



**Pioneer Square Chinatown I-D Community Preservation and Development  
Authority dba Historic South Downtown (HSD)**

**Grant Making Plan (Draft 9 14 18)**

**BACKGROUND**

Historic South Downtown began building this Grant Making Plan in late 2016, holding two meetings with stakeholders that surfaced the community's desire to act on a long list of priorities that have been discussed over time, and avoid more studies and processes. These initial conversations demonstrated that both communities wanted HSD funding to:

- leverage other funding sources
- emphasize connection and history shared by the two neighborhoods
- actively infuse art, culture, and history into projects
- support neighborhood priorities already identified and have buy-in
- focus on high impact, or "wow" project(s)
- using our funds to build upon, not replace other sources

Examples of project ideas identified by the participants from both neighborhoods included parks and parklets, public art, historical markers and plaques, historically accurate signage and lighting (particularly in the CID), storefront façade improvements waterfront projects, Jackson Street corridor projects, Lighting, pedestrian safety, and wayfinding. Neighborhood stakeholders expressed a strong desire to capture stories "that are timebound," including oral histories that may slip away as residents age.

In 2017, the HSD Board of Directors reviewed the community conversations and further refined funding parameters, including funding capital expenses that support housing, including feasibility studies, site control, development of ground floor retail spaces, public realm improvements associated with housing developments and other related expense. Additionally, due to the limited amount of HSD funding and the potentially high costs, HSD will, for the present, refrain from funding Unreinforced Masonry (URM) projects, but will look for other ways to support this critical preparedness and preservation need.

HSD hired Kathleen Barry Johnson as its first full-time professional executive director in the fall of 2018. In early 2018, HSD and King County completed contract negotiations that led to the commitment of a total of \$8,091,000 (almost \$2M of which is already committed) in investments in the HSD service area.

In January of 2018, the HSD Board formed an Ad Hoc Grant Making Committee tasked with: the completion of this Grant Making Plan; the development of a competitive grant making process; the issuing of the authority's first RFP from solicitation of proposals through evaluation and selection. The Grant Making Committee is made up of Heidi Park (Political Strategist, YWCA, CID Resident, committee

chair), Heidi Hall (Senior Community Development Specialist, OED, City of Seattle, Ex Officio member) and Azar Koulibaly (Attorney, Microsoft Corp., Pioneer Square Resident).

Throughout 2018, the Grant Making Committee and Johnson met with 16 groups and individuals, representing neighborhood nonprofits, similar funders, business owners, and community advocates. We have met with South Downtown community leaders, who are experts in the challenges faced by local service providers. This community input allowed us to refine further the organization's funding priorities. At the same time, the Board assessed neighborhood opportunities and challenges, in preparation to update its Strategic Plan. In June, the authority held its annual retreat at which it finalized the Strategic Plan and heard from Rep. Sharon Tomiko Santos regarding her initial vision for HSD and her perspective on the challenges we face.

This September, we held a focus group with 28 participants. The prospective applicants, HSD board members and Johnson reviewed a preliminary version of this Grant Making Plan, with attention paid to the funding priorities listed below. The 90-minute discussion helped to ensure the Grant Making Plan's priorities and structure align with current priorities of organizations and advocates likely to seek HSD support. The focus group also allowed prospective applicants to understand the direction HSD is moving and provided them with additional time to consider what projects they might develop in response to the upcoming funding cycle.

Today, HSD is pleased to submit this Grant Making Plan. You will see, reflected below, the priorities identified by stakeholders from the two neighborhoods, and a nuanced and thorough understanding of neighborhood opportunities and challenges.

#### **COMPETITIVE PROCESS**

The HSD Board will manage several cycles of competitive grant making beginning in Fall, 2018. HSD will utilize its internal and external networks, social media and one-on-one meetings to ensure the RFP is broadly disseminated to anyone who may be a prospective applicant. The RFP will be focused on delivering resources to organizations that support and strengthen Chinatown-International District and/or Pioneer Square. The RFP will be evaluated by a Community Review Panel, with the goal of announcing awards in Spring 2019 and beginning the funding of community organizations by June 2019. Scoring criteria will be included in the RFP form so that applicants understand the priorities and evaluation process.

