**SV2 – Silicon Valley Social Venture Fund**

2015-2016 Education Grant Round

Letter of Interest Guide

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**SV2 – Silicon Valley Social Venture Fund**

2015-2016 Education Grant Round

Letter of Interest

***About SV2:***

SV2’s mission is to unleash the resources and talents of the Silicon Valley community in support of promising social ventures to achieve measurable impact.

SV2 pursues its mission through an engaged giving model with three core lines of work:

1. Grants & Investments: Our donors (called “Partners”) pool their capital to give financial support to high potential social ventures and work together to identify and fund the most promising organizations
2. Beyond-the-Dollars Support: Many Partners roll up their sleeves and contribute time and expertise in service of SV2 Grantees’ needs
3. Learning Programs: We offer workshops, speakers, and other opportunities for Partners and Grantees to augment their learning and growth

SV2 grants support nonprofit capacity building, and we look to fund innovative organizations with evidence of effectiveness that are seeking to grow their impact. In addition to giving grants, SV2 Partners engage with Grantees directly through beyond-the-dollars support, so we look for organizations that are eager for a high level of engagement. More information about SV2’s beyond-the-dollars support is included in **Attachment A**.

To learn more about SV2, please visit www.sv2.org.

***About this grant opportunity:***

SV2’s 2015-2016 Education Grant Round is aiming to fund an organization focused on out-of-school time (e.g., after school and summertime) learning for under-resourced students. One organization will be selected to receive approximately $120,000 over three years for capacity building, along with beyond-the-dollars support from SV2.

To be eligible for the 2015-2016 Education Grant Round, an organization must:

* Be a nonprofit organization
* Deliver programs and have an executive presence in the Bay Area
* Have an annual operating budget of less than $4 million – organizations with budgets between $0.5 million to $2 million tend to be the best fit for the support that SV2 offers
* Have not previously received a grant from SV2

***About the Letter of Interest:***

You have received this information because SV2 Partners would like to learn more about your organization for potential consideration in this year's Education Grant Round. Our intention is for the Letter of Interest to be a preliminary information-gathering step. We hope it will take a limited amount of your time, which we know is valuable. *As such, we encourage you to* ***bound your response to******two or three pages****, and we welcome you to borrow liberally from other materials/applications that you have prepared previously.*

We are offering an optional group call for any organizations that may have questions about the Letter of Interest or SV2’s grant-making process. The call will take place on Monday, September 28 at noon. If you would like to participate, please use the following dial-in information: NUMBER: (706) 913-1155 | PIN: 645 4955.

Please submit your response by email to SV2 Partners Aarti Chandna ([aarti.chandna@gmail.com](mailto:aarti.chandna@gmail.com)) and Mark Wilson ([markw1231pv@mac.com](mailto:markw1231pv@mac.com)), our Grant Round Leaders, with a copy to Elizabeth Dodson ([edodson@sv2.org](mailto:edodson@sv2.org)), SV2’s Director of Grantmaking & Grantee Impact and Jody Chang ([jchang@sv2.org](mailto:jchang@sv2.org)), SV2’s Assistant Director of Grantmaking. The subject line should read, “Education Grant Round LOI: [Organization Name].” Please submit your response as a pdf, titled “LOI: [Organization Name]. The deadline to respond is **Thursday, October 8, 2015 by 5:00pm PDT.**

**Questions:**

Please respond briefly (in two or three pages) to the following questions:

1. Please provide the following information about the organization:
   1. Name and contact information of Executive Director (email and phone)
   2. Mission & Vision (1 to 3 sentences)
   3. Location of primary office and geographic focus of programs
   4. Founding year
   5. Operating budget for current fiscal year and previous fiscal year
   6. Key funders (e.g., governmental entities, private foundations, etc. whose funding constitute a major part of organization’s revenue) (comma-separated list or bullet points)
2. Please help us understand the organization’s program model by briefly summarizing the organization’s primary activities. Provide (a) a brief description of each primary activity that the organization currently is executing (two sentences per activity maximum) and (b) the organization’s target population and reach (e.g., number of youth served) through each activity.
3. Please briefly answer the following in bullet-point or table format:
   1. What key outcomes does the organization target in its work, and what metrics does it use to track progress toward and/or the achievement of those outcomes?
   2. Based on these metrics, what progress/outcomes did the organization achieve in the most recent year for which it has results?
4. What are the organization’s goals for growing its impact over the next three years? (one paragraph)

***What’s next?***

Based on information gathered in this preliminary diligence questionnaire, SV2 Partners will invite up to ten organizations to participate in a more in-depth diligence process.

