

## NEIGHBORHOOD SMALL GRANTS GUIDELINE REVIEW & FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **ORGANIZATION:**

Park Heights Renaissance, Inc. (PHR) is a 501(c) (3) organization whose mission is the revitalization of Baltimore's Park Heights community, which comprises 12 distinct neighborhoods and more than 35,000 residents. A young and dynamic organization, PHR is implementing a master plan for the community that includes housing development, commercial redevelopment, community capacity building and outreach, and human development.

### **PURPOSE:**

Park Heights Renaissance will offer small grants for programs and events to neighborhood associations and organizations within the Park Heights Community, which is bounded north and south by Park Circle and Northern Parkway and east and west by Greenspring and Wabash Avenues, respectively. The purpose of the Neighborhood Small Grants Program is to provide funding for programs which promote and address community health, public safety, neighborhood beautification and greening, sports and recreation, capacity building of neighborhood associations, and youth programming. **PHR reserves the right to pay a vendor directly.**

### **APPLICATION PROCESS & TIMELINE:**

- Applications may be downloaded from PHR's website – [BoldNewHeights.org](http://BoldNewHeights.org)
- Applicants must complete all portions of the Community Small Grant Application Form, and include a listing of members. Governmental organizations and religious activities are not eligible. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.
- All applications will be scored by the Community Small Grants Review Committee
- Application Timeline:
  - Begin distribution: Weds, January 4, 2017
  - Technical assistance meeting: Sat, January 28, 2017 @10am
  - **Application Deadline: Weds, February 8 (at 4:00 pm)**
  - Grant decisions announced / presented: Thurs, March 9<sup>th</sup> (in conjunction with the Resident Community Council Meeting)

### **REVIEW OF THE APPLICATION PROCESS**

- A. Grant proposals are evaluated by a Review Committee, which is appointed on an annual basis. The diverse membership of this committee will bring a variety of perspectives to the deliberations.

- B. The Review Committee will recommend finalists to the Board of Directors of Park Heights Renaissance, and the board announces its recommendations.
- C. Grants will be awarded based upon overall impact and appropriateness for funding. Those which address community cohesion, promote and address community health, public safety, neighborhood beautification and greening, sports and recreation, capacity building of neighborhood associations, and youth programming have a greater likelihood of being recommended for funding.
  - a. Applications are critiqued based upon:
    - i. **Clarity:** Are the project / event objectives clearly described? Is the budget and personnel adequate to accomplish event objectives?
    - ii. **Readiness:** Is the project ready to proceed and can objectives be accomplished in a realistic and timely manner?
    - iii. **Value:** Does the project benefit the community by engaging members? Can this event be duplicated in the future without significant financial assistance?
    - iv. **Commitment:** How does your project help make Park Heights a healthier more sustainable community?
- D. The Review Committee may recommend an increase or decrease as appropriate. Any recommended increases will not exceed the maximum of the grant award for that funding cycle.
- E. Due to the competitive nature of the process we are unable to guarantee funding.

#### **APPLICATION REVIEW COMMITTEE**

1. The Review Committee for the Neighborhood Small Grants program will meet each March.
2. The committee will be composed as follows:
  - a. One (1) representative, each, on behalf of
    - i. the Mayor of Baltimore
    - ii. the District 6 City Councilperson
    - iii. the Commissioner of Baltimore Housing & Community Development
  - b. One (1) at-large community representative residing in any of the twelve (12) neighborhoods as defined in the Park Heights Master Plan – Arlington, Central Park Heights, Cylburn, Greenspring, Langston Hughes, Levindale, Lucille Park, Park Circle, Park Lane, Pimlico Good Neighbor, Towanda/Grantley, Woodmere.
  - c. Three (3) members of the Community & Human Services Committee (of PHR’s Board of Directors)

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE GRANT PROGRAM:

### GRANT GUIDELINES & PROCESS

#### ***What are the conditions on the grants?***

Each grant applicant must have a representative:

1. Sign a “Grant Agreement” with Park heights Renaissance.
2. Attend the mandatory “Neighborhood Small Grants” technical assistance workshop to review program guidelines and receive grant award. If a representative is not available, the grant application or grant will be cancelled.
3. Send proof of depositing into the organization’s bank account within thirty (30) business days of receiving the check.
4. Credit on ALL promotional material should note **“Special Thanks to the Mayor, City Council of Baltimore and Park Heights Renaissance for helping to make this event possible.”** During the application technical workshop(s) a digital copy of PHR’s logo will be made available for use on promotional items.
5. Grant recipients will be asked to submit an event summary or final report along with an expense summary no later than four (4) weeks after the event(s).

