



SISTERS OF CHARITY FOUNDATION  
OF CLEVELAND



**Supportive Housing Initiative: Housing Stability for Vulnerable Families**

*Request for Proposals — May 2007*



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OF CLEVELAND

The Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland seeks to advance the model of housing with support services for single adults and families who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless in Cuyahoga County. Since 1998, the Sisters of Charity Foundation has made grants to address the critical need for affordable housing. The Foundation has supported organizations with programs to create a wide range of housing opportunities for low-income individuals and families, combined with advocacy efforts to improve the continuum of care for the homeless.

The Foundation views affordable housing as vital to supporting families, building stable neighborhoods and reducing poverty. In its new strategic vision, the Foundation reaffirms its commitment to the critical need for affordable housing by focusing on those with the greatest need: those without a permanent home or those who are vulnerable to losing their home. The Foundation is particularly interested in directing funds to programs that target single adults and families who, without intervention, would likely remain homeless or be at risk for becoming homeless.

Three strategic objectives encompass the Foundation's Supportive Housing Initiative: permanent supportive housing for long-term homeless single adults; supporting at-risk families and youth to remain housed; and advocacy to effect positive policy reform addressing the full homeless continuum of care. Through these objectives the Foundation will work towards one goal: improving our community's capacity to increase the availability of quality, permanent housing with supportive services to help those in need and reduce poverty in Cuyahoga County.



## **OBJECTIVE: Preventing Homelessness for Vulnerable Families and Youth in Cleveland**

*At-Risk Families.* Families in Cuyahoga County rarely experience long-term continuous homelessness, yet many families are at continuous risk for becoming homeless. Families living in poverty are more likely to have frequent moves, live in substandard and/or overcrowded housing, or experience multiple episodes of homelessness. Research shows that homelessness has a negative effect on children's physical health, interferes with children's development, and affects their performance in school.<sup>1</sup>

Even families who have successfully navigated the subsidized housing system often struggle to remain housed. Absent adequate supports to address other social and economic challenges, they remain vulnerable to recurring episodes of housing instability. Many low-income parents require additional education, competitive job skills, an understanding of financial management, and access to quality child care. Still others experience issues of mental health, substance abuse, dual disorders and domestic violence that are commonplace for the chronically homeless single adult population.<sup>2</sup>

The Foundation is interested in supporting partnerships that effectively and efficiently allow families to maintain their housing and promote economic and social well-being. Prevention strategies can be short- or long-term, with attention focused on different challenges that families face. Some promising strategies for ending family homelessness include:<sup>3</sup>

### **1. Preventing Homelessness (Primary intervention)**

- ❑ *Short-Term Loans or Grants* – Financial assistance to families facing immediate eviction or foreclosure coupled with financial counseling and budgeting assistance to prevent their entry into the homeless system.
- ❑ *Housing Plus Services* – Permanent rental housing where a dedicated staff person is assigned to work with tenants to coordinate and deliver supportive services, both on site and through referrals in the community. The key to success in so-called “Housing Plus Services” interventions is the partnership between housing and service providers.<sup>4</sup>
- ❑ *Targeting Prevention Services* – Match prevention resources to neighborhoods where the largest number of families enter the shelter system. In Cleveland, one good example could be the targeting of foreclosure prevention services to neighborhoods with highest rates of foreclosure.
- ❑ *Alternatives to Foreclosure or Eviction* – Direct intervention with lenders, landlords and the housing courts to prevent eviction or foreclosure and almost certain homelessness.<sup>5</sup>

## **Housing Objectives for 2007**

### **Preventing Homelessness For At-Risk Families & Youth**

*RFP for Planning and Demonstration Grants*

### **Advocacy for Homeless Continuum of Care**

*RFP for Research and Policy Collaborations*

### **Strengthening Housing First**

*Invited Proposals*

**2. Rapidly Ending Homelessness** – Move people from shelters directly into permanent housing with appropriate case management and support services to prevent the reoccurrence of homelessness. (Secondary intervention)

- ❑ *Transition-in-Place Model* – Moving the traditional transitional housing providers into a “housing first” practice. The program resembles traditional transitional housing for the time-limited period (up to two years), but at the end of the time limit, a family can remain in the same housing unit through the assumption of the lease, thereby lessening the negative consequences to children that accompany frequent moves.
- ❑ *Formal Collaboration* – Structured partnerships between shelters and transitional housing programs with community-based housing resources.

The Foundation would welcome additional promising models that would help achieve this objective.