Please plan for the following next steps and key dates should your organization be invited to move forward:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Date:** | **What to expect:** |
| October 20, 2015 | * Notification of invitation to submit a full application * Receipt of application questions from SV2 |
| November 16, 2015 | * Deadline to submit requested proposal to SV2 |
| December 1, 2015 | * If selected, notification of invitation to a 30-minute Applicant Q&A Session with SV2 Partners (up to six applicants selected) |
| January 12, 2016 | * Applicant Q&A Session I – three of the six remaining applicants will have their Applicant Q&A Session on this date |
| January 26, 2016 | * Applicant Q&A Session II – the other three applicants will have their Applicant Q&A Session on this date |
| February 10, 2016 | * If selected, request to host SV2 Partners on a site visit (up to three applicants selected) |
| February 11-  March 14, 2016 | * Window for SV2 site visit completion |
| March 15, 2016 | * If selected, notification of invitation to make a finalist presentation at SV2 (up to three applicants selected) |
| April 12, 2016 | * Finalist presentations at SV2 |
| April 26, 2016 | * Notification of selection as SV2 Grantee |

**Attachment B** contains the anticipated schedule of SV2 Education Grant Round meetings, at which SV2 Partners will deliberate on applications.

**Attachment C** contains a *draft version* of the application questions that up to ten organizations will receive on October 20, 2015, with the deadline to submit proposals being November 16, 2015. This is a *draft only* – the questions may be revised.

If you have any questions about the application process, please feel free to reach out to Aarti, Mark, Elizabeth and Jody.

Thank you for your time!

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Beyond-the-Dollars Support

***About SV2***

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1. **Grants & Investments:** Our donors (called “Partners”) pool their capital to give financial support to high potential social ventures and work together to identify and fund the most promising organizations
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3. **Learning Programs:** We offer workshops, speakers, and other opportunities for Partners and Grantees to augment their learning and growth

***About Beyond-the-Dollars Support***

We seek to provide beyond-the-dollars support to Grantees in critical organizational effectiveness areas such as board development, nonprofit finance, marketing/communications, performance measurement and strategic/business planning.

We think of our beyond-the-dollars support as encompassing a spectrum of options that range from low-intensity to high-intensity engagement:

* **Online Resources**
  + *Description*: Documents and other online resources available at SV2.org related to critical organizational effectiveness areas
  + *Example(s)*: With respect to nonprofit finance, links to materials on nonprofit funding models like, “Finding Your Funding Model: A Practical Approach to Nonprofit Sustainability” from The Bridgespan Group
* **Big Thinks**
  + *Description*: Occasional group input sessions that can be convened when a Grantee would like to gather the perspectives of a range of Partners
  + *Example(s)*: Providing group input to help a Grantee to shape an elevator pitch for a capital campaign or hone an impact measurement dashboard
* **Light-Touch Advising**
  + *Description*: One to eight hours of advice on a specific need or challenge from a qualified SV2 Partner
  + *Example(s)*: A Partner with deep board experience advising a Grantee Executive Director on building a stronger relationship with his or her Board Chair; a pair of Partners with fundraising and communications experience brainstorming with a Grantee on a set of events to hold in support of a capital campaign
* **Full-Scale Projects**
  + *Description*: Full project support from SV2 Partners or strategic allies
  + *Example(s)*: A pair of Partners helping a Grantee understand how to utilize a Net Promoter Score (NPS) to understand customer satisfaction and building an NPS survey; the Stanford Alumni Consulting Team (ACT), a pilot SV2 strategic ally, carrying out a case focused on updating a Grantee’s sliding-scale pricing model for the services that it provides in the community

SV2 is in the process of developing a refreshed approach to its beyond-the-dollars support in accordance with its new strategic plan, available [here](http://api.ning.com/files/6Yi1*KCqJUQRmxszThZqcuY12CiPP1SynG4zziS5pE7bhgohI97hJUxqWgSfiKnYbEQBgQbHsUHo0K-ssqWAgHS2JeKW7UIT/SV2_1417StratPlan_050214.pdf). This document reflects our latest efforts to shape this part of our work, but the work is still ongoing. For instance, Stanford ACT is our first pilot strategic ally for providing beyond-the-dollars support, and we hope to build more helpful alliances over time. We look forward to continuing to improve our beyond-the-dollars support with input from Grantees and Partners.

