



**People Organizing Positively (POP)  
2018-2019 Grant Cycle  
Invitation to Submit Letter of Intent**

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**Executive Summary**

People Organizing Positively (POP), formerly known as the Positive Organizing Project, through support from Gilead Sciences, has provided over \$750,000 in grants to communities across the U.S. for four program years. Over 500,000+ people living with HIV (PLHIV) have been reached in POP's history by nearly 40 grantees. Information on the most recent cohort of grantees is [here](#).

AIDS United, with funding from Gilead Sciences, Inc., is pleased to announce the opportunity for grant support through the *People Organizing Positively* (POP) initiative. The goals of this initiative are to:

- 1) Support innovative projects that fully embody the principles of Meaningful Involvement of People Living with HIV (MIPA);
- 2) Increase leadership capacity of People Living with HIV (PLHIV);
- 3) Support grassroots activities that involve the leadership of PLHIV; and,
- 4) Strengthen the organizational practices that embody and operationalize MIPA values.

AIDS United closely partners with the U.S. People Living with HIV Caucus (HIV Caucus) on this initiative, supporting 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.

**Meaningful Involvement of People Living with HIV and AIDS (MIPA)**

In the thirty-seven 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).

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.

MIPA affirms that people living with HIV must be involved in decision-making at all levels: their own health, in how organizations serve them, and how their communities and nations respond to their needs. From local HIV planning bodies to the President’s Advisory Council on HIV/AIDS, MIPA has guided and demanded that the leadership of people living with HIV be followed. The POP Initiative will mirror MIPA principles with the expectation that PLHIV must be involved in decision-making *at all levels of this project*.

### **Background on the Initiative**

AIDS United’s People Organizing Positively (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.

***Funded POP Projects are intended to be designed by and for People Living with HIV. PLHIV should be involved in all stages of the POP initiative including: project conceptualization, project design, grant writing, and ultimately, management and implementation of the project.***

For additional information on MIPA, download the factsheet jointly developed by AIDS United and the HIV Caucus: [Meaningful Involvement of People with HIV/AIDS \(MIPA\)](#). A recorded webinar on

the principles of MIPA as they inform this initiative is [here](#). We strongly encourage applicants to review both prior to submission of the Letter of Intent. The review committee for POP will place great weight on how an applicant has meaningfully involved PLHIV in the design and implementation of its proposed project.

## Eligibility Requirements

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, or the US Territories of Puerto Rico, and the US 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.

## Project Support

AIDS United will support projects via the following two tracks:

- 1) Building a MIPA-driven Organization: projects focused on concrete activities that 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.

## Project Expectations

All funded projects and invited organizations 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-related 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.

## Project Focus Areas

The POP Initiative will fund projects that are innovative, address leadership/capacity development of PLHIV, address reduction of HIV stigma, and are rooted in a thorough understanding of the principles of MIPA at the community and organizational level. The letter of intent must be for a project that addresses one or more 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.

## Letter of Intent Content

The POP Letter of Intent submission form is available electronically in the Qualtrics platform. Applicants will answer seven questions that will cover the following:

### ***Organizational Profile***

- Organization or Fiscal Sponsors, 501(c)3 status and location in the U.S. and U.S territories.
- Organization leadership and community reach

### ***Project***

- How the project will increase leadership of PLHIV in the community

- How your organization currently implements and embodies the principles of MIPA
  - Examples of PLHIV leadership development at your organization
  - Provide examples of your commitment to MIPA in your community
- How people living with HIV have been involved in the development of the grant, their engagement if awarded, and how their efforts will be compensated
- Your estimated range of requested funding

## Letter of Intent Submission Instructions

Letters of Intent are due in the Qualtrics platform at this [link](#) by 12:00 Noon Eastern Time on July 27, 2018. Letters of Intent will not be accepted by any other means.

## Timeline

*The following outlines key benchmarks for the initiative:*

July 10, 2018	Requests for Letters of Intent released
<b>July 27, 2018</b>	<b>Letters of Intent Due by Noon ET</b>
July 27, 2018	Letters of Intent sent to Internal Review Team
August 3, 2018	Decisions on invitations due to AIDS United from review team
<b>August 6, 2018</b>	<b>All applicants will be notified of invitations to submit a full proposal</b>
August 14, 2018	Joint Webinar from HIV Caucus and AIDS United to invited applicants
<b>August 31, 2018</b>	<b>Completed applications due from those invited to submit full proposals</b>
September 24, 2018	Notice of awards made
September 27, 2018	Negotiation of revised budgets and execution of grant agreements due
October 15, 2018	Grant period begins
October 2018	Grantee orientation webinar with AIDS United & the HIV Caucus
January 2019	Two-day grantee convening in Washington, DC*
March 2019	Interim Progress Monitoring Call
March 2019	AIDSWatch (End of March Dates TBD)
June 15, 2019	Program activities concluded
June 30, 2019	Grant period ends and final progress report due

AIDS United will invite applicants to submit a full proposal after an internal review of submitted LOIs. AIDS United expects to award funds through this grantmaking initiative by **October 1, 2018**. Grant awards will range between \$40,000 and \$60,000. **Update: Please note that AIDS United will review and consider letters of intent for funding levels starting as low as \$20,000.**

**Please Note: Invitations for full proposal submissions will specify a project period in the range 8-12 months.**