

SMALL GRANT APPLICATION: Project Support

INTRODUCTION

The Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation began a new Small Grants Process in 2009. This process applies to grant applicants requesting up to \$35,000 per year for up to 2 years. The purpose of this process is to ensure that nonprofits receiving relatively smaller grants do not expend disproportionate effort and resources applying for a grant relative to the funding that they receive.

The Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation values the immense contributions made by small and grassroots organizations in North Carolina, often on very limited budgets. It is our hope that this process enables organizations to improve the lives of North Carolinians and to interact with the Foundation as partners in a more productive way.

In this application, you will be asked to provide:

- 1) Basic information about your organization
- 2) Amount you are requesting
- 3) Financial information including budgets (both actual and projected)

To describe your organization's work, you will be asked to complete a template listing:

- 1) Up to THREE project RESULTS
- 2) ACTIVITIES performed by your organization to achieve those results
- 3) INDICATORS of your progress and success on those results

At the end of the application, you will have up to 400 words to add any information you have not had the chance to include. Z. SMITH REYNOLDS FOUNDATION, INC.

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

Name of Organization:

(Exactly as it appears on your federal tax-exemption certification under section 501(c)3 of the IRS code)

AKA: North Carolina Open Government Coalition

Mailing address: Campus Box 2850, Elon University

County: Alamance

Website: <http://www.elon.edu/e-web/academics/communications/ncopengov/>

Telephone: (336)278-5506

Fax: (336) 278-5734

Chief Executive Officer (CEO): Title: Rick Willis

CEO Telephone: (919) 882-4020

CEO Email Address: rick.willis@news14.com

Date of Incorporation: November 4, 2003 State of Incorporation: North Carolina

Federal ID#: 01-0808430 Fiscal year: Mary 31, 2011

Contact person to whom all communication regarding this application should be directed:

Name: Title: Rick Willis

Mailing Address (if different from above):

Primary Contact Cell Phone:

Primary Contact E-mail:

Is your organization's primary location out of state?

List the physical address of your organization's primary NC office:

Mission: Please state your organization's mission. (150 word limit)

The North Carolina Open Government Coalition unites organizations interested in ensuring and enhancing the public's access to government activity, records and meetings. The nonpartisan coalition will educate people about their rights and support their efforts to gain access, and advocate the principles and benefits of open government. Democracy functions best when citizens know what government is doing; this requires access both to public records and to the public decision-making process. The people have an unalienable right of participation in and access to the governments that they have instituted among themselves. Our goal is to make the public aware of their legal rights and civic responsibilities and work to help information holders to understand and effectively administer existing open meetings and public records laws, and err on the side of more openness, access and inclusion when matters of interpretation arise.

List your organization status. For example, public charity-and organization described in section 509(a)(1), (2), or (3).

Charitable corporation

Is your organization a supporting organization? No.

If so, choose the type of organization.

Z. SMITH REYNOLDS FOUNDATION, INC.

STAFF AND GOVERNING BOARD

Number of Staff Members: Total (Part-time: 4 Full-time: 0)

(If governmental unit or college/university, list only staff related to the project)

Total Number of Members on Governing Board: 16

Please indicate the **number**:

Male: 10

Female: 6

White/Caucasian: 15

Non-White/Non-Caucasian: 1

Please indicate the **percentage**:

Male: 62.5%

Female: 37.5%

White/Caucasian: 94%

Non-White/Non-Caucasian: 6%

What is the demographic composition of the geographic area in which the work for which you seek funds will be performed? (Note: As a source, ZSR recommends U.S. Census Quickfacts at <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/37000.html>)

Please enter the **percentage** as a numerical value (between 0 to 100) of each race or ethnic group listed below so that the total equals 100:

African-American: 21.6

Hispanic/Latino: 7.7

Native American: 1.3

White/Caucasian: 66.8

Other: 3.4

Total Non-White/Non-Caucasian (from above): 33.2

The Foundation actively seeks to promote access, equity, and inclusiveness and to discourage discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and other factors that deny the essential humanity of all people. If the racial and/or gender make up of your organization's Board is not representative of the demographics in the area served, please explain if and how the organization plans to address this circumstance. (150 word limit) Z. SMITH REYNOLDS FOUNDATION, INC.

The N.C. Open Government Coalition formed in 2004 as a broad alliance of groups to promote public access to government records, meetings and activities. Our goal to better reflect the demographics of our state and the people we serve is a two-pronged approach. Ethnic minority members currently account for six percent of the board membership. We are anxious to improve that number and have been active in recruiting more diverse board members. Thirty-seven percent of our board membership is female. The board leadership and members are also focused on having our demographics reflect efforts toward coalition-building. To that end, we recently recruited Cary's Town Clerk to our board. She brings the perspective of government employees charged with providing public access to records and meetings. Through diversity of race, sex and occupation; our board aims to raise public awareness of the importance of open government.

REQUEST

Short project title (20 word limit): Moving toward Sustainability for Educating the state of North Carolina on open government issues

Projection description (250 word limit): We are seeking funds to strengthen our workshops and create more tools for use in middle school classes. We plan for statewide outreach through marketing of our citizen hotline, development of a polished and up-to-date workshop on North Carolina open government laws and creation of curriculum and community education materials.

We would like to create a workshop series to offer across the state. We have good success with several initial collaborations, such as our lectures on open government with the Chuck Stone Program for Diversity in Education and Media and the high school multimedia lesson plan on open government for the North Carolina Council for the Social Studies teachers. We are also working in conjunction with the N.C. Scholastic Media Association (NCSMA), a statewide organization that promotes excellence in high school journalism. In the fall, UNC-Asheville was the site for a NCSMA workshop, where the N. C. Open Government contributed to that program and we held our own afternoon workshop, which was open to the public. We are planning a similar arrangement for fall 2011 in Greenville. Our goal is to use this format to move our workshops around the state.

