

REFORM

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS February 2023

INTRODUCTION

REFORM Alliance aims to transform probation and parole by changing laws, systems and culture to create real pathways to work and wellbeing.

The unjust re-imprisonment of Meek Mill sparked a movement that ultimately led to the creation of REFORM Alliance. In November 2017, a Philadelphia judge gave Meek a controversial two to four-year prison sentence for minor technical probation violations. That shocking sentence spurred the international #FreeMeek movement and ultimately resulted in Meek's release in April 2018. During this process, Michael Rubin, Shawn "JAY-Z" Carter, Van Jones, and Robert Kraft were among several leaders to publicly advocate for Meek's release and acknowledge that problems with the criminal justice system extended well beyond his case. After Meek's release, he and a group of influential leaders in business and philanthropy came together and committed to change laws that keep millions of others trapped in this flawed system, launching REFORM Alliance.

There are currently about 6 million people in the justice system in the United States and more than 4 million people who are currently on probation and parole. Every five and a half minutes, someone is sent to prison for a technical violation, costing taxpayers \$2.8 billion each year. Parole and probation have become a web of confusing and ineffective conditions that keep people trapped in a revolving door from probation and parole to prison, excluding people reentering society from wellness and economic stability. We believe that the United States can significantly reduce the number of people under government control while dramatically increasing community safety.

In recognition of the critical role that frontline service providers and community-based organizations play in creating an ecosystem of support for communities most impacted by harmful criminal justice policies, REFORM Alliance is issuing this RFP to solicit grant applications from qualified organizations for its FY23 Grant program.

REFORM seeks proposals from organizations that would be willing to engage their membership list (listserve) on state or federal legislation (parole/probation) and/or providing direct services for justice impacted individuals. Specifically:

- **In the following states (Illinois, Indiana, Mississippi, California, New York, Virginia, Georgia, Iowa, Florida, Louisiana, and Pennsylvania)**

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1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 TIMELINE

- **February 27, 2023:** RFP released to organizations.
- **February 27 - March 17, 2023 :** Requests for Information (RFI) may be submitted. Requests for Information (RFI) may be submitted via the zoomgrants link ONLY. RFI's submitted after 11:59 p.m. Pacific Standard Time on **March 17, 2023** will not receive a response.
- **March 8, 2023, 3:00pm Pacific Standard Time:** [Live Informational Session](#) - will record to send to all applicants if unable to attend.
- **March 17, 2023, 11:59 p.m. Pacific Standard Time:** Deadline for Proposals. Proposals must be timely received electronically via Zoom Grants and include all information requested.
- **March 18 - March 31, 2023:** Evaluation of Proposals. REFORM reserves the right to contact individual proposers to request revised proposals or more information.
- **April 3, 2023:** REFORM notifies each organization by e-mail whether its proposal was selected.
- **April 10 - 21, 2023:** Onboarding Training/Webinar

1.2 REFORM CONTACT

Please email us at submissions@reformalliance.com with any questions or if you need assistance with the application process. Please include a contact number for us to reach you.

1.3 REFORM GRANT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All proposals must be submitted electronically via the grant form [HERE](#).

1.4 EXPECTATIONS OF GRANTEES

- Attending recurring calls with REFORM Staff.
- Participating in narrative change and education campaigns, including storytelling, educating your constituency on the issue, and helping build understanding of REFORM's overall vision for systems change.
- Responsiveness to requests / communications from REFORM staff.
- To complete a full plan for the grant term and provide bi-monthly reports through zoomgrants.
- Participate in joint events/activations around key moments such as in April - National Second Chance Month, May - Mothers Day, June - Fathers Day, and REFORM events like Job Fairs, Town Halls, etc.
- Serving as Ambassadors on behalf of REFORM and supporting our membership building activities that bring in new REFORMers to the movement.

