AIDS United’s mission is to end the AIDS epidemic within the United States. We seek to fulfill our mission through strategic grant making, capacity building, and research. For more than two decades, we have supported community-driven responses to the HIV epidemic around the country that reach the nation’s most disproportionately affected populations, including gay and bisexual men, transgender women, communities of color, people living in the deep South, people struggling with substance use and people living with HIV/AIDS. To date, our strategic grant making initiatives have directly funded more than $104 million to local communities, and have leveraged more than $117 million in additional investments for programs that include syringe access, access to care, capacity building, HIV prevention, positive leadership, and advocacy. (www.aidsunited.org)

AIDS United, with funding from Gilead Sciences, Inc., is pleased to announce the opportunity for grant support through the **Positive Organizing Project (POP)**. The goal of this initiative is to increase grassroots mobilization and engagement among people living with HIV within service delivery systems that will directly impact stigma, improve the policy and community environment for inclusive and effective HIV programs, and indirectly improve outcomes along the continuum of care.

AIDS United will support projects via two tracks, both of which are built on meaningful involvement of people living with HIV (MIPA):

1) Building a MIPA-driven Organization: projects focused on concrete activities to strengthen the organizational practices and that operationalize MIPA values at the organizational level.

2) MIPA-driven Grassroots Projects: projects focused on specific grassroots activities that involve the leadership of people living with HIV.

AIDS United expects to award grants through this grant making initiative by October 1, 2017. Grant awards will range between $20,000 and $40,000. This funding will cover a project implementation period of 8 months. **Applications are due no later than 5:00 PM Eastern Time on Monday, August 14, 2017.** Applications submitted after that time will NOT be accepted. All applications must be submitted electronically via AIDS United’s online application system.

The US People Living with HIV Caucus (HIV Caucus) will partner with AIDS United on development of this initiative, selection of grantees, and provision of technical assistance. The HIV Caucus is a group of organizations, coalitions, networks, client groups, and individuals with HIV who advocate for people with HIV in the U.S. Formed in January 2011, the HIV Caucus includes diverse and accountable representation of people living with HIV from throughout the United States and seeks to speak with a unified voice for people living with HIV in the U.S. At present the HIV Caucus is an unincorporated association of interested parties and does not have a corporate non-profit status. (www.hivcaucus.org)
STATEMENT OF NEED

In the thirty-six years since the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported the first cases of what would later be defined as HIV, biomedical interventions and access to quality care have transformed HIV from a once-fatal disease to a chronic manageable condition. This progress would not have been possible without the advocacy and leadership of people living with HIV who were the driving force behind pushing for HIV cure and treatment research with urgency.

The people living with HIV self-empowerment movement began when an advisory committee of people living with AIDS convened in Denver, Colorado in 1983 and drafted the Denver Principles. These principles of “Nothing about us without us” laid the foundation for the concept of Meaningful Involvement of People Living with HIV/AIDS (MIPA).

What is the Meaningful Involvement of People Living with HIV (MIPA)?

At its most basic, MIPA is the meaningful involvement of people living with HIV in the development, implementation, resolution and evaluation of programs and policies which impact their lives. MIPA assumes that:

- People living with HIV are subject matter experts in the issues that they face and have the right to participate in decision-making processes about issues that affect their lives;
- Those most affected by issues are integral to identifying sustainable solutions to address them;
- People living with HIV who are involved must be reflective of the local community affected by HIV; and
- Efforts to ensure involvement should emphasize populations often ignored or excluded from decision-making.

MIPA does not assume that all people living with HIV can be represented by a single person, or that perspectives are race and gender-neutral. Because disclosure of HIV status can be dangerous, MIPA also does not require disclosure of HIV status for participation.

MIPA is more than tokenistic representation and participation.

True meaningful involvement requires that people living with HIV understand their role at the table, have a decision-making voice (including the capacity to say no without repercussions), and are resourced appropriately to participate. Efforts should be made to ensure that all people living with HIV affected by a decision can participate in making that decision, including addressing accessibility concerns. Thus, MIPA builds in the processes necessary for effective and productive coalitions of people living with HIV.

AIDS United’s Positive Organizing Project (POP) is designed to revitalize a grassroots organizing movement among people living with HIV that reduces HIV-related stigma, raises education and awareness among policy makers, and indirectly improves outcomes along the continuum of care with a strong focus on ensuring MIPA at all levels of the project. The program supports local organizing efforts to address stigma and engagement in care. This is accomplished by (1) revitalizing the grassroots mobilization of people living with HIV in local communities, and (2) ensuring synergistic efforts that help us document models that are effective in achieving organizing goals and can be shared and scaled elsewhere.
AIDS United believes that realizing the true potential of this moment in the HIV epidemic will require partnership with a revitalized grassroots movement of people living with HIV. People living with HIV have a critical role to play in combating stigma, serving as role models for disclosure and engagement in care, working to decriminalize HIV, and leading advocacy activities by—and for—people living with HIV, towards policy and programmatic solutions.

