

Hill-Snowdon Foundation's Democracy's Promise 20/21 Project

The idea of American democracy is based on noble principles of justice, equality, fairness, tolerance and respect for differences, liberty and prosperity. These principles are meant to be a compact between the residents of this country and our government, but America has seldom lived up to these principles. The past two and a half years under the Trump era has reminded us how ugly, destructive and terrifying America can be when it chooses to turn its back on its founding principles. However, it has also reminded us that the true promise of America's democracy is and always will be everyday people – often those pushed to margins – coming together in power to demand that the country live up to its' most noble ideas.

Given the current fear, anxiety, chaos, skyrocketing inequity and persistent threats to our democratic ideas and practice, it may not be hyperbolic to assert that the 2020 election cycle will be one of the most important elections in our lifetime. The next two years is also important because of the rare confluence of three key events for American democracy - the 2020 Presidential Election, the decennial Census and the beginning of the redistricting process across the country. These events represent a critical crossroads for our democracy that will define either a more hopeful or more desperate future for many of us.

To meet this critical crossroad, the Hill-Snowdon Foundation is developing a multi-faceted plan for 2020 to support our grassroots partners in their efforts to organize their constituents to fight for their right to thrive. As one component of this plan, HSF is launching the **Democracy's Promise 20/21 project**. **Democracy's Promise will infuse \$500,000 over two years into ten (10) current HSF grassroots partners doing strategic organizing and coalition work around the 2020 Census, the 2020 election cycle (e.g., local, state and/or federal), and/or redistricting; in addition to developing contingency plans for the aftermath of the 2020 election cycle. This is an invitation only process and we will select ten groups with the following characteristics:**

- *Current Hill-Snowdon Foundation grassroots partner (current as of May 2019)*
- *Has an established, active and effective civic engagement infrastructure and body of work.*
- *Priority will be given to organizations who have a plan carry out a specific civic engagement goal, focused on the Census, 2020 election cycle (local, state, federal), and/or redistricting, over the next two years. Examples of this could include:*
 - *Census: working to increase the undercount in historically low count areas/constituencies.*
 - *2020 Election Cycle: Voter registration, education and mobilization with important low turnout constituencies or areas; integrated voter engagement on local or statewide issue campaigns; voter protection work. *There is not a need to do work that is specifically related to the 2020 presidential election as we assume that local and statewide issue-based civic engagement will have an impact on turnout in all voter engagement efforts across the board.**
 - *Working to develop alternative community plans for redistricting particularly in areas that are at threat of severe racial gerrymandering.*

- *Are creating space to do “contingency planning” with their members and/or allies to be best prepared for navigating the aftermath of the 2020 Presidential election and its potential impact on local communities – positive or negative.*
- *Are in areas that have traditionally not received sufficient civic engagement funding and/or that represent a critical strategic opportunity around a specific civic engagement goal to reinvigorate democratic participation.*
- *Are led by under-represented populations including women of color, youth of color, immigrants, Native, LGBTQ and Southern communities.*

Process

HSF will provide a two year, multi-year grant of \$50,000 (\$25,000/year), in addition to HSF’s other grant, to a select cohort of current HSF partners. The selection process is by invitation only. The grant will begin in the fall/winter 2019 and run through fall/winter 2021. However, we expect to release grant funds in two installments – half before the end of 2019 and the remaining half before June 2020 – so that groups can have all the funds in advance of the most intense outreach periods.

We are running the Democracy’s Promise 20/21 project through the JustFund portal. JustFund is a new digital portal created by Solidaire Network and a group of funders, collaborative funds, and donor networks to build a common proposal model for philanthropy that makes applying for funding simple and straightforward for organizations.

1. If you have an existing account with JustFund, log in at www.justfund.us. If you've forgotten your password, you can click "I forgot my password" to receive a new password in your email. (go on to step 3)
2. Once you’ve logged in to your account, click “Create a New Proposal Draft” to begin your proposal or adapt an existing proposal. You may save your proposal and continue to edit it at your leisure, even after you submit the application.
3. Once you have completed the general proposal questions, click "Submit". Make sure to select **“Democracy’s Promise 20/21”** from the drop down menu, and supply the additional information specific to our fund.
4. When you have completed these steps, you will then select “Submit” once more to complete your official submission.
5. Once submitted, you will see that your proposal is "Live." This means that your proposal has been submitted to us and that it is also visible to other funders who are using the JustFund portal. It is possible you may receive funding from other sources before we determine our grantees each funding cycle. In addition, if you receive a Democracy’s Promise grant, our endorsement may be leveraged to help you secure additional funding. If you have questions about how to register or use JustFund, please email info@justfund.us.

The deadline for submissions is July 8th 2019. We may follow up to ask for additional information via email or teleconference. We expect to make final grant decisions and notify all applicants by mid-November 2019.

For questions about the Democracy’s Promise 20/21 Project, please email Erin Morris at emorris@hillsnowdon.org.

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Grant Application Questions

- A. What work are you seeking support for under the Democracy's Promise 20/21 Project? (List all that apply).
- 2020 Census
 - 2020 Election Cycle
 - Local
 - State
 - Federal
 - Redistricting
 - Contingency Planning for 2021
- B. Please include [or list] some high level outcomes of past civic engagement activities. If you've done Census turnout activities in the past, please list those as well.
- C. Please attach a list of the activities for which you are seeking support, including the following (*two page maximum*):
- Issue(s) your organization is addressing
 - Target constituency and/or areas
 - Strategies employed
 - Timetable of work over two years
 - Benchmarks and anticipated outcomes (e.g., increase voter turnout among unlikely voters by x%)
 - Partners/allies for this work
- D. Please attach a 2 year budget (2019-2021)
- E. Please attach a proposal written for another foundation for your 2020 Census or 2020 election cycle work.