#### ***If event or programmatic funding has been obtained from additional sources, should this information be included in the grant application?***

If an applicant has received funding from additional sources, this information should be provided for the question asking, “From where have you received or applied for additional funding to assist with this project?”

#### ***Will the current grant application process remain in place going forward?***

To ensure transparency and equity, the current process for submitting and reviewing Neighborhood Small Grants Applications was reviewed by a number of partners and staff. However, to better serve the Park Heights community, at the conclusion of this funding cycle, PHR will once again solicit feedback and review the each step of the process to see if there may be room for improvement.

### TECHNICAL SUPPORT

#### ***Can I get help with putting together a grant application?***

Assistance is available by calling or emailing Tony Bridges, [tbridges@phrmd.org](mailto:tbridges@phrmd.org). Please note, we cannot provide assistance in crafting, writing or typing grant applications. Assistance is limited to answering questions regarding the grant application or grant usage.

***Can an individual seek assistance or do you need to be a part of an organization?***

The Neighborhood Small Grants Program is intended to benefit organizations or groups providing a service to one or all of the 12 neighborhoods (Arlington, Central Park Heights, Cylburn, Greenspring, Langston Hughes, Levindale, Lucille Park, Park Circle, Park Lane, Pimlico Good Neighbor, Towanda/Grantley, Woodmere) that make up the Park Heights Community. Therefore, individuals are not eligible.

***Will PHR refer me or my organization to alternative funding sources?***

While PHR does not have the staff capacity to identify whether there are other opportunities for or which benefactors may have grants available, we will however, share any information we have at the time of the request.

***Will the PHR logo be made available for download?***

Yes, the PHR logo is available for download here: [ <http://BoldNewHeights.org/phr-logo> ]. Each grant recipient is expected to include PHR's logo on all event marketing material.

***Does PHR have a listing of organization's having received grant funds in the past and will this history be taken into consideration for the current application process??***

In some cases, an organization may have submitted an application for a previous grant program administered by PHR; however, as previously noted, if an applicant meets the eligibility criteria, the grant application will be judged on its merits.

If an organization was awarded a small neighborhood grant previously and did not meet all the requirements of the award (i.e., submit pictures, submit final report, etc.), they WILL NOT be awarded funding.

If an organization is a current Large Neighborhood Grant recipient through PHR, they are not eligible to receive funding through the Small Neighborhood Grant program.

***When funded events are held, will there be an "active" presence from PHR?***

PHR is committed to providing an opportunity for each funded grant applicant to ensure the success of their event and will make every opportunity to attend any event or program focused on bringing positive attention to the residents and neighborhoods of the Park Heights community – whether or not its funded through the Neighborhood Small Grants Program.

**BANK ACCOUNT(S)*****Can we send a voided check from a personal bank account or does it have to be under an organizations name when we submit the application?***

Any organization submitting a grant application must have a bank account in the organization's name.

***What is proof of an organizational bank account?***

An organization may provide a bank statement, no more than 45 days old, OR an account verification letter from their financial institution as proof of an organizational bank account. Regardless of which option is chosen, except for applications including information from a fiscal agent, the name on the bank account must match the name of the applicant.

**FISCAL AGENT*****If a program or organization has a non-profit “fiscal agent,” can the bank information from that agency be provided with the grant application?***

If an organization submitting a grant application uses a “fiscal agent” to manage their finances, a letter from the organization with a copy of their 501(c)(3) status and a bank statement (no more than 45 days old) or letter of account verification from the financial institution may be submitted.

***Will PHR recommend a “fiscal agent” if my organization is in need of this type of assistance?***

While PHR does not have the staff capacity to identify whether there are organization’s wishing to be fiscal agents, we may, however, provide guidance for what type of entity might be willing to assist in this manner.