For additional information on MIPA, download the factsheet jointly developed by AIDS United and The US People Living with HIV Caucus: Meaningful Involvement of People with HIV/AIDS (MIPA).

**WHO MAY APPLY?**

Regional, community and faith-based organizations, including but not limited to AIDS service organizations, Federally Qualified Health Centers, and/or established networks of people living with HIV are invited to apply as long as they meet the following eligibility requirements:

- **Documented Non-Profit Status** – Applicants must be non-profit, tax-exempt organizations, per the guidelines set forth by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) with proper 501(c)3 status. Appropriate verification of this federal status will be undertaken by AIDS United before final grant decisions are made. Only organizations located in the United States, Puerto Rico, or the Virgin Islands may apply. Organizations that do not hold 501(c)3 status must have an already established relationship with a fiscal sponsor, holding such status, in order to apply.

- **Organizational Viability** – Organizations should be viable with or without the grant. These funds are not intended to provide general support, help start new organizations or serve as a replacement for discontinued funding.

**CONTENT AREAS TO ADDRESS**

Applicants may propose projects that address any of the following:

**Community issues:**

**HIV-related stigma** is prejudice against people and populations based on perceived HIV sero-positive status. This prejudice may be institutionalized through policies, such as HIV criminalization, or enacted at the individual or community level. Applicants may propose addressing HIV-related stigma through institutional, community-level, or individual interventions, including policy change.

**Building capacity for people living with HIV involvement in state-level advocacy.** There is a need to build capacity among people living with HIV to meaningfully participate in and lead state-level advocacy efforts. Applicants may propose projects that support and enhance participation of people living with HIV in state level advocacy and policy work.

**Organizational and community issues:**

**Structural barriers to MIPA** may derive from complex historical and current processes that intersect with stigma and oppression related to race, gender, gender expression and identity, sexual orientation, class, opportunities for formal education, mental illness, HIV status, and more. Applicants may propose organizational and institutional interventions to reduce these barriers, including addressing
organizational policies that may reduce participation by disproportionately affected communities in decision making roles.

**Leadership development** is a central tenet of MIPA. At the organizational level, this could include processes that prepare people living with HIV to participate at the board level, to apply for jobs with the organization, develop an active and engaged advisory board, and to organize networks of people living with HIV to address local and regional challenges.

**Organizational culture** can affect participation by people living with HIV, especially for people of color and people of trans experience. Applicants may propose initiatives to improve organizational culture. Such efforts should be developed and led by people from the affected communities, and proposals should have clearly articulated problems along with potential solutions.

### EXPECTED GOALS & OUTCOMES, PRIORITIES & MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

All applicants must demonstrate how their proposed project will help achieve increased grassroots mobilization of people living with HIV, identify and develop leaders living with HIV or increase organizational meaningful involvement of people living with HIV.

- **Grassroots mobilization** should include people living with HIV in the identification of the challenge and in the planned response. This could include local, state, or national advocacy campaigns led by people living with HIV to address HIV issues.

- **Developing leaders living with HIV** could include identifying a cohort of people living with HIV, supporting them as they identify skills sets, seek training opportunities and continue to develop their leadership. This might result in seats on planning councils, community boards of directors, staff positions, or elected office.

- **Meaningful Involvement of people living with HIV at the organizational level** requires that people living with HIV understand their role at the table, have a decision-making voice (including the capacity to say no without repercussions), and are resourced appropriately to participate. This may include an organizational commitment to mentor board members living with HIV, ensure internships or staff positions for people living with HIV or to create a Community Advisory Board (CAB) with measurable organizational impact.

In all of the areas, efforts should be made to ensure that all people living with HIV who are affected by a decision can participate in making that decision, including addressing accessibility concerns. Thus, MIPA builds in the processes necessary for effective and productive coalitions of people living with HIV.

People living with HIV should be involved in the grant development and application. This grant is very specific to developing leaders living with HIV or supporting people living with HIV in mobilization. Successful applicants will discuss the current state of involvement of people living with HIV and identify the impact this grant will have on that engagement.

Funding is available for two different types of projects; both are intended to increase meaningful involvement of communities affected by HIV.