Concurrent with the release of our RFP, we will also initiate an Emerging Opportunities fund, which will allow applicants to seek funding outside of the defined RFP period, when emergent conditions require (*see, below*).

#### **VALUES**

Drawing from HSD's Strategic Plan, the Board of Directors has determined that all grant solicitation, review, evaluation, awards, and monitoring will be conducted in furtherance of the authority's defined values:

1. **Equity.** Mitigate historic racial and social inequity and model equity in work and impact.
2. **Neighborhood Self-determination.** Advocate for Chinatown-International District and Pioneer Square to exercise self-determination with regards to our character, future needs and wants.
3. **Continuous Learning.** Rooted in history and remain responsive to our changing neighborhoods.

4. **Accountability.** Act transparently and maximize the potential of our assets to benefit our community.
5. **Resiliency.** Respond to opportunities and threats while maintaining mission focus

#### **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

The Guiding Principles are the framework for scoring and evaluating the following:

1. Grants lead to community benefits that remain after our funding is expended.
2. Ideally funding should be leveraged. Our participation should build upon other resources and support, ensuring we are not replacing other funders.
3. Funding will be given to organizations located within in the boundaries of Pioneer Square or the Chinatown-International District, as defined by the City of Seattle, for projects that serve one or both of these districts. Current district maps may be found at:  
<http://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/programs-and-services/historic-preservation/historic-districts/international-district#districtboundarymap> (C-ID) and  
<https://www.seattle.gov/neighborhoods/programs-and-services/historic-preservation/historic-districts/pioneer-square#districtboundarymap> (Pioneer Square).
4. Funding shall be provided to nonprofits and fiscally-sponsored organizations.
5. All participants in the solicitation, evaluation, awarding, and monitoring of HSD grants shall be trained to implement the HSD strategic plan.

#### **TYPES OF FUNDING**

We intend to provide both capital and operations funding. A capital project is one that leads to the creation or renovation of the built environment. There will be no minimum financial level to define capital. Applications for either capital or operations will be asked to specify the ongoing community benefit that will result from HSD investment of funds.

#### **PARTNERSHIPS**

HSD recognizes that partnerships between nonprofits and between the two neighborhoods can increase capacity and improve the quality of program and capital outcomes. However, we also recognize that partnerships must be authentic, and not add to the administrative burden of either entity. In some cases, where partnerships support the Values and Guiding Principles of HSD, we will encourage them by scoring them higher in the RFP process. Partnerships between an entity that does not meet our Guiding Principles (i.e. that is located outside of HSD territory or is not a nonprofit) will be required to demonstrate that the HSD investment will benefit the local nonprofit, creating capacity growth that will remain long after the funds are expended.

HSD itself may engage in partnerships to further the reach of our Values and Guiding Principles. We will be actively seeking funding partners who share our interests and may wish to provide additional funding either to increase funding available in our priority areas, or to build a collaborative process to help in the ongoing development of a project or program.

#### **PRIORITY FUNDING AREAS**

HSD seeks to provide funding in areas that will help to elevate the voice of those who live, work, and play in the South Downtown neighborhoods that will help build community strength and identity, and develop resiliency in these two historic communities. Specifically, we will be targeting our investments toward:

*Capacity Investments for Local Organizations*

Recognizing that the capacity of the neighborhoods to advocate for their priorities is tied to the strength of its nonprofit network, HSD will provide a portion of its funding to support time-limited projects that empower local voices and promote equitable results for the neighborhoods of South Downtown. Examples of work that will be funded includes neighborhood advocacy, organizing, project incubation.

