



Capacity Building Initiative 2012 Organizational Assessment Request for Proposals

Questions? Contact Kate Shirah (Kate@rexendowment.org or 919-838-1183).

Organizational Assessment Grant Application Notification of Intent to Apply must be e-mailed by noon on Tuesday, February 14, 2012 to: Kate@rexendowment.org

The John Rex Endowment invests in the development and support of activities, programs and organizations that improve the health of underserved people in Wake County. The John Rex Endowment supports visible and measurable improvements in the health of children and youth by improving access to health services, by promoting healthy behaviors and by providing opportunities for growth and development.

Grantmaking Rationale

The Capacity Building Initiative (CBI) is a funding area of the John Rex Endowment to:

- Strengthen the organizational capacity of nonprofits that address the health and well-being of underserved children and/or youth in Wake County; and
- Ensure these organizations can sustain their programs and services so they can contribute to healthy lives of our target population.

Funding Guidelines

Eligibility

The John Rex Endowment uses these criteria to determine eligibility:

- 501(c)(3) tax status or collaborative comprised of representatives from multiple organizations. Government and academic institutions are not eligible to apply. If the collaborative does not have 501(c)(3) status, it must designate a fiscal sponsor that does have 501(c)(3) status.
- In operation for at least three years
- Operating budget of \$10 million or less
- Primary focus on
 - providing physical, mental or behavioral health services to Wake County children and/or youth, or
 - fulfilling a core function in the provision of programs and services for underserved Wake County children and/or youth, or
 - ensuring healthy child/youth-specific spaces and environments in Wake County
- Local or regional service area (applications from statewide organizations will be considered if (1) they have a strong policy advocacy component that impacts Wake County children and/or youth, or (2) their programs and services address a need that is not met by a local or regional organization)

We encourage applications from organizations providing services to geographic regions of the county outside of Raleigh.

Note: CBI applications and awards do not impact an organization's eligibility for or consideration as part of other John Rex Endowment grant opportunities.

Expectations of Grantees

An underlying philosophy that informs our consideration of applications is that capacity building work is not easy work: there are no magical solutions and the level of benefit to organizations directly correlates to the level of time and effort invested by organizations. We expect that grantees approach this work with the understanding that, even with the use of a consultant, staff and board members should be adequately prepared for their role and responsibilities to ensure the work has value.

Those organizations new to working with the John Rex Endowment must be available for a grant implementation meeting at the beginning of the grant term. All grantees must be able to submit a final written report.

Funding Availability for Organizational Assessments

Effective capacity building begins with a comprehensive organizational assessment – a process of determining an organization’s current strengths and challenges in order to identify priority needs and recommended steps for improvement.

Funding requests for Organizational Assessment grants are expected to range between \$5,000 and \$10,000 (up to \$11,000 including 10% indirect expenses). The John Rex Endowment will not consider organizational assessment requests greater than \$11,000.

We expect that most Organizational Assessment grants will be completed within 6-12 months. However, there is no minimum or maximum grant term for any type of support.

The John Rex Endowment will pay for an annual membership in the NC Center for Nonprofits for the year in which the grant term begins; the membership fee should be included in the budget request. Grantees are responsible for all communication and coordination of membership with the NC Center for Nonprofits.

Requirements for Organizational Assessments

- Must be conducted by an outside professional consultant who is skilled and experienced in implementing an effective organizational assessment process
- Must involve board leadership as well as staff in the assessment process
- Must assess each of these key areas¹ of organization infrastructure to identify strengths and challenges/areas for improvement:
 - ⇒ Mission, Vision and Strategy—Does the organization have a clear mission, and are strategies in alignment with this mission?
 - ⇒ Governance and Leadership—Does the organization have strong governance and foster leadership?
 - ⇒ Resource Development—Is the organization financially sustainable?
 - ⇒ Strategic Relationships—Does the organization have strong and positive relationships with external stakeholders?
 - ⇒ Internal Operations and Management—Does the organization have a strong and sound core infrastructure?
 - ⇒ Program Delivery and Impact—Is the organization effective in its delivery of programs and services, and is evaluation of impact integral to the organization?

The assessment must include a review of organizational documents (legal documents, financial statements, and other important management documents) in addition to gathering key stakeholder input.

¹ Key areas are those recommended by Paul Connolly and Carol Lukas. (2002). *Strengthening Nonprofit Performance: A Funder’s Guide to Capacity Building*. Amherst H. Wilder Foundation in collaboration with Grantmakers for Effective Organizations.

- Consultant produces a written document (*confidential to the organization*) that describes the process completed and recommends areas for improvement and defined focus for future capacity building work including:
 - ⇒ Shorter-term and/or no or lower-cost improvements and activities—These include one-time activities that have a self-contained purpose, or preparation or planning activities that must be done to prepare for more complex capacity building work.
 - ⇒ Longer-term and/or higher-cost improvements and activities—These include capacity building activities that are complex in nature and will require a significant investment of time and/or financial resources to undertake.
 - ⇒ All recommendations, within each of these sets, should be organized by priority and level of impact.