1. **Building a MIPA-driven Organization**: projects addressing organizational and institutional barriers to meaningful involvement, focusing on concrete activities to strengthen the organizational practices and operationalize MIPA values at the organizational level. Examples of this may include developing
an organizational plan to increase leadership of people living with HIV on staff or the board of
directors in clear and concrete ways, or to create decision-making mechanisms that meaningfully
integrate input and direction from people living with HIV into the organization.

2. **MIPA-driven Grassroots Projects**: Building capacity for people living with HIV to be involved in policy
and advocacy change. Projects focused on specific grassroots activities that are led by people living
with HIV. Examples of this may include creating an anti-stigma education campaign, mobilizing and
community organizing, and direct advocacy.

For consideration, both project types will need to have a clearly defined event or activity with measurable
outcomes demonstrating objectives and outreach to members of the HIV community.

Priority will be given to applicants that can provide clear plans and demonstrated capacity to ensure that
people living with HIV who are reflective of the communities affected are involved in developing and leading
efforts to combat stigma, improving the policy or legal environment, and/or ensuring effective programs.

Tips for applications:

- Include a discussion of the key populations affected by HIV in your community, and describe how
  your proposed project addresses them.
- Describe the HIV epidemic in your target region including prevalence of HIV, and socio-economic
disparities faced by people living with HIV.
- Describe how people living with HIV and populations disproportionately affected by HIV in your
  community are currently involved in your organization.
- Communicate why your proposed project is timely.
- Explain why the applicant is well-positioned to address these issues.
- Describe the impact you propose to have on the local HIV response.
- Include clear plans to achieve measurable and specific goals.
- Applications are **REQUIRED** to include budget lines (in the budget template provided) for travel to
  AIDSWatch 2018 for at least one person living with HIV working on the project.

- Include outcomes that describe how you propose to shift meaningful involvement. Examples of
  metrics may include:
  - Increases to the number of people living with HIV engaged in advocacy;
  - Increase in leaders living with HIV who are involved in your organization; and/or
  - Changes in bylaws that increase opportunities for people living with HIV to apply for staffing
    positions or board membership.

If you have received a POP grant in years past, please explain in detail what your grant addressed,
deliverables achieved, deliverables not achieved, and lessons learned. If this grant will support continuation
of work from past years or take your program in newly identified directions, please describe. This should
include analysis from the leaders living with HIV.

Applicants must demonstrate the capability to engage a minimum of 100 people living with HIV in your
efforts, especially those reflective of key communities who are engaged and/or poised to play a leadership
role in implementation.
**TIMELINE**

*The following outlines key benchmarks for the initiative:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 14, 2017</td>
<td>Requests for Proposals released</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July 26, 2017</td>
<td>Application technical assistance/content webinar</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 14, 2017</td>
<td>Complete applications due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 18, 2017</td>
<td>Approved applicants will be notified of funding decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 20, 2017</td>
<td>Negotiation of final targets and execution of grant agreements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 1, 2017</td>
<td>Grant period begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 6, 2017</td>
<td>Grantee orientation webinar with AIDS United &amp; the HIV Caucus</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 2018</td>
<td>Two-day grantee convening in Washington, DC*</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2018</td>
<td>Mid-project Progress Monitoring Call</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 2018</td>
<td>AIDSWatch <em>(End of March Dates TBD)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 15, 2018</td>
<td>Program activities concluded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 30, 2018</td>
<td>Grant period ends and final progress report due</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*All grantees are required to have a program lead (who is a person living with HIV) attend the January convening in Washington, DC.*

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**GRANT AMOUNTS AND PROHIBITED USE OF FUNDS**

Applicants should only apply for necessary funding up to $40,000. As with any funding opportunity, grant requests may not be approved for the full amount. Awards will range between $20,000 and $40,000. **Because the maximum grant period is eight months, applicants are required to submit a detailed project budget.**

Grant funds may **not** be used for:

- Direct services;
- Direct or grassroots lobbying;
- Expenses not directly related to the proposed project;
- Medications or medical care;
- Facility acquisition or renovation;
- Deficit reduction or debt payment;
- Displacement of existing funding sources;
- Indirect expenses over 15%; or
- Program or organizational development