**FUNDING AVAILABILITY, ELIGIBILITY & USAGE*****When will we receive the funds?***

After an organization receives notification their grant application has been funded on Thursday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, PHR will notify the point of contact of the anticipated date and time of the funding will be released. Not all funded partners will receive funding at the same time.

***Is \$3,500 the maximum per organization or per event?***

As noted in the grant application guidelines, eligible applicants (i.e., organizations) may apply for up to \$3,500 based upon availability during the annual funding cycle.

***What is the total amount available for a grant?***

As noted in the grant application guidelines, eligible applicants (i.e., organizations) may apply for up to \$3,500 based upon availability during the annual funding cycle.

***What type of items will NOT receive grant funding?***

- Ongoing organizational general or operational support – including but not limited to salaries, stipends, insurance, computer equipment, or legal costs.

- Costs which may be incurred in preparing the grant application
- Funds going directly to or for the benefit of specific individuals or religious services or programs (i.e., any event or program having religious meaning or significance).
- Current organizational debts or loans.
- Capital improvements, such as any real property enhancements, renovations or structural improvements which increases the overall value of real estate, adapts it to new uses, or extends its life.
- Items intended for resale or profit making ventures.

***Will PHR fund groups outside of the Park Heights Community that will host an event or project to benefit the community?***

PHR honors the importance of the many small organizations and neighborhood associations which help meet the needs of residents within the contiguous communities of Park Heights. Any non-sectarian, non-government organization residing in one of the 12 Park Heights neighborhoods – Arlington, Central Park Heights, Cylburn, Greenspring, Langston Hughes, Levindale, Lucille Park, Park Circle, Park Lane, Pimlico Good Neighbor, Towanda/Grantley, Woodmere – is eligible to apply for grant funding. Likewise, the intended activities must take place in one of the Park Heights neighborhoods.

***My organization does not have a non-profit status. Can we still apply?***

If an organization provides proof of having met at least 4 times within a 12-month period, has at least ten members, and a bank account in the organization's name, yes, the organization is eligible to submit a grant application.

***Are for-profit entities eligible to submit a grant application?***

If a for-profit entity provides a certificate of good standing with the State of Maryland, has a bank account in the entity's name, and wishes to submit an application for a community-based program, beautification project, community or similar event in which no profit-making potential exists, yes, an application may be submitted.

***How much will the grant application from a "for profit" entity be scrutinized?***

Each grant application will be reviewed on its merits and as previously noted, as long as an grant application abides by the conditions and requirements of the Neighborhood Small Grants Program, the submitting group is eligible to be considered for funding.

***Is funding available for renovation to a building that houses an organization?***

Home or building renovations are outside of the scope of this grant as it is more in line with personal funding and, therefore, would not be eligible.

***Will the funds for the event / program be held until the grantee needs them or will they be distributed at the time of the award?***

After an organization receives notification their grant application has been funded, PHR will notify the point of contact of the anticipated date and time of the funding will be released. Not all funded partners will receive funding at the same time.

***Are there time restraints (i.e., time of year) regarding when the grant funds can be spent?***

After an organization receives notification of their grant application having been successfully funded, it is PHR's expectation that the funded amount will be obligated prior to June 30, 2017. All supporting documentation for grants approved must be submitted to PHR by July 15, 2017 or no later than four (4) weeks after the event, whichever comes first.

***Does the organization need to provide proof of having met at least four (4) times?***

In the case an organization is relatively new and wishes to ensure the Grants Review Committee is aware of their "active" status, the submitting organization is encouraged to provide random fliers and / or attendance sheets from meetings held within the previous 12 months.

***Can we apply for funding for more than one event for this year?***

To ensure all organizations have an opportunity to seek grant funds, all organizations are asked to limit their request to one event or program per grant application. If, however, funds remain after the Grants Review Committee has reviewed all grant applications and awarded grant funds, an organization may choose to submit an additional grant application.