#### *Business Development*

HSD recognizes that small businesses represent a gateway to economic stability for individuals and families, enlarging employment opportunities for residents and creating a platform for sustainable economic prosperity. We will fund projects that build the capacity and resilience of small, micro, culturally relevant businesses. Funded projects must comply with the Washington Constitutions' proscription against lending of public credit or gifting of public funds (Wash. Const. Art. 8 §5, 7). Examples of projects that could be funded include:

- a nonprofit that provides free training for small business start-ups;
- funding of façade improvements that are needed to comply with the special review procedures of the two Historic Districts;
- funding of resources for succession planning for family business owners, and similar capacity building programs;
- funding portions of nonprofit capital campaigns (housing development or other) to build out ground-floor retail or provide equity that allows lower cost rental space for cultural/historic nonprofit organizations.

#### *History/Culture*

HSD will invest in projects that promote, preserve and strengthen the history and culture of the two neighborhoods we serve. Examples of projects include historic exhibits at museums; installation of historical markers; art installations. It is possible projects identified in this category could overlap with other categories.

#### *Public Realm*

HSD will invest in projects that support activation, safety and engagement in the public sphere. We understand the public realm to be a critical investment for the residents, businesses and visitors to our communities, and moreover recognize that a failure to invest may lead to a degradation of the quality of life in the areas we serve. Examples of projects include activities that promote usage of area parks and plazas, implementation of prior planning processes.

#### *Emerging Opportunities*

We recognize that critical funding needs often arise outside of a recurring RFP process. We intend to launch an open application process, concurrent with the announcement of the first RFP, so that local organizations might have access to funding to allow them to take advantage of time-sensitive, critical opportunities. Applications must fit within one of the above categories and can ask for capital or program funding. In some cases, we may seek to make them recoverable grants, leading to a reinvestment of the funds to utilize for other organizations. Examples of potential projects include earnest money grants, emergency funding to assist in a merger or dislocation of a local nonprofit or group of small businesses. We intend to utilize the Community Review Panel to assist in evaluating any Emerging Opportunities applications as well.

We anticipate investing both capital and operational activities, so long as the proposed projects align with our Values and Guiding Principles.

## **RFP PROCESS**

### **RELEASE OF RFP – FALL 2018**

6-8-week proposal creation period (deadline will be published with the RFP)

RFPs submitted by email (acknowledgements sent; timestamps saved with each application)

### **PROVISION OF TECHNICAL SUPPORT**

- Access to HSD staff by email
- Open office hours in each neighborhood, weekly during open RFP period
- Access to translated materials and interpreter services
- Access (paid by HSD) to professional, independent technical assistance consultant to read proposals and make suggestions
- Project Examples

### **PROPOSAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS**

Community Review Panel (CRP)

- Stipends provided
- Membership (based on local connections and expertise in subject areas)
- Training (follow SJF training, training in HSD strategic plan and values, evaluation clearly set forth)
- Proposal Review Process

Board Review of Results

- Review for consistency with HSD Values, Strategic Plan, Grant Making Process
- Approval by slate as proposed by CRP
- Conflicts of Interest

Appeal process

- The appeal process will be available to any applicant, whether funded or not, to highlight diversions from the published HSD process. If any applicant feels HSD has failed to follow its defined process, they may send an appeal form to the Board President, c/o Historic South Downtown, 409B Maynard Ave. S., Seattle, WA 98104. The Board President shall consult with the Executive Committee and the Executive Director and respond to the appeal letter within 30 days. The funding awards are not subject to appeal.
- Applicants may also seek review of unsuccessful applications by the Executive Director, who will respond to their request within 5 business days.

### **GRANT CONTRACTING PROCESS & EVALUATIONS OF GRANT OUTCOMES**

- Metrics will be defined on a grant-by-grant basis. Applicants will be requested to define their outcomes, and contracts will be written to memorialize these as benchmarks. The contracting system will be similar to that employed by King County in Best Starts for Kids.

### **EVALUATION OF HSD GRANT MAKING PROCESS**

- After the conclusion of the first RFP process, the Grant Making Committee will evaluate the process, including review of any appeals received, the # of applicants/funded projects, the geographic spread of applicants/funded projects, the subject matter diversity of

applications/funded projects, and the amount of funding requested by applicants/committed to funded projects.

**ATTACHMENTS**

- Financial projection
- FY2018 Operations Budget
- Update on Jackson St. Hub project