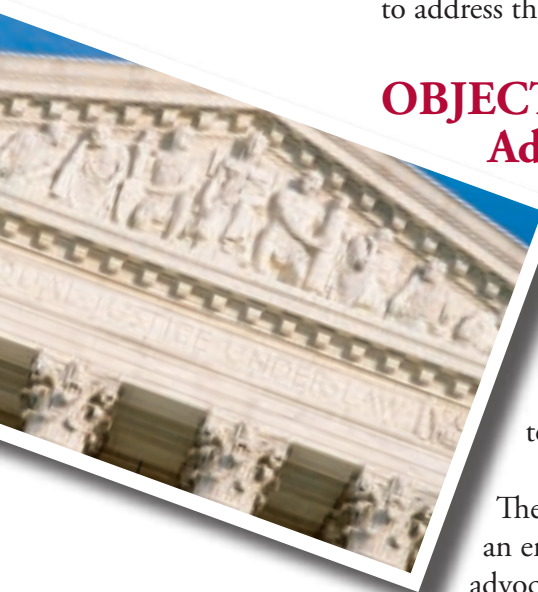
**Vulnerable Youth.** Another targeted population is unaccompanied homeless youth and youth transitioning to independence from the foster care system. Special attention is warranted to assist these young people as they transition into society as adults. Housing with support services needs to be targeted specifically to address the challenges of these young adults, such as case management, access to transportation, life skills training and assistance in gaining access to further educational opportunities and employment.

The Foundation has an interest in supporting community planning efforts to address the needs of this population.

**OBJECTIVE:**  
**Advocacy for Homeless Continuum of Care**

The Foundation recognizes that even the best programs it supports cannot thrive without some level of systemic change. This change often is most synonymous with government support and intervention. An effective method for achieving policy change is through the support of research and collection of evidence to support best practices. Advocates can then use the evidence-based practices to encourage increased public funding to reach scale.

The Foundation will support the engagement of advocacy activities, with an emphasis on evidence-based research and collaborations working in direct advocacy on housing issues.



## OBJECTIVE: *Strengthening Housing First*

In 2002, the Foundation, in partnership with Enterprise Community Partners and the Cleveland/ Cuyahoga County Office of Homeless Services, convened the *Housing First* coalition to bring a permanent supportive housing model to our community. *Housing First* begins with the understanding that without housing, people find it difficult to maintain a job, care for their children, and sustain a healthy lifestyle. It offers stable and affordable housing which is linked to comprehensive support services.

By 2003, *Housing First* had developed a comprehensive plan to develop 1,000 apartments within eight years. Currently, almost 340 units of permanent supportive housing are occupied or under construction for occupancy by 2008. *Housing First* is targeted to single adults who meet the HUD definition of chronically homeless (continuously homeless for at least one year, or having experienced multiple episodes of homelessness over two years).

Residents in *Housing First* units receive on-site case management provided by Mental Health Services for Homeless Persons, the AIDS Taskforce of Greater Cleveland and the Veterans Administration. Residents also have access to support services, either on-site or through linkages with other community providers.

Respecting the long-term collaboration among the many *Housing First* partners, the Foundation continues to support the goals of the *Housing First* initiative on an invited basis only at this time. Support will be provided to demonstrate the effectiveness of a supported employment model within *Housing First* projects. Also in 2007, the Foundation will issue a separate *Request for Qualifications* to conduct an evaluation of the Permanent Supportive



## 2007 Grants for Planning, Demonstration and Advocacy in Supportive Housing

In 2007, the Foundation is requesting proposals for planning and demonstration grants to advance promising practices in homelessness prevention in our community. In addition, we request proposals in support of affordable housing advocacy. Planning funds are offered this year with an aim toward future, multi-year funding.

The Foundation plans to award \$250,000 for planning, demonstration and advocacy activities. All proposals must address one of our strategic objective areas as we work together to end the risk of long-term homelessness in our community.

Organizations demonstrating collaborative evidence-based approaches to help us meet our strategic objectives are encouraged to apply.

**Planning grants** will be awarded to organizations whose current mission and programs are a good match for our objectives and who would be interested in a collaborative process to help us meet our goals. The project duration may be six months or shorter if appropriate for the scope of the project.

**Demonstration grants** are for organizations already working in collaboration for planning such programs which would require a very short planning time (one to three months) to ramp up for program implementation.

**Advocacy grants** will be made to organizations whose primary mission and activities center on direct advocacy or research to support advocacy efforts. All Demonstration and Advocacy grants will be for one year.