***Can my organization submit multiple grant applications?***

While organizations are asked to limit their requests to one event or program per grant application, multiple applications may be submitted. In the case of multiple grant applications from an organization, if the applications have not been prioritized, the Grants Review Committee will determine which application to review for initial consideration and should grant funds remain after all initial applications have been considered, the Review Committee may review any additional grant applications.

***What documentation is needed for an event or program held on City property (i.e., schools, vacant lot, etc.)?***

Final approval for any grant is contingent upon proof of permission to hold an event or program on City owned property. PHR needs proof that you have received a right of entry for the property.

***Are multiple organizations eligible to apply for the maximum amount for the same event?***

PHR works to promote the collaboration of many organizations and neighborhood associations. As a result, it is understood several organizations may seek funding for festivals or other programs involving multiple community partners and vendors. In such cases, each grant application will be reviewed on its own merits and the Grant Review Committee may choose to fully or partially fund

a proposed program and provide a recommendation each group seek additional partnership opportunities from other grant recipients or community partners.

## **FUNDING DECISION(S)**

### ***Are multi-day events eligible for funding?***

If a submitted grant application is for non-consecutive multi-day events, it should be associated with an organizational program such as a summer camp, after / out of school time program or themed program (e.g., Project PAYE, Project Engage, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, etc.).

### ***Will grant dollars be distributed equally among the neighborhoods that apply?***

All grant applications will be reviewed on their merits and some applications may receive larger shares than others, based on the merits and programming information provided.

### ***Is there a chance my grant application will only be partially funded?***

Yes. The Grant Review Committee may choose to partially fund a proposed program. Such a determination may be related to total funds available, or if it the activities are possible to carry on with funding less than the total requested, or if a particular budget item can be funded through alternative sources.

### ***If a grant application is not fully funded are there discretionary funds available for consideration?***

As previously noted, the Grant Review Committee may choose to partially fund a proposed program. To date, the only funds available (via PHR) for community groups and partners are through the Neighborhood Small Grants Program and to ensure transparency and equity in funding decision, PHR has committed to allocate funding in accordance with the Grant Review Committee.

### ***Will grant applications with similar events and programs be linked together?***

Each grant applications will be reviewed on its merits and some applications may receive larger shares than others, based on the merits and programming information provided. If, however, the review panel reaches a determination that multiple grant applications are identical, the committee will have the ability to determine whether which of the grants are eligible for full, partial or no funding.

### ***Will PHR mandate partnerships for organizations receiving grant funds?***

While each grant application will be reviewed on its merits if the review panel determines multiple grant applicants have submitted for events similar in intent and timeframe, the committee will have the ability to partially fund each group with a recommendation of seeking additional partnership opportunities from other grant recipients or community partners.

***If I host an event before funds are presented will I be able to be reimbursed for any funds paid out of pocket?***

If the grant application of an organization has been approved, yes, the organization is eligible to be reimbursed up to the full amount of the grant award, provided original receipts and an event summary or final report has been provided as required.

**GRANT SUBMISSION**

***Can additional pages be added to my grant application?***

If an organization has exhausted all available space when responding to a part of a grant application, an additional page may be added to ensure a full response. In all cases, there shall be no more than ONE additional page per grant application.

***What font and font size should be used for the additional?***

If an organization includes an additional page with their grant application it should be typed in 12pt Times Roman or Times New Roman.

***May grant applications be handwritten?***

If an applicant is unable to complete a typewritten grant application, a legibly printed and readable application may be submitted.

***Can grant applications be dropped off at the PHR offices?***

If an organization prefers not to email or mail an application, yes, the grant application may be dropped off at the offices of Park Heights Renaissance, 3939 Reisterstown Road, Suite 268 Baltimore, MD.

***If I choose to drop off my grant application, will I receive an acknowledgement or receipt it has been dropped off?***

Once the grant application has been received from an organization, a written acknowledgement will be provided via email or in-person.

***Where do I mail or email my grant application?***

Applications are due Wednesday, February 8<sup>th</sup> (at 4:00 pm).

Grant applications can be sent via US Postal mail to:

Park Heights Renaissance  
ATTN: Neighborhood Small Grants Program  
3939 Reisterstown Road, Suite 268  
Baltimore, MD 21215

OR grant applications can be sent via email, to:  
info@phrmd.org