** A reminder to label the sample, being sure to label the *actual* sample - as well as the case— with the Project title, running time, and producer's name. Samples **MUST** accompany application which must be postmarked by May 15 and may not be sent under separate cover. One sample work is preferred. If you have additional project samples, please consider the relevance to your submitted project and send no more than two different samples.
3. **Include one (1) copy ONLY of relevant material that is a part of your distribution strategy** (possible examples: study guide, action/activists guide, flyer/poster, newsletters, etc.)
4. **(Suggested) Include a self addressed and stamped postcard.** *As the Funding Exchange does not proactively confirm receipt of applications*, this will act as a receipt of your application and will be returned to you by June 15. You may also request a return receipt from the postal/delivery service of your choice. Please do not call to confirm receipt of your application.
5. **(Optional) Include a self addressed and stamped envelope for return of your sample work.** If your proposal is awarded a grant by the Funding Exchange, we would like the option of keeping the sample work to use for educational or promotional purposes for the Paul Robeson Fund. If your proposal is not funded, we will return your sample work in the self-addressed, *postage-paid* mailer or envelope appropriate for shipping. Any sample materials that are not returned to you under the above criteria will be recycled.

Please take note:

- No email or fax applications are accepted.
- You may not send additional written OR sample material to complete or supplement your application after the deadline date.
- Please do not attach additional information not requested such as résumés, scripts, letters of intent or support, articles, etc.
- Applicants may not substitute pages to their application or exchange sample material once they are received by our office.
- A reminder that previous grantees of the Funding Exchange who do not complete and return the outstanding progress report will not be considered for future funding.

Be sure that your application is complete and submitted under **ONE** cover. Applicants will not be notified to submit missing portions, and we are not responsible to collate any materials submitted separately. **All applications must either be POSTMARKED by the annual May 15 postmark deadline, or, HAND-DELIVERED by 6:00 p.m. Eastern time, to the address below.** Applications are accepted only between April 15 and the May 15 deadline.

Funding Exchange  
 Attn: PAUL ROBESON FUND FOR INDEPENDENT MEDIA  
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 New York, NY 10012

**Revisions** If there are *significant* changes in the nature or content or funding status of your project, you may send such information to us (1-2 pages maximum) by July 1. A reminder, however, to inform us at anytime of any contact or address changes at any time. Please email any such changes to [grants@fex.org](mailto:grants@fex.org)

Thank you for your work for justice, and for your interest in the Funding Exchange!