

CIRCLE for JUSTICE INNOVATIONS



Funding grassroots activism to radically transform the criminal *in*justice system since 2001.



Our Mission

- ▶ End Criminalization and Incarceration.
- ▶ Build and Strengthen the Infrastructure of the Grassroots Justice Movement.
- ▶ Fund where the movement is developing, shifting and growing.
- ▶ Uproot systems that harm and perpetuate injustice.
- ▶ Sow justice, healing, kinship, creativity, transformation and love.
- ▶ Support leadership by those impacted and directly by the injustices of the current system.
- ▶ Work in alliances across race, class, faith, gender, gender identity, sexuality, immigration status and age.

CJI: An Innovative Funding Model

- ▶ CJI's work helps broaden the philanthropic options available for criminal justice organizing by promoting a funding model that connects activists working on the ground directly to donors to co-create and promote change together.
- ▶ CJI:
 - ▶ Provides an alternative, progressive model for giving
 - ▶ Incubates new organizations and new donors
 - ▶ Nurtures seedling organizations that build community power and awareness from the bottom up
 - ▶ Has a circle structure that crosses class, race, culture, age, gender, sexual orientation, and experience with incarceration
 - ▶ Creates space for activists', donors' and donor activists to share power
 - ▶ Promotes transformational experiences and funding decisions
 - ▶ Encourages donors to include impacted voices in funding decisions outside of CJI

Who We Fund



Supporting emerging groups with movement-building strategies



Marginalized, constituency-led communities



Cutting edge work bringing new perspectives, voices, issues and approaches



Organizations that work in **coalitions, alliances, or collaborations**, instead of in isolation

What We Fund Including but not limited to:

- ▶ Organizing for systemic change in difficult environments, in the presence of state violence, and communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19
- ▶ Mobilization
- ▶ Education for action and to build awareness
- ▶ Movement building
- ▶ Advocacy
- ▶ Get out the vote efforts
 - ▶ Voter mobilization
 - ▶ Voter education
- ▶ Strategizing
- ▶ Implementation of policy changes
- ▶ Leadership development
- ▶ Promotion of restorative and transformational justice practices and policies

Requirements for CJI Funding



Formerly Incarcerated & Directly Impacted leadership

Including: children and families



Organizing for systemic change

Including: policy, institutions, 'other systems of control'



Marginalized communities

race, class, gender, location, incarceration experience



Movement building

alliances, membership-base, leadership development

CJI Funding Programs

- ▶ **Leadership Circle General Docket**
 - ▶ Addressing work on the front-end, through conditions of confinement, to perpetual punishment after release from prison
- ▶ **Starving the Beast**
 - ▶ For community-based harm reduction and drug arrest diversion programs
 - ▶ A collaboration with Open Society Foundations
- ▶ **Quest for Democracy**
 - ▶ To support organizations led by formerly-incarcerated people working on bail reform, civic engagement, voting re-enfranchisement, law enforcement accountability, and restoration of rights
 - ▶ A collaboration with the Formerly Incarcerated People & Families Movement
- ▶ **FreeHer Fund**
 - ▶ To support organizations led by incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women and girls and/or their families working to end the incarceration of women and girls
 - ▶ A collaboration with The National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls
- ▶ **Strategic Opportunity Support (SOS)**
 - ▶ Rapid Response Funding for unanticipated crises facing our communities

CJI Defines Movement Building as:

Ongoing collaboration, both within and across communities, intended to eradicate core systems of injustice and build power.



Collaborations may include those among grassroots or community organizations and/or between grassroots/ community organization, and people



Organizations working with transparency and integrity inside the institutions they seek to transform



Immigrants and Immigrant Communities

are being terrorized by:

- ▶ ICE Harassment
- ▶ Detention
- ▶ Deportation
- ▶ Family Separation
- ▶ Surveillance

Individuals' legal immigration status and entire communities' security are rescinded or threatened.

People of Color are Under Attack



The US Department of Justice has:

- ▶ abnegated its responsibility to protect our communities
- ▶ ended investigations of police misconduct and other types of discrimination
- ▶ ramped up efforts to criminalize, incarcerate and deport people from disenfranchised and marginalized groups
- ▶ ordered use of chemical agents during peaceful protests



LGBTQI People, *Especially Young Trans People*

- ▶ facing attempts to roll back their recognition and civil rights
- ▶ discrimination against them in the criminal legal system continues
- ▶ lack of protection from unbridled violence in their communities and in the prison system
- ▶ physical and sexual abuse by police

Economically Disadvantaged Communities

are over-policed for
“crimes” of survival
such as homelessness,
street vending, survival
sex work, and
addiction

Are kept in cells for
days, weeks, even
years because they are
unable to pay bail or
fines



Organizers and Activists Facing State Violence

- ▶ are targeted by multiple law enforcement agencies
- ▶ are labeled as “Black Identity Extremists” or “illegals”
- ▶ are criminalized, surveilled harassed, arrested, and deported in order to quash dissent and resistance
- ▶ organizers exercising their right to free speech and assembly are met with militarized responses such as tanks, rubber bullets, tear gas, pepper bombs, tasers and flash bangs



CJI 2020 Application Review

Circle for Justice Innovations (CJI)

The CJI team welcomes your questions and comments or questions. You can also contact Tina Reynolds, Director of Programs at tinar@cjifund.org.

