

Community Foundation of Greater Des Moines Criteria for Community Foundation Leadership Involvement

The following criteria will be reviewed when significant issues are brought to the attention of Community Foundation Board and/or staff to gauge appropriateness, fit with mission and goal to build social capital, use of staff resources and “fit” for Community Foundation involvement. The Community Foundation president and vice president of donor relations and community investment will evaluate these community issues or projects to determine fit and will make recommendations for Community Foundation involvement to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.

SELECTION PROCESS

- 1. Fit with Community Foundation’s mission and goal of building community social capital**
 - a. Does the project offer significant potential positive impact in the community?
 - b. Is there a clear role for philanthropic involvement?
 - c. Does the issue/project fit well with other Community Foundation initiatives, convenings, etc.?
 - d. Will the initiative further the building of social capital and promote networks and connectivity?
 - e. Reasons to say no: Is the cause a clearly partisan one? Is it trendy or reactive?

- 2. Compelling Community Need/Impact**
 - a. Is the issue/project related to a compelling community need that is not being effectively addressed in other ways?
 - b. Are the potential benefits to the community clearly articulated?
 - c. Is there a reasonable potential for success/for concrete results?
 - d. Is the community **prepared** to work on the issue?

- 3. Actual or Likely Donor Involvement**
 - a. Is there a group of donors (or potential donors) **or community funders** that have expressed an interest in the issue?
 - b. Do we believe they would be willing to be involved and might commit additional philanthropic resources to an effort?

- 4. Can we do it well? (uniquely well?)**
 - a. Does the project build on our strengths/leverage our expertise, connections, stature?
 - b. Is there a contribution that we are uniquely positioned to make?
 - c. **Do we have the capacity to get involved?** If we do not have current capacity, can we obtain it readily and does it make sense to approach it this way? In this case, will it expand our strengths in a desirable way?
 - d. Is there another organization that could do this better?
 - e. Is the proposed role for Community Foundation an appropriate one? Can we stay neutral?

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

1. Integrity of Selection & Planning Process (note – some of these factors will have to be considered as detailed plans are developed)

- a. Are there donors who are interested in participating in design and providing financial support around the issue?
- b. Who is the visionary?
- c. Are others involved? What is the capacity, quality, caliber of these partners?
- d. Is there a plan spelling out how the objectives and community benefits will be achieved?
- e. Is the plan clear as to roles, responsibilities, timelines, decision-making authority and what is to be achieved?
- f. Are there adequate resources (funding, available staff and administrative support) for the project to be successful?
- g. When will Community Foundation's role end? Is there an exit plan?
- h. Is the effort sustainable: how will the project sustain itself once Community Foundation is no longer involved?

2. Risk versus Return

- a. Are our incentives financially driven or based in a benefit to the community?
- b. Do the rewards outweigh the risks?
- c. What will be the costs to Community Foundation in terms of hard dollars, soft dollars and opportunity costs?
- d. Is this a good investment of Community Foundation resources?
- e. Will the Community Foundation's visibility as a leader be increased?
- f. What is the likelihood of the outcome being successful?
- g. Is there clear time-frame for achieving project outcomes?
- h. Are outcomes measurable?
- i. Have others gone there before and failed? What is different now?