EXPECTATIONS OF REFORM ALLIANCE

- Grant funds of up to \$25,000.
- Responsiveness from designated REFORM staff liaison.
- Co-branding support for all proposed events/activations,
- Lifting up your leadership and the visibility of your organization through events, communications, activities, and partnership.

1.5 GRANTEE ELIGIBILITY AND QUALIFICATION

To qualify to receive a REFORM grant, Applicants must meet all of the following criteria:

- Be a duly-formed organization in good standing in its state of formation;
- Have been established for three or more years, with three years of compliant 990s;
- Be a community-based organization with Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status;
- Be registered to do business as a 501(c)(3) in the states where it is proposing in its grant application to operate in collaboration with REFORM;
- Have a demonstrated commitment to empowering people directly impacted by the justice system.

Preference will be given to organizations whose founder, leadership team, and/or membership are comprised of individuals who are formerly incarcerated or directly impacted; and organizations that demonstrate strong evidence of responding to one of REFORM Alliance's funding priorities. If you have any questions about eligibility, please contact us at submissions@reformalliance.com **before** submitting your application.

2. REFORM'S NATIONAL COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP GRANT PROGRAM

2.1 Funding Priorities

REFORM's goal is for people to reenter society with dignity, to remove barriers to their financial independence, and equip them with the tools to succeed, all while making families and communities safer and stronger.

- **Education**: Grants in this category support initiatives that improve access to education, increase educational opportunities, and enhance the quality of education for people of all ages.
- **Jobs & Economic Development**: Grants in this category aim to support initiatives that create jobs, promote entrepreneurship, and strengthen local economies.
- **Public Safety Solutions**: Grants in this category support initiatives that improve public safety, reduce crime rates, and increase community resilience.
- **Civic Engagement**: Grants in this category support initiatives that promote active participation in civic life, encourage community involvement, and foster social cohesion.
- **Health & Wellness**: Grants in this category aim to support initiatives that improve health outcomes, increase access to healthcare, and promote wellness (e.g. mental health services)
- **Crime Survivors**: Grants in this category support initiatives that provide direct services, support, and solutions for individuals and communities impacted by crime.

3 PROPOSAL CONTENT

Applicants will be required to address the questions in their proposal below.

Questions for All Applicants

1. Title/Project Name
2. First Name
3. Last Name
4. Telephone Number
5. Email
6. Organization Legal Name/Entity Name
7. Organization's Complete Address
8. Organization's Telephone Number
9. Organizations' Fax Number (optional)
10. Organization's Website (optional)
11. Organization's Federal Tax ID (EIN) (XX-XXXXXXX)
12. UEI Number
13. (N)CAGE Code
14. CEO/Executive Director First Name
15. CEO/Executive Director Last Name
16. CEO/Executive Director Title
17. CEO/Executive Director Email
18. CEO Bio
19. Which state was your organization founded in?
20. Year organization was established?
21. How large is your email list?
22. Number of employees directly impacted by the criminal justice system?
23. Please provide the links to your social media accounts and website.
24. Please select the categories that best describe your programming and services:
 - Education
 - Jobs & Economic Development
 - Crime Survivors
 - Public Safety
 - Civic Engagement
 - Health & Wellness
25. Please describe how your organization supports justice impacted individuals
26. Please list all programs and services that your organization provides.
27. Need/Description of Issue your organization seeks to solve.
28. Project Work Plan: Provide a detailed description of the proposed plan for accomplishing the work describing how the project will operate throughout the funding period and how the applicant will successfully achieve objectives, goals, and deliverables. The work plan must include:

