

FAQS:

1. What is your Strategic Direction Summary?

It is a summary of our strategic plan, which mainly focuses on our grants. Please see the “[Become a Grantee Partner](#)” page of our website to download it.

2. What is your Letter of Connection (LOC)?

LOCs are the first of two phases in our grantmaking process. They help us start conversations. Based on our eight grant criteria, LOCs include three parts: **(a)** overview, **(b)** questionnaire, and **(c)** summary. We value each LOC shared with us, yet given our finite resources, we anticipate more eligible and promising LOCs than we can fund. Therefore, we review every LOC, contact some to learn more, and invite few to submit grant applications (phase two). Annually, anyone can submit one or more LOCs for either grant portfolio, and the same LOC form applies to both grant of our main portfolios. Please see the “[Become a Grantee Partner](#)” page of our website to download our LOC.

3. What are your grant portfolios, as well as your priorities, processes, and deadlines for each?

Please see the “[Grant Portfolios](#)” page of our website to learn more and download documents.

- **Grant Portfolio I: Environmental Justice & Protection** – **Priorities:** (1) water and (2) climate/energy.
- **Grant Portfolio II: Social Justice** – **Priorities:** (1) voting rights and (2) criminal justice.
- **Grant Portfolio III: McIntosh County** – No LOCs. Closed, invitation-only process.
- **Grant Portfolio IV: Tools** – No LOCs. Processes vary, to advance the desired outcomes of Portfolios I-III.

4. What are your Tools? What are the processes and deadlines for each?

Please see the “[Grant Portfolios](#)” page of our website to learn more and download documents.

- **Tool I: Organization Development Fund** – Support internal, individual development of one organization or network.
Process: Monthly, open process for direct grantee partners that received grant award letters (not regrants) within two years.
- **Tool II: Collaboration Development Fund** – Support external collaborations across organizations or networks.
Process: Quarterly, open process for direct grantee partners that received grant award letters (not regrants) within two years.
- **Tool III: Smith W. Bagley Advocacy Award** – Celebrate one organization or network, in memory of our late president.
Process: Annual, closed process.
- **Tool IV: Musgrove Award** – Provide intimate and inspiring space for retreats or gatherings on St. Simons Island, GA.
Process: Annual, open process that is currently on pause.

5. Can I download your LOC and Sample LOC for your two main grant portfolios?

Yes. Please see the “[Become a Grantee Partner](#)” page of our website to download both.

6. Can I submit more than one LOC annually for either/both of your two main grant portfolios?

Yes.

7. What happens after I submit my LOC (phase one)?

After you submit your LOC to info@sapelofoundation.org, we will confirm receipt of your LOC. We are grateful for everyone who shares LOCs with us. We **review every** LOC, **contact some** to learn more, and **invite few** to submit grant applications (phase two). Given our finite resources, we anticipate more eligible and promising LOCs than we can fund. Therefore, meeting or exceeding our grant criteria cannot guarantee funding. If we contact you to learn more, we may request additional information via emails, phone calls, in-person/zoom meetings, or site visits with trustees.



8. What happens if I am invited to submit a grant application (phase two)? What are the deadlines?

Grant applications are invitation-only and based on LOCs. Beyond what was shared in original LOC submissions, grant applications only request: **(a)** some additional information (e.g., budgets) and **(b)** final/updated LOCs that may include revised or expanded responses to key questions. During board meetings, our trustees vote on all grants. At least a month before a deadline, grant applications are available on our online portal. Given our longtime policy: Incomplete or late grant applications cannot be accepted, unless extensions were requested or offered at least three days before a deadline. Please see the “[Grantee Partners](#)” page of our website to access our online portal for grant applications and grant reports. Deadlines will be communicated at the time of invitation but are generally as follows:

- **Grant Portfolio I: Environmental Justice & Protection** – Grant applications due in March.
- **Grant Portfolio II: Social Justice** – Grant applications due in September.

9. What does your grant report include? What are the deadlines?

Although we look forward to being in touch with grantee partners throughout each year, annual grant reports help our grantee partners and our foundation assess, evaluate, and learn together. Grant reports let grantee partners share outcomes, updates, and lessons learned about: **(a)** content from grant applications and **(b)** one or more of our four desired outcomes for a given grant portfolio. At least a month before a deadline, grant reports are made available to on our online portal. Given our longtime policy: Grantee partners that do not submit complete and on-time reports cannot be considered for future grants, unless extensions were requested or offered at least three days before a deadline. Please see the “[Grantee Partners](#)” page of our website to access our online portal for grant applications and grant reports. Deadlines and process will be communicated at the time of award.

10. Who are your grantee partners?

501(c)3 nonprofit organizations (or their fiscal sponsors) that align with our grant criteria and represent their own organizations, formal networks, or less-formal collaborations of two or more organizations.

11. Where do your grantee partners work?

Georgia: We either support **(a)** statewide efforts, with meaningful inclusion and perspectives of those living in more rural communities and smaller cities outside metro Atlanta or **(b)** local and regional efforts based outside metro Atlanta.