We already created a high school DVD that is streaming on our website and a lesson plan we provided for the NC Social Studies teachers group. We would like to expand on this effort with the hopes of including a section on open government in the N.C. history and civics textbooks and creating a middle school interactive DVD.

Has your organization ever received funding through the Small Grants Process*?

No

Your organization is eligible to apply for either a one-year or a two-year grant for up to \$35,000 *each year* (\$70,000 total maximum per application) through this process. If you wish to apply for a larger grant, you should complete the strategic grant application.

Amount requested: \$ 60,000

Year 1: \$ 30,000

Year 2: \$ 30,000

Total amount of budget expenses: We currently spend \$25,000 a year on programming and would have new direct costs associated with the creation of the useful education materials and the increased workshops across the state.

Duration of grant (number of months): 24 months

Period for which funds are being requested (grants cannot be used to cover expenses incurred prior to the grant award date): April 1, 2011-March 31, 2013.

Region of state in which your organization is located: Central North Carolina but we serve the whole state.

Geographic area in which work will take place: Across the state.

If single-county or multi-county, please list the county or counties in which your organization will work (99 word limit): Z. SMITH REYNOLDS FOUNDATION, INC.

In the following section, you will describe:

Your project RESULTS (what the organization hopes to achieve to improve lives, ensure justice, advocate for better public policies, conserve the environment, etc.).

You may describe up to THREE project RESULTS. You do not need to enter text in each box-only use as many boxes as needed.

Because you are limited by space and the number of boxes, please emphasize your most significant desired RESULTS, indicators of SUCCESS, and ACTIVITIES to achieve each result. Z. SMITH REYNOLDS FOUNDATION, INC.

Our overarching goal is to educate the public about open government. To achieve this, with have several results, indicators of success and activities.

- 1) Result: Create more understanding of open government among high school journalism and civics classes

Indicator of success: Students will be able to articulate the basic legal protections for open meetings and laws in NC. We can use the poll and the age question as a way to measure young people's awareness of open government.

[Our past work for education has been used in the classroom. The executive director and assistant director of the Sunshine Center, joined by a third Elon faculty member and a Cummings High School educator, led a session at the 2008 statewide N.C. Social Studies Council Conference in Greensboro. The session introduced high school educators from across North Carolina to the Sunshine Center's educational DVD and covered developments and insights about open government education and issues. We can use this connection to distribute our new classroom materials.](#)

Activities: Create an interactive DVD that works with the NC course of instruction for use [in middle](#) school classes

Activity: Continue high school outreach with the North Carolina Scholastic Press Association

- 2) Result: Be an ally in the state for those facing problems with access

Indicator of success: Follow up calls to those requesting our assistance show our success rate for solving their issues is around 90%.

Activity: Continue our staff efforts to resolve real world issues posed to us on the phone hotline by North Carolina citizens. Increase awareness of the hotline among citizens with a new marketing campaign.

3) Promote Sunshine issues throughout the state

Indicator: Awareness of public records and open meeting laws as assessed yearly through the Elon poll

Activity: [Expand our workshop efforts to 6 fall workshops throughout the state, in partnership with the N.C. Scholastic Media Association.](#)

Partner with annual politics, media and civic responsibility conference at Elon University.

Create our own information sheets on open government and pass out at our events and other state functions.

Result

Result #1

Who or what will change if the project is successful? In what way will they/it be different? Results should be achievable within four years. (60 word limit)

Activities

Result #1

Activities to achieve the result (up to three) activities during the grant period that are expected to lead to progress on result #1. Please be as specific as possible. (80 word limit per activity)

Indicators

Result #1

Indicators of success (up to two) explain how you will know you have achieved or made progress on result #1. Indicators show that you achieved or made progress on this result, not that you completed the activities you will describe below. (80 word limit per indicator)

Result Activity #1B

Result Indicator #1B

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Have your organization's finances been professionally audited in the past three years?

Yes

If Yes: During the past three years, if you received any management letters or audit exceptions prepared by the auditor, please upload a copy of the letters as well as the responses.

How do you plan to sustain the project financially in the future? Include in your answer current funders, methods of attracting new contributors, alternative sources of earned income and any ways in which you might reduce costs. (150 word limit)

We have been raising organization funds for an endowment that will move us toward sustainability. These funds will allow us to continue our work in the state in the future. Now we would like to create some signature communications pieces to use in community and school education efforts and expand our statewide education efforts.

Once we have created the high end interactive DVD, we will have already paid for the design template. We will ensure that the production team creates a template that can be updated with changes in the law. This way we can use our own operating expenses to update the DVD as needed. With increased bandwidth, future copies might be posted online for free rather than in a DVD format. However, with the limited computers in many NC classrooms, we feel that this version needs to be distributed on DVDs to the classroom.

Does your organization have Skype videoconferencing capacity? *Skype, a free videoconferencing tool, requires a high speed internet connection and a web camera; full system requirements are available at: <http://www.skype.com/download/skype>.

They ask if you have any more information so we could say this here.

A generous 2006 grant from Z Smith Reynolds several years ago provided necessary operating expenses for our organization to begin work to educate citizens in the state about open government and to offer assistance to community members seeking help in getting access to information. During the three year period since we received funding from Z. Smith Reynolds, awareness of open government among North Carolina citizens as tracked by the Elon Poll each year has gone from 21% of adults to 46% of adults, a dramatic increase. Even with this significant progress, we are focused on the remaining 54% citizens and the important role they play in the democratic health of our state. This small grant would allow us to deepen and continue these education efforts.

Brooke Barnett 2/1/11 10:20 PM

Deleted: