

## Year-Round Organizing Grant Guidelines

**PURPOSE:** The Year-Round Organizing Grant Program provides financial support to affiliates to implement Member Organizer programs that provide stipends to members for organizing work during evenings, weekends, and summers to advance the growth and strength of affiliates. It can also include support for release time and/or substitute pay in exceptional circumstances.

**ELIGIBILITY:** Both state and local affiliates are eligible to apply for YRO Grants. Effective in FY2027, Aspiring Educator and NEA-Retired Chapters can participate by inclusion in a state affiliate YRO plan.

**SELECTION:** YRO Grants are awarded on a competitive basis and are limited in total by the available funding approved in the NEA Budget. Prior funding is not a guarantee of future funding.

**TIMELINE:** Effective for FY2027, the grant cycle is aligned to the fiscal year: i.e. the term of the grant runs from September 1 to August 31.

The deadline for grant applications is April 15. Extensions can be granted on a limited basis. Affiliates will be notified by email of grant decisions or revisions by May 30.

### **APPLICATION PROCESS:**

Prior to submitting a grant proposal, affiliates are expected to have a YRO team. State teams should include staff that fill the roles of field manager, staff organizer, data organizer, and communications lead designated by the State Executive Director; along with a Governance Champion and Member Organizer(s) designated by the State President. Local teams should be designated by the Local President.

Prior to grant submission, the team completes the [YRO State Self-Assessment tool](#) to assess starting point for campaign planning. The team then utilizes the [YRO Campaign Planning Guide](#) to discuss areas the team wants to work on. The guide contains critical questions and examples to support team planning. The team submits their grant with the assistance of [YRO Campaign Guide to Funding](#) in the Blackbaud grant system and

also includes their [YRO Campaign Plan](#) and [YRO Campaign Budget and Metrics spreadsheet](#).

There is a designated NEA YRO organizer assigned to each state. Affiliate teams are strongly encouraged to work with their assigned NEA YRO staff throughout the application process.

**COORDINATION:** Like a number of other NEA grant programs, YRO grants are available to both local and state affiliates. Within the YRO grant application, locals are asked whether their state affiliate is aware of the application. If the answer is no, NEA staff direct the local affiliate to discuss their request with their state affiliate first. If the answer is yes, then NEA staff contact the state affiliate to verify, and to discuss options for aligning YRO to work in that local affiliate with the rest of the state's YRO plan. The designated NEA YRO organizer is responsible for coordinating YRO grants if there are multiple grants within a state.

As with all grants to local affiliates, once a decision is made on whether to fund or not, a copy of the decision/award letter is sent to the state affiliate.

## **GRANT APPLICATION REVIEW AND EVALUATION**

Once grants are submitted, the YRO team reviews each grant using the following criteria (*included in the Blackbaud system for review*):

- Overall grant submission compliance (measurable goals for membership growth, engagement and retention of members, and data and tracking, member organizing which are reflected as the four required goals of the grant)
- Plan addresses growth of all NEA membership categories (Aspiring Educators, PK-12, ESPs, Higher Ed, and Retired)
- Plan reflects diversity of the entire bargaining unit or intentional strategies to address areas of gap.
- Plan includes the incorporation of the 7 Key Strategies and four organizing seasons, along with incorporation of an early enrollment strategy and a back-to-school plan

## **METRICS**

- Plan metrics for measurable growth include at least a 2% growth goal for each participating local as measured by the NEA Civis Goalsetting tool
- Plan includes measurable objectives for engagement of members, number of 1:1 conversations, and # of new leaders identified

#### BUDGET

- Affiliate cost-share commitments
- Budget spreadsheet is completed with affiliate support for organizing (*sustainability*) included
- Budgets reflect predominant expenditures for member organizing work

#### DATA

- Usage of NEA data ecosystem for data collection, including YRO cards & data cleansing protocols
- Targeted locals are identified using CIVIS Goal-Setting Tool data, including the contact information & tenure of the current local president (*for new local president training identification*)

### GRANT FUNDING CONSIDERATIONS

The grant review process takes into consideration:

- Strategic priorities of the affiliate & of NEA, including a plan for Autopay conversion based on threat map
- Affiliate capacity and need, especially membership growth trends
- Affiliate demonstrated ability to run successful Member Organizer programs that result in measurable increases in net growth
- Strength of affiliate YRO team processes and capacity
- Other NEA funding sources received, made available or possible based on proposed plans (*ex: an ESP-focused plan, a health and safety issue campaign, or other organizing program support*)

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