



## REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

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### SIF COMMITTEE

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### BOARD LIAISON

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## Special Initiative Fund and Existing Initiative Fund

### Guidelines and Application Form May 2021

#### INTRODUCTION

The Special Initiative Fund (SIF) and Existing Initiative Fund (EIF) allow Amnesty groups to take advantage of event or programming opportunities that would be difficult to finance otherwise. SIF provides support for projects that would normally be beyond the budgetary capabilities of campus groups, local groups, clusters, and co-groups. Funding decisions are made during the month following the submission by a six-member committee of volunteers, one from each region, plus a youth representative. A Board liaison and a Staff liaison will hold non-voting seats.

#### AWARD AMOUNT

Awards generally average \$1500.00. In the case of special pilot initiatives, flexibility in the range will be considered. For example, initial pilots with Youth Group projects might be restricted to \$500.00, and traditional awards and/or new pilots in the newly-designated Special Focus Groups may be awarded up to \$2000.00, to be determined by the SIF Committee.

#### GOALS OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

Projects funded by SIF/EIF need to have the potential to substantially advance Amnesty International's mission in two or more of the following ways:

- Focus on AIUSA priority issues
- Educate the public about human rights issues
- Enhance Amnesty International's visibility in the community
- Recruit new Amnesty International members
- Stimulate Amnesty International membership activism
- Foster multi-cultural development in AIUSA
- Have human rights impact on both US and other governmental policies and practices
- Strengthen area and regional collaboration amongst AIUSA groups
- Support networking with human rights organizations

#### CRITERIA FOR ELIGIBILITY

- Groups must consult their SIF/EIF Regional Representative (listed at left) and contact their Regional Office Staff (such as Field Organizer) and, if available, the State Area Coordinator or Student Area Coordinator, when applying for SIF/EIF funding. Applicants are requested to present a draft proposal **well in advance of their proposed event**. (See specific details under "Proposal Narrative" below.) The committee usually convenes the first week of the month.
- Projects that contain a special initiative, as opposed to being a means to meet regular group expenses, can apply for Special Initiative Funding; projects that are on-going (i.e., occurring on an annual basis) can apply for Existing Initiative Funding. EIF applications must contain a brief history of the project and describe its success.
- Demands on staff, co-groups, or others must be agreed upon in advance of the project.
- **Pre-planning is essential.** Proposals for projects that have moved beyond planning to

actual implementation or advance expenditures will not be considered for SIF funding. For example, a film festival that has already shown a film cannot be funded.

- Projects must be completed within one year of their application start date and all expenses must be reported by the date the SIF committee assigns, within 45 days of completion.
- Funding cannot be used for staff expenses or for sending members to AGMs or Regional Conferences; other restrictions may apply.
- Nearly identical applications for multiple grants for the same event will not be considered.

### **Proposal Narrative**

Complete the following application form and a narrative (limit 4 pages) and send it to your Regional SIF Representative (listed on Page 1) for consultation. To increase your chances of getting the award, **it is essential that you contact your SIF Representative well in advance of submission**, in order to work together throughout the process of developing the proposal. **Your Representative will be able to share more specific guidelines or restrictions with you, which can expedite the process.** Then submit the final proposal by e-mail to your Regional SIF Representative to arrive no later than the last day of the month; if it arrives later, it may be considered as an emergency proposal but may also have to wait until the following month for consideration.

- Specific Aims** Briefly describe the goals and objectives of the project. Include a statement of the problem to be addressed.
- Method** The proposal should indicate the means by which it is to be carried out including a timeline and outline of the project. It should be specific, demonstrating its feasibility in terms of resources (money, people, and time).
- Budget** Include an itemized list of costs you expect this project to incur in detail and justify each item; include other sources of funding, such as that provided by partnering organizations.
- Evaluation** Describe the criteria by which the project will be evaluated (e.g., number of petitions signed, new members, publicity). **NOTE: The evaluation must include the number of attendees or participants in the project, or the number of people potentially reached by the event.**

### **Acceptance Process**

Once your proposal is approved, you will be sent an approval letter which you must sign and send to the Staff Liaison to activate the check-writing process, and you will receive an expense verification form that you will submit later with your event evaluation. You will also be asked to submit a W-9 form, which is a formality required by the IRS; upon sending in your receipts, the W-9 form will be discarded. Instructions for this process will be sent to you with the approval.

### **Post-Event**

Within 45 days of completion of the event or project, you are required to send in the evaluation, an expense verification form, and original receipts to the Staff Liaison. A copy of the evaluation narrative should also be sent to the Regional Representative.



**SPECIAL INITIATIVE FUND/ EXISTING INITIATIVE FUND  
APPLICATION FORM**

Please email this completed application form with your proposal to your **Regional SIF Representative**

Name

Date:

Address:

Email:

Project Title:

AIUSA affiliation:

Phone (day):

Phone (evening):

Regional staff member contacted:

SIF Committee member contacted:

AC/SAC member contacted:

*(For country-specific projects only)* Co-Group member contacted:

Total amount requested (generally capped at SIF/EIF \$1500):

Will this project raise funds (check one):  Yes  No

Project start date:

End date:

**Checklist required:**

Consultation with Initiative Funds regional representative

I am a volunteer member (i.e. Board and staff members are ineligible)

Proposal narrative attached