12. How do you define metro Atlanta?

We use the United Way’s [13-county definition for metro Atlanta](#): Butts, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, Dekalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, Paulding, and Rockdale.

13. How do you define policy advocacy, civic engagement, and grassroots community organizing (listed in your criteria)?

Please see Glossary, below.

14. How do you define anchor institutions (listed in your criteria)?

Please see Glossary, below.

15. How are you responding to COVID, as well as the movement for black lives and racial justice?

In 2020, we significantly increased our annual grant budget. We will reassess our grant budget annually for three years.

16. Do you take phone calls from potential grantee partners?

We are always grateful to connect. However, we ask potential grantee partners to first review our materials and email a completed LOC to us. We will be in touch to learn more, if we think there may be a fit.



GLOSSARY:

This glossary serves as a clarifying and helpful starting point. It is based on an amalgam of resources, history of efforts for just systemic change, and our internal reflections. We welcome more definitions and approaches.

- 1. Justice** – Demonstration of what is morally upright, good, fair, righteous, and merit-worthy.
- 2. Social & Environmental Justice Philanthropy** – Capital utilization meant to benefit marginalized or vulnerable communities (population element) and meant for effective, long-term, and just systemic change (strategy element). Capital can include grants, endowments, human resources, advocacy, relationships, etc. [Resource: NCRP](#)
- 3. Policy Advocacy** – Power-building strategy of promoting the adoption of a policy or idea. [Resource: NDI](#)
 - Examples – Pursue precedent-setting litigation, launch media campaigns, advance issue advocacy, etc.
 - Common Decision-Makers or Targets – Executive branch (governors), legislative branch (city counselors), judicial branch (judges), administrative agency (Dept. of Energy), business (CEOs), or public (residents).
- 4. Civic Engagement** – Power-building strategy of helping people be active participants in building and strengthening their communities, whether defined as a shared place, identity, or interest. [Resource: PACE](#)
 - Examples – Vote, engage in GOTV efforts, canvass, complete the census, etc.
 - Common Decision-Makers or Targets – Voters, residents, candidates, elected officials, etc.
- 5. Grassroots Community Organizing** – Power-building strategy of integrating relationships, leadership, and agency; bringing the power of collective voice to bear on the issues that impact communities; and engaging with relevant decision-makers to bring goals to fruition. [Resource: NCRP](#)
 - Examples – Develop community agendas, protest, sign petitions, boycott, implement direct actions, etc.
 - Common Decision-Makers or Targets – See “policy advocacy” and “civic engagement.”
 - Grass-Tops Community Organizing – Leaders in positions of power access and influence decision-makers.
 - Astroturf Community Organizing – Faux grassroots/tops organizing. [Resource: Community Catalyst](#)
- 6. Anchor Institutions** – Organizations that demonstrate the following attributes:
 - Have a track record of helping catalyze just systemic change.
 - Are trusted by the community and relied upon by other organizations.
 - Lead, convene, or support networks.
 - Demonstrate deep expertise (strategies, communities, places, issues, sectors, or movements).
 - Are usually place-based (local, regional, or statewide).
 - Have strong organizational health (financial sustainability, internal capacity, and strategic acumen).



7. Just Systemic Change – A goal and a process. The following is one of many frameworks.

- **Set Context** – “Unless we attempt to deal with the causes of [problems], we will only be mitigating the consequences of malfunctioning systems, or even providing inadvertent cover for their failure — we will not create the change we want to see.”
[Resources: New Philanthropy Capital & LankellyChase Foundation](#)
- **Apply an Equity & Justice Lens with Communities** – Start with a commitment to equity and justice – as a value, process, and goal, as well as internally, externally, and meaningfully. Consider racial, social, economic, environmental, and geographic equity and justice. Engage communities that an organization or network serves and empowers. [Resource: Building Movement Project & The California Endowment](#)
 - What are the communities’ demographics, histories, needs, assets, deficits, opportunities, barriers, etc.?
 - Which systems impact the communities? Why and how?
 - Are all communities equally impacted by all systems, positively or negatively? Why and how?
 - If not, which communities are marginalized? Why and how?
 - Which marginalized communities could benefit most from just systemic change? Why and how?
 - How are marginalized communities, with deep expertise, helping define and shape just systemic change?
 - How are decisions made, and who is absent, present, consulted, participating, leading, and benefitting?
 - Why does an equity and justice lens help organizations and networks advance missions and effectiveness?
- **Define Status Quo** – Study systems: goals, values, history, processes, budgets, socio-economic landscape, political will, public opinion, decision-makers, influencers, opponents, proponents, allies, barriers, opportunities, opportunity costs, best practices, etc.
- **Address Challenges** – Peel back layers to find the root causes of systemic challenges that can stretch across systems.
- **Pursue Solutions** – Develop and implement effective, meaningful, long-term, and just systemic solutions.