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**GRANTEE SELECTION**

AIDS United will conduct a competitive selection process that will include a committee of qualified reviewers, the majority of whom shall be people living with HIV. AIDS United has a strict conflict of interest and confidentiality policy. Reviewers will be asked to report any conflicts of interest before they are provided with any applicant materials. If there are no conflicts of interest, or if those conflicts can be addressed by simple recusal from a specific applicant review; and if reviewers agree and sign to the policy for maintaining confidentiality of materials received, then the reviewers are provided with relevant applicant materials. If the conflicts of interest cannot be addressed, then the reviewer is respectfully removed from the committee.
Reviewers are provided with a review score sheet template to guide their evaluation of the proposals to which they have been assigned. The reviewers’ task is to evaluate the merit of the proposed projects based on the goals outlined in this Request for Proposals document and delineated in the review score-sheet template. Reviewers will assess the quality of numerous factors in the proposed project. The score sheet will provide a starting point and guidance for discussion. Detailed notes assessing the quality of the proposal will be used to make the final recommendation to the committee about whether to Fund, Not Fund, or Discuss.

Reviewers will score applications according to the points allocated to each question. For the point values associated with each question and attachment, refer to the Application Instructions.

*Application instructions are provided on the following pages.*
APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Completed proposals are due via Foundation Connect by **5:00pm ET, Monday, August 14, 2017**. **All components** of your application must be submitted by this time. **If the application is submitted with any components missing, it will be deemed incomplete and will not be considered for a grant award.** You can access the system through the AIDS United website, as explained below.

**All the information outlined below MUST be submitted through the online application system, as directed. Each question will have a character limit of 8,000 characters including spaces, however all formatting counts as HTML code and therefore increases how many characters are used. AIDS United asks that responses to each question be no longer than 4,000-6,000 characters and recommends completing the application in a word processing program before submitting online in order to adhere to the maximum page count. If given the option, please make sure to “paste as plain text” into the system. Application materials will NOT be accepted through email, fax, mail, or express delivery.**

I. **Grant Application Information.**

**Organization-Specific Questions**

1. Organization type (CBO/ASO/faith-based/human rights organization/clinic or medical provider/legal aid/other ________.)
2. Total organizational budget, rounded to the nearest dollar (current fiscal year)
3. Summarize the organization’s mission (two to three sentences)
4. Geographic area served (urban, suburban, rural, reservation-based, statewide, region, etc.)
5. General Client Profile: Please note the clients whom you intend to serve under your AU-funded project during the grant period
   - Age
   - Gender
   - Race and ethnicity
   - Socio-economic status
   - Self-identified sexual orientation
   - Self-identified HIV status
6. If your organization is not recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)3, please list your Fiscal Sponsor’s *information.
   A **Fiscal Sponsor is a 501(c)3 organization that may be acting as your financial agent if you do not have 501(c)3 designation.**
   - Organization name
   - Contact person at your fiscal sponsor
   - Contact telephone number
   - Contact e-mail address
   - Fiscal sponsor EIN
   - Fiscal Sponsor Address
   - Fiscal Sponsor City/State/Zip

**Project-Specific Questions**

1. Project title
2. Project type:
   - Building a MIPA-driven Organization
   - MIPA-driven Grassroots Project
3. Total funds requested
4. Summary of project or grant request (**three to four sentences MAXIMUM**)
II. Project Narrative

The maximum length of answers in the section below should be the equivalent of 6 single-spaced pages in a word processing program such as MS Word using 12-point font. Proposals should strive to provide complete information as these following questions serve as review criteria. (Note: any formatting will be converted to HTML when your responses are entered into Foundation Connect and those HTML tags will count against your character limit.)

1. Describe the current context in which you are working, including information about the epidemic in your jurisdiction (demographics, barriers to care, etc.), any information on HIV-related stigma, discrimination, or related issues; information on other historic and/or current efforts related to HIV-positive organizing in your jurisdiction; and if you seek to help systemically change meaningful involvement of people with HIV within an organization, relevant info about the organization and past efforts. Do NOT include national data/statistics (unless the project proposed is national in scope). (10 points)

2. Please describe the constituency (organizations, people, or community and/or political leaders) you are trying to impact beyond individuals living with HIV. Why have you chosen to target the identified group(s)? (10 points)

3. Please describe current and/or future efforts to meaningfully involve individuals living with HIV within your organization from governance to front-line staff and how such individuals have been involved in the development of your proposed effort to date. Please also clarify how the proposed leadership of people living with HIV reflects the local epidemic or target community/communities. (20 points)

4. Please describe how you plan to use the requested funds. Include specific goals, activities and outcomes stated in measurable terms and reflect measures you will report back to AIDS United. Explain why this funding is critical to your program and what the additional value added will be if you receive funding. Please include timelines and benchmarks you will use to measure your progress, as well as key person(s) responsible for activities listed. (25 points)