- a. All proposal goals, objectives, activities, and outcomes
 - b. Description of target population, including eligibility requirements, the number of individuals proposed to be served, and justification and demonstration that this is an attainable number.
 - c. The processes the applicant will use to identify and recruit the target population and to match activities and services to their identified needs.
29. Please provide a capabilities and competencies statement which demonstrates the qualifications, experience, expertise, and organizational/staffing capacity necessary to achieve the identified goals and objectives of the project. Please include any supporting reports, presentations, certifications, job descriptions, and resumes as attachments. This section should also speak to the applicants' past experience with grants, and as well as what percentage of your organization – or your proposed team – are returning citizens or are directly impacted by the criminal justice system.
30. Provide names and contact information for five references for your organization, including at least one legislator, who can speak to your organization's work
31. Please detail your organization's experience passing criminal justice reform legislation and/or participating in the legislative process in your state?
32. Would your organization be interested in joining a parole/probation reform coalition in your state? What support are you best positioned to provide to a parole/probation reform coalition in your state?
33. Has your organization received funding from REFORM Alliance in the past?

4. PROPOSAL REVIEW CRITERIA

4.1 Rating Factors and Point System

Shown in the table below are four (4) Rating Factors and the maximum points assigned to each factor.

	Rating Factors	Point Range
1	Capabilities & Competencies	20
2	Project Narrative	70

3	Budget/Budget Narrative	10
4	Strategic Alignment with REFORM	10
Maximum Possible Proposal Score:		110

4.2 Rating Factors

Capabilities & Competencies (Up to 20 points)

The extent to which the applicant has clearly and credibly demonstrated it has the capacity to carry out this proposed project, including:

- Applicant has demonstrated a large membership base as evidenced by size of email list, strong local network, social media
 - presence/following, and/or robust community support. **(Up to 3 points)**
- Applicant clearly demonstrates the qualifications and past experiences needed to provide the services applied for. **(Up to 3 points)**
- The strength of the experiences and capability of the applicant's organization to effectively implement and conduct the proposed project and meet project expectations, including the applicability of any previous experience implementing similar projects. **(Up to 3 points)**

- Applicant demonstrates sufficient and appropriate staffing for proposed project. Staff roles and responsibilities are clearly defined. Resumes and/or position descriptions for key project staff are included as an attachment. **(Up to 3 points)**
- A clear and convincing demonstration that the applicant has the capability to serve system impacted individuals. **(Up to 4 points)**
- A clear and convincing demonstration that the organization has the administrative controls needed to manage grant funds. **(Up to 4 points)**

Project Narrative (Up to 70 points)

● ***Project Need (Up to 10 points)***

- Applicant clearly describes the need/benefit of the project to the target population. Shows an urgent need or opportunity for additional support for the impacted population in the organization's state.

● ***Project Work Plan (Up to 40 points)***

- The extent to which the applicant's project work plan clearly and feasibly demonstrates how the project will operate through the funding period.
- The extent to which the project work plan includes a clear and thorough description of all functions or activities in the application.
- Program goals and supporting objectives and activities are clearly defined, measurable, and time specific.
- Applicant demonstrates clearly the effectiveness of their services and activities in accomplishing the program goals and objectives.
- Applicant demonstrates that the program is using best practices

● ***Project Timelines (Up to 10 points)***

- The extent to which the application reflects coherent and feasible timelines for completing tasks and achieving outcomes.

● ***Plan For Measuring Impact (Up to 10 points)***

- The extent to which the application describes the process for assessing the project's effectiveness through the collection and reporting of performance metrics.

Budget/ Budget Narrative (Up to 10 points)

- The extent to which the budget narrative provides a description of costs associated with each line item on the budget worksheet and that the costs are reasonable and realistic to achieve stated goals and objectives. **(Up to 5 points)**
- The extent to which the totals on the Budget Worksheet and the Budget

Narrative align. **(Up to 5 points)**

Strategic Alignment With Reform (Up to 10 points)

- Clearly demonstrates support of community supervision reform (**Up to 1 point**)
- Evidence of community network of system impacted individuals **(Up to 5 points)**
- Clearly demonstrates commitment to one or all of the following **(Up to 4 points)**:
 - Elevating voices of system impacted individuals through storytelling in partnership with REFORM.
 - Utilize listserve and social media accounts to promote community supervision initiatives
 - Build network of Reformers and activist