Criteria for Priority Consideration

- A mission and primary programs, services, or activities that strongly align with the John Rex Endowment's mission.
- Evidence of an approach that is based on established best practices in organizational assessments.
- Reflection on recent or expected economic, political, or social changes and their potential impact on the organization and the assessment process.

Consultant Qualifications and Criteria

An outside consultant is required for organizational assessment grants.

Please note that the John Rex Endowment does not endorse or recommend any particular consultants or consultant agencies. Should you need assistance in identifying a consultant to work with your organization, we have a directory of consultants in the area. In addition, we have created a guide that details our perspective on working with consultants as well as resources that can assist organizations in managing the process of engaging and working with consultants. Both the directory and guide are available for download on our website (<http://www.rexendowment.org/funding-process/capacity-building-request-proposals>).

We require evidence that the organization has interviewed at minimum two consultants in their selection process. Release from this requirement can be requested if the following conditions are met: (1) the organization has been working with a particular consultant and is requesting funds for continued and/or similar work, or (2) the organization has engaged the consultant in the past for similar work. Similar work is defined as work that requires the same skillset or knowledge expertise.

In addition, we expect these criteria for consultants that are conducting organizational assessments through John Rex Endowment funding:

- Complies with State of NC regulations and licensure requirements as applicable
- A minimum of three years nonprofit experience (as staff, board, volunteer, or consultant)
- A minimum of two years recent experience in a nonprofit consulting role
- Demonstrated skill in conducting comprehensive organizational assessments for nonprofits
- Demonstrated effectiveness in working in a consulting role with nonprofit clients

Application Instructions

Application Assistance

Questions? Contact Kate Shirah (Kate@rexendowment.org or 919-838-1183).

Proposal Process and Timeline

Organizations may have only one active CBI grant at a time. The CBI grant review process is competitive, regardless of whether an organization has received prior John Rex Endowment CBI funding. CBI proposals will be accepted during all three funding cycles: the Summer Award Cycle, the Fall Award Cycle, and the Winter Award Cycle.

The Organizational Assessment grant review process involves these steps:

- Organizations planning to apply for assessment funding must send an e-mail to Kate Shirah (Kate@rexendowment.org) as notification of intent to apply. E-mail notification need only include the name of the organization and a sentence stating intent to apply. Applicants will be sent an e-mail confirming receipt of their intent (please follow up should you not receive confirmation).
- Applications for assessment funding must be submitted as a **hard copy** (Attn: Kate Shirah; John Rex Endowment; 712 W. North Street; Raleigh, NC; 27603) and via **e-mail or disc** (Kate@rexendowment.org). Applicants will be sent an e-mail confirming receipt of their application (please follow up should you not receive confirmation).
- The John Rex Endowment's Health Improvement Committee will review submitted proposals and applicants will be notified of status following the meeting.
- The Health Improvement Committee will take funding recommendations to the Board of Directors and applicants will be notified of status following the Board meeting.
- Approved grants cannot have a start date earlier than six weeks following the Board meeting.

DEADLINES	Summer Grant Award Cycle	Fall Grant Award Cycle	Winter Grant Award Cycle
Intent to Apply Due	Noon on Tuesday, February 14	Noon on Tuesday, June 12	Noon on Tuesday, October 9
Application Due	Noon on Tuesday, April 10	Noon on Tuesday, August 14	Noon on Tuesday, December 11
Review Status Notification	End of May	End of September	End of January 2013
Award Notification	Mid- June	Mid-October	Mid- February 2013
Earliest Grant Start Date	August 1	December 1	April 1

Proposal Contents

Only one hard copy is required, no staples, paper clips, or other binding. Do not send any attachments except those specified in these guidelines: any additional attachments received will not be provided to reviewers.

1. Complete the John Rex Endowment's proposal cover page.
2. Complete a narrative that argues the case for funding of your organizational assessment. You should include all of the sections listed below using the section titles as provided. At minimum, you must answer each question listed under the section title. You may choose to include additional content as appropriate. The narrative must be typed using a font size of 10 pt or larger and must not exceed three pages. Recommended word counts are provided for each section; nevertheless, we expect that section lengths may fall outside of these recommendations depending on the nature of the organization and the assessment process.
 - A. Organizational Information (*recommended 500 words or less*)
 - 1) Briefly describe your organization's (or collaborative's) mission, population served, and programs and services.
 - 2) What is your geographic service area?
 - 3) Quantify and/or qualify the impact of your work on Wake County children and/or youth.
 - 4) Quantify and/or qualify the percentage of your programs and services that benefit Wake County children and/or youth directly and/or indirectly. If applicable, include the number of unique children and/or youth served by your organization.
 - 5) Articulate whether and how your organization plays a critical role for Wake County children and/or youth in addressing a particular need or needs. For statewide organizations, please describe (1) the advocacy component of your work that impacts Wake County children and/or youth, and/or (2) what need your organization addresses that is not met by local or regional organizations serving Wake County. Competitive applications will offer specific examples that illustrate your contributions.

- 6) How long has your organization (or collaborative) been in operation? When did you receive your 501(c)(3) status?
- 7) (If applicable) If the request is on behalf of a collaborative, please list the names of each key partner organization with primary contact information.

