

# Norfield Congregational Church

## Request for Proposal

### Norfield Church Fair Beneficiary Program

*2012 Fair Mission: To glorify God by engaging members of Norfield Church in an annual fundraiser to promote fellowship amongst Norfielders and the community and raise awareness and proceeds for selected organizations in need.*

#### **Background**

In the spring of each year, the Norfield Congregational Church in Weston CT holds a community fair for its members and the broader community. The objective of the fair is two-fold:

1. To engage all members of the church in a collaborative effort to raise funds intended to directly improve the lives of Fairfield County Residents through support to qualifying non-profit organizations.
2. To engage those beneficiaries in meaningful volunteer opportunities and to invite them to help raise awareness about some of the most pressing social and economic issues affecting these communities.

This year, the Fair will be held on June 16, 2012. One hundred percent of the net proceeds are distributed to qualified non-profit organizations in or near Fairfield County, Connecticut. Those organizations that are selected to receive funds (beneficiaries) benefit from this grant in a number of ways:

1. Each beneficiary will receive a portion of the funds raised through the church's fundraising events (namely the Fair) to be used in accordance with the grant guidelines and as expressed in your approved proposal.
2. Each beneficiary organization will be asked to partner with the Church over the course of the year so as to *actively exchange* with Norfield members in a meaningful relationship. For example: your organization will be asked to provide volunteers for the Fair; you will be invited to share your stories and mission as an organization with the Congregation; you may welcome members of the Church to volunteer on site with your organization so that they might share their gifts and learn directly from you about the people we, as a church, intend to serve.

## **Grant Guidelines**

In an effort to be as inclusive and unrestricted as possible, Norfield's granting approach is intentionally broad; however primary consideration is given to organizations in or near Fairfield County, Connecticut. We would like to offer a few guidelines to help you as you think through your application.

We are acutely aware that organizations serving those with the greatest unmet needs in our communities often find themselves working directly with individuals who are in immediate need of physical, emotional, spiritual, or economic support – homeless youth, women living with domestic abuse, children living in poverty, and other marginalized groups. It is clear that this is a vital service and one that is as close “to the ground” as is possible. That said, we are also very interested in supporting those organizations that *also* operate with a parallel course of work that addresses not only the people in need, but the systemic *causes* of the socio-economic challenges that put those people at risk. We believe strongly that unless we support both the cause and effect of challenging social conditions for the people of Fairfield County, that we are missing an essential piece of the puzzle.

With respect to the groups you serve, Norfield Church is not focused on providing support to any one particular population (children vs. elderly, for example) but rather, hopes to support those organizations that have carved out an *effective* model and a *place in the larger community effort* to improve people's lives. We look for organizations that are willing to collaborate with others, that avoid reinventing the wheel or duplicating efforts, and that have a long-term vision and mission for sustained work and for meeting a carefully expressed set of goals.

We do not expect perfection, but rather we welcome your honest assessment of your strengths and challenges and how you may in fact need to build the capacity of your organization. We are so glad to help in this way.

## **Application Process**

Norfield Church does not have a proposal template for you to submit, but rather we prefer a brief narrative description of your project request and we encourage you to include not only an account of your past successes, but your present challenges and concerns as well – this gives us a sense of your understanding of the landscape in which you work and your clear vision for strengthening it through our support.

Please include:

1. a brief cover letter requesting support and a summary paragraph on the nature of that request

2. project description (goals, objectives and activities to be undertaken and any barriers or opportunities)
3. how this project addresses both the *causes and effects* of the needed services
4. a list of opportunities for engaging Norfield Congregational Church members with your volunteers and community over the course of the year
5. collaboration (how you plan on working with others – what relationships do you have with other organizations doing similar work)
6. background about the organization(s) (including brief history, mission, biographical information of leadership and evidence of 501-c3 status)
7. proposed budget and supporting narrative documents (how does this budget fit into your overall organizational budget and strategic plan? Are you approaching other funding sources for this work?)
8. Other supporting information/documents (while we welcome any attachments that are directly relevant to the project, we respectfully ask you to please keep them to a minimum – only essential items please)
9. Please indicate how you heard about this opportunity.

The application is due no later than February 10, 2012. The Board of Outreach of Norfield Church will be approving grants and notifying successful applicants no later than March 1, 2012. Please note that funds will be disbursed in November 2012.

The members of the Board of Outreach may wish to visit your facilities during the month of February. Please let us know if this can be arranged.

Applications and attachments should be sent **by email only** to: [miller@philanthropycraft.com](mailto:miller@philanthropycraft.com). No phone inquiries please. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact Stephanie Miller in writing at the same email address.