**SV2 – Silicon Valley Social Venture Fund**

2015-2016 Education Grant Round Meeting Schedule

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Wed., September 16, 2015**  **11:15 a.m. | Social**  **11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. | Meeting** | **Kickoff Meeting**   * Preview of year ahead * Learning about potential sub-topics * Selection of sub-topic |
| **Tues., October 20, 2015**  **11:15 a.m. | Social**  **11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. | Meeting** | **Preliminary narrowing to ~10 applicants**   * Based on letters of interest received from potential applicants, Partners select up to 10 organizations to submit full applications to the Grant Round |
| **Tues., December 1, 2015**  **11:15 a.m. | Social**  **11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. | Meeting** | **Selection of up to 6 applicants for Q&A**   * Based on applications received from the 10 organizations selected in October, Partners select up to 6 applicants to participate in Q&A at SV2 |
| **Tues., January 12, 2015**  **11:15 a.m. | Social**  **11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. | Meeting** | **Applicant Q&A Session I**   * This meeting will consist of 30-minute Q&A sessions with the Executive Directors of three of the six remaining applicant organizations |
| **Tues., January 26, 2015**  **11:15 a.m. | Social**  **11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. | Meeting** | **Applicant Q&A Session II**   * This meeting will consist of 30-minute Q&A sessions with the Executive Directors of the other three remaining applicant organizations |
| **Coffee + Vote Deadline:**  **Tues., February 9, 2016** | **Selection of up to 3 applicants for site visits**   * By February 9th, Partners meet for coffee to discuss 6 remaining applicants and then vote online for 3 with which to conduct site visits |
| **Tues., March 15, 2016**  **11:15 a.m. | Social**  **11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. | Meeting** | **Selection of finalist organizations**   * Partners report out on site visits and decide which remaining applicants to invite for finalist presentations (may select two or all three) |
| **Tues., April 12, 2016**  **11:15 a.m. | Social**  **11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. | Meeting** | **Finalist presentations** |
| **Tues., April 26, 2015**  **11:15 a.m. | Social**  **11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. | Meeting** | **Selection of 2014-2015 Education Grantee** |

**SV2 – Silicon Valley Social Venture Fund**

2015-2016 Education Grant Round

Application Questions

This is a draft set of application questions that up to ten organizations will be invited to answer for the 2015-2016 Education Grant Round. This draft solely is intended to give you an approximate idea of what to expect should your organization be invited to participate in further diligence for this Grant Round by submitting an application.

**PLEASE DO NOT RESPOND TO THESE QUESTIONS AT THIS TIME.** ORGANIZATIONS INVITED TO SUBMIT APPLIZATIONS WILL BE NOTIFIED AS SUCH IN OCTOBER 2015.

**DRAFT Application Questions:**

1. Current strategy: Does the organization have a current strategic plan in place? If so, please include a copy. If not, please describe the organization’s current-year strategic priorities and the process the organization uses to identify strategic priorities each year. (about one page)

(*Note, if the organization’s current strategic plan also addresses any of the questions below, please feel free to refer us to the relevant section(s) of the plan for the question(s) rather than providing a separate narrative response.*)

1. Strategy for growing reach: In the organization’s Letter of Interest, you described the organization’s goals for growing its impact over the next three years. Please summarize here the organization’s plan for achieving those goals. (about one page)
2. Capacity building to support growth. Please briefly describe the key organizational capacity building needs that the organization must satisfy in order to achieve its plan for growing its impact. (about half a page)

4.1 Current funding model. To the extent that the following are significant revenue streams for the organization, please list for each the current percentage of organizational revenue from that source and any key funders:

* 1. Government contracts or grants
  2. Grants from private foundations
  3. Donations from individuals
  4. Earned income (other than government contracts)
  5. Other

4.2 Funding model to support growth. Please describe (a) the organization’s key financial needs to support its plans for expanded impact (i.e., key one-time and ongoing costs and key sources of revenue to cover those costs) and (b) its high-level plan for evolving its current funding model and organizational structure to meet those financial needs. Please feel free to include any relevant attachments. (about one page)

1. Leadership / Staff. Please describe or explain:
   1. *Board*. The makeup of the organization’s board and the role that the board currently plays within the organization (one page maximum)
   2. *Staff*. Please attach an organizational chart of all staff and volunteer roles and, with respect to each staff member, please note his or her tenure. (No need to show every volunteer, just numbers and where they sit on the organizational chart.)

**Additional attachments to include:**

In addition to the attachments noted above, please include the following documents with the organization’s proposal:

* Financial statements for the organization’s last two fiscal years (Income Statement and Statement of Activities – unaudited okay)
* The organization’s current fiscal year budget
* Brief professional biographies of the ED/CEO and board chair
* IRS Determination Letter confirming Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3) status
* Rough estimate of total time spent on Letter of Interest and Application