5. Please describe why your organization, or your collaboration, is best positioned to take on the proposed project. (10 points)

6. Please describe how this project may impact/support the broader work of the organization and the organization’s ability to ensure ongoing meaningful involvement of people living with HIV. (15 points)

7. Provide a brief evaluation plan for the overall project, including how you will collect information, measure success, and identify challenge areas. (10 points)

III. Required Attachments

a) Budget Forms: Use the budget form included with the RFP documents. Do not use any budget form other than the one provided by AIDS United (downloadable from FoundationConnect). A complete project budget includes the completion of the first Excel worksheet tab outlined below:

   1) Project Budget – The proposed project budget, including expenses by line item for project period starting Oct. 1, 2017 and running for eight months. Funding requests may be approved for less than the full amount. Please refer to the eligible expenses outlined in that section on page 6. Please note that the administrative indirect cost rate cannot exceed 15% in the project budget. (REQUIRED)
2) **Funding Sources (if applicable)** – Please indicate the amount of funding secured and/or pending for this proposed request from other sources, including other funders or donors (individuals, corporations, foundations, and government agencies). Cost sharing is not required, but applicants showing leverage of additional funds/resources will be assigned 2 additional points.

*Please refer to the instructions tab of the workbook to correctly complete the budget form.*

b) **Organization’s Current Annual Operating Budget (2-page maximum):** Please provide the organization’s operating budget for the **current fiscal year** (i.e., 2017 or 2016-2017), including both revenue/income and expenses. *(REQUIRED)*

c) **Audit** – your 2016 independent audit. If your organization does not have an audit, submit your 2016 IRS Form 990. If you do not have either document, you **must** provide a detailed letter of explanation. We advise reaching out to AIDS United should you intend to submit a letter of explanation prior to submitting a proposal. *(REQUIRED)*

d) A list of the organization’s **Board of Directors with professional or community affiliations**. Please note that affiliations of board members are a **required** part of this list. If the organization does not have a Board of Directors, please send your fiscal sponsor’s board of directors list. If neither is available, a detailed letter of explanation is required. We advise reaching out to AIDS United should you intend to submit a letter of explanation prior to submitting a proposal. *(REQUIRED)*

e) **If your organization does not have IRS determined non-profit status,** please include a signed letter of agreement from your fiscal sponsor.

f) **Diversity Table** – please use the form linked within the Foundation Connect system. *(REQUIRED)*

g) **Memoranda of Agreement or Letters of Support** from any key collaborating organizations or vested entities, if applicable. Memoranda of Agreement should reflect the concrete roles, responsibilities and/or expectations of the collaborative relationship between the applicant organization and any other supporting agency. Letters of Support should reflect how/why an organization intends to support the proposed project, how an organization and/or community may benefit from the proposed project and/or how the proposed project is filling a gap identified by a partner organization or community.
SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

The online submission system and application may be accessed by clicking here. If the applying organization already has a FoundationConnect account, please use it to log in and access the application. If the applying organization does not have a FoundationConnect account, click the “Register” button to create one. If you have any difficulties with FoundationConnect, please contact Julio Fonseca at jfonseca@aidsunited.org, or (202) 876-2835.

The application MUST be submitted no later than Monday, August 14, 2017, at 5:00pm Eastern Time. However, we strongly encourage completing the application early to allow for unforeseen technical difficulties.

Approved applicants will be notified of funding decisions by September 14, 2017. Applicants that are not selected for funding will be notified in writing the first week of October 2017. Please do not call or email to inquire about the status of your application during the review process.

Application Checklist

- Grant Application Information
- Project Narrative
- Project Budget - Use only the Excel template provided and submit in the original Excel format
- Organization’s Current Annual Operating Budget
- Audit
- Board of Directors List with community affiliations
- Organizational Chart
- Diversity Table
- Any Memoranda of Agreement or Letters of Support

Assistance during the Application Process

AIDS United is committed to assisting eligible applicants with the preparation of a complete and responsive application to the Positive Organizing Project initiative. Our staff is available to answer any questions and to provide technical support. We prefer that you submit questions and requests for assistance to our dedicated email address, pop@aidsunited.org, with your organization’s name in the subject line of the message. You may also call Julio Fonseca, at AIDS United, at (202) 876-2835.

Additionally, AIDS United will offer offer an applicant content/technical assistance webinar to go over the application and answer any questions:

Wednesday July 26, 2017
3:30 PM-5:00 PM EDT

The virtual meeting will take up to ninety minutes. To register click here.

Thank you for your interest in the Positive Organizing Project.