B. Organizational Interest and Commitment (*recommended 350 words or less*)

- 1) What prompted your interest in the Capacity Building Initiative?
- 2) Why is your organization (or collaborative) wanting to undertake this assessment work now?
- 3) Speak to the organization's (or collaborative's) readiness to change and commitment to follow through on areas for improvement as they are identified through the assessment process.
- 4) Indicate the date on which the proposed assessment process was discussed and approved by the Board (or other leadership entity for collaborative). For CBI funding, the John Rex Endowment is requiring organizations to have Board approval for the work being conducted. We strongly feel that sustaining the impact of capacity building over the long-term requires ownership of and commitment to the process by organization leadership and staff.
- 5) Do you expect any turnover on your Board in the coming year? If so, how might these changes in the Board impact follow through on identified areas of improvement?
- 6) Articulate your expectations regarding the amount of time board members and management staff will need to invest in this work to ensure its value.

C. Consultant Description (*recommended 350 words or less*)

- 1) Provide the name, phone number, and email address for the consultant who will be conducting the assessment. If you are working with more than one consultant, provide names and contact information for all consultants. Designate which consultant will serve as the primary contact to your organization.
- 2) Describe how you selected this consultant. With how many consultants did you speak? Who were involved in the decision making regarding the selection of the consultant? What was the selection process?
- 3) Why did you select this consultant? Why did you think they would be a good fit for your organization?
- 4) Articulate how the consultant meets these John Rex Endowment criteria:
 - Minimum of three years nonprofit experience (as staff, board, volunteer, or consultant)
 - Minimum of two years experience in a nonprofit consulting role
 - Demonstrated skill in conducting comprehensive organizational assessments
 - Demonstrated effectiveness in working in a consulting role with nonprofit clients

Note: A consultant contract should be kept on file with your agency and available to the John Rex Endowment if requested.

D. Assessment Description (*recommended 500 words or less*)

- 1) Describe the assessment process as well as the basis for the assessment strategy selected, including what organizational areas will be addressed.
- 2) What are the major activities associated with this project? What is the timeline for these activities?
Note: This information may be presented in narrative, with a table, using a logic model, or any combination of these.
- 3) What information sources will be used to assess each of the organizational areas? For example, interviews with board members, board member and committee descriptions, and bylaws might be used to assess governance and leadership.
- 4) Who will be involved in the assessment process (such as board members, staff, your constituency or other community stakeholders)?

E. Project Finances (*recommended 250 words or less*)

- 1) Summarize what the requested amount of funds will be used for in support of this project.
- 2) (If applicable) Provide justification if your budget request includes personnel expenses. For each personnel line item, document: (a) the planned activities or responsibilities of the staff member, (b) a brief rationale as to why these activities or responsibilities must be carried out by this particular staff member, (c) the number of estimated hours the staff member will spend on carrying out each activity or responsibility, and (d) the percent time and dollar amount of support requested specific to the grant term (e.g., 2% FTE for 3 months for a total request of \$800).
- 3) (If applicable) Provide justification for any budget line items that are atypical or not self-explanatory.

Personnel Expenses: The John Rex Endowment will consider personnel costs only IF they apply directly to organizational assessment activities and fall outside of typical operating activities. For example, the John Rex Endowment will not provide funding for a staff member to organize meetings. Support for this type of work is provided through the John Rex Endowment's provision of 10% indirect expenses.

Note: A detailed budget justification for all expenses should be kept on file with your agency and available to the John Rex Endowment if requested.

3. Please attach these supporting documents:

- A. The proposed project budget using the John Rex Endowment's budget form. John Rex Endowment funds are to be used to cover both direct and indirect expenses associated with the assessment. Indirect expenses must be included at 10% of requested direct expenses. Total requests for organizational assessment funding should not exceed \$11,000 (including 10% indirect expenses). If desired, please include the cost of annual membership with the NC Center for Nonprofits.
 - 1) Direct expenses—costs that are clearly and easily attributable to the assessment—include personnel expenses and project expenses such as consultant expenses, education and training fees, and convening or meeting expenses.
 - 2) Indirect expenses (not to exceed 10% of John Rex Endowment-paid direct expenses), or overhead costs, such as rent, utilities, housekeeping, bookkeeping, and internet charges.
- B. A list of your organization's board of directors with affiliations and key management staff including position titles.
- C. For the John Rex Endowment's financial review of the organization, please provide the following supporting documents:
 - 1) Your organization's operating budget for the current fiscal year showing revenue (with sources) and expenses.
 - 2) Your organization's most recent independent financial audit. If an audit is not available please state why.
 - 3) The two most recent financial statements including (1) Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet), and (2) Statement of Activities (Income Statement). If these financial statements are not available please state why. Please note that financial management processes will be a required part of the organizational assessment should the grant be awarded, and any future application must include these financial statements.
- D. A copy of the consultant's resume.
- E. If a collaborative application with a fiscal sponsor, include a completed fiscal sponsor signature page.

4. Complete the John Rex Endowment's proposal signature page.