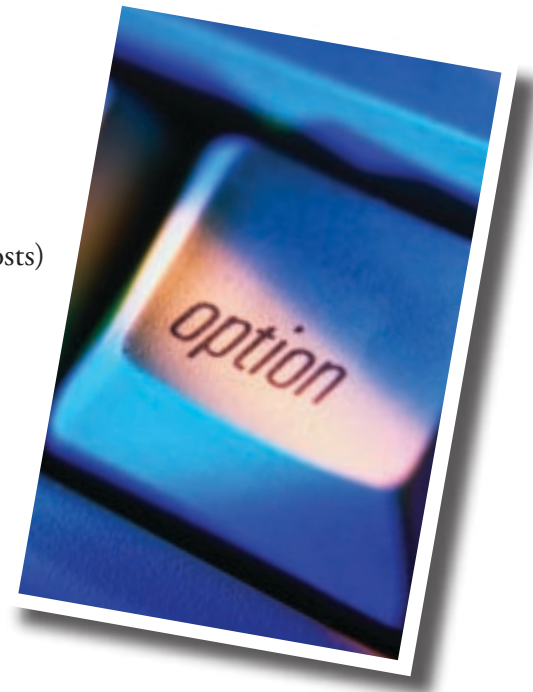
### Planning Grant Criteria

The process and timetable for all proposals will be the same, but they will be reviewed according to different criteria. The Foundation's intent is that the majority of the funds will not be used to support immediate program offerings, but will take the form of planning for a strategic program or investment that would build the organization's capacity for sustainable program expansion in the future. Planning grants are intended to enable organizations to explore the feasibility of building partnerships to engage in promising practices in homelessness prevention.

Grant funds may be used to compensate staff for planning time, meeting costs (including facilitators, trainings or conferences and/or site visits to existing model programs) or other needs in the planning process. The work product from a planning grant will be in the form of a program development plan including program needs, feasibility, facilities and/or capabilities and collaboration costs and/or the development of a strategic business plan that will provide the blueprint for implementing such a program in 2008. Those submitting a full proposal will be required to include more detailed benchmarks and desired outcomes that will result from the proposed program.

*Examples of planning activities that may be funded and the anticipated work product include:*

- ❑ Development of a strategic business plan
- ❑ Program Development planning (program needs, feasibility, facilities and/or capabilities, consultant costs, collaboration costs)
- ❑ Staff Development (related to topic area - training and development, conference attendance)
- ❑ Staff time costs for engaging in planning activities
- ❑ Visits to “best practice” sites in other cities
- ❑ Information technology, program evaluation and accountability systems (or assessment of these technologies)
- ❑ Collaboration building needs (e.g., time, meeting costs and facilitators)



Indirect costs are not allowed in this grant mechanism.

## **Demonstration Grants**

For those organizations which, with short-term planning, would be ready to engage in a program, there is also funding available for demonstration grants. These organizations will be eligible for planning as well as start-up expenses necessary to implement their program on a demonstration basis. These funds can be used for planning expenses (outlined above), staff costs and other start-up costs. Funds cannot be used to support existing programs; *however, we will consider proposed program expansions.*

## **Advocacy Grants**

Eligible activities for advocacy grants include:

- ❑ Research to support a position that furthers the goals of housing with support services for those most vulnerable.
- ❑ Direct advocacy activities through coalitions that are addressing issues affecting the homeless continuum of care.

## **Other Technical Assistance & Evaluation**

The Foundation encourages grantees to define their capacity building needs to plan for and implement a program. However, separate from grant funding, the Foundation may, at its discretion, contract directly with consultant(s) to sponsor workshops and/or provide individualized technical assistance to groups engaged in the planning process as needs arise. Grantees will be expected to participate and work with Foundation staff and/or designated evaluation consultants to further strengthen plans and projects as well as to build an outcome-based model for their work. Targeted outcomes will be developed and reported on by all grantees. Staff time involved in meeting evaluation requirements should be included in the grant proposal.



## Eligible Organizations

- ❑ Valid tax-exempt status: 501(c)(3), public entity or fiscal sponsor
- ❑ Organizations with an annual budget of over \$250,000 must have an audit requirement and provide audited financial statements.
- ❑ Organizations with an annual budget of less than \$250,000 must provide a copy of their most recent IRS Form 990.
- ❑ Geographic restriction: Must benefit residents of Cuyahoga County.

## Letter of Intent: Due July 6, 2007

A letter of intent is the first step in the grants process. The purpose of a Letter of Intent is to help us determine which organizations demonstrate the greatest potential for collaborative planning efforts. Submission of a Letter of Intent also saves potential grantees the time and effort required to complete a full proposal until they are encouraged to do so.

A letter of intent will include a completed application (a copy is attached and is also available at [www.socfdncleveland.org](http://www.socfdncleveland.org)). Letters of Intent should not exceed seven pages in length and should include the following in abbreviated fashion:

### 1. Organization Information ALL (Suggested 1-2 pages)

- ❑ Organization name, brief history and mission. Identification of target population and geographic focus.
- ❑ A description of the organization's main programs and number of people served.
- ❑ A brief statement of reasoning and the organization's capacity to take on a new project. Specify the lead staff to be involved.

### 2. Proposal Summary: (Suggested 2-3 pages)

#### For Planning Grants:

- ❑ Clear identification of which of the strategic objectives the plan will address.
- ❑ The process, organizations and individuals who will be involved in the planning process.
- ❑ Your organization's ability to coordinate this effort including evidence of successful collaborative relationships (past or current).
- ❑ Specific experience with, and/or interest in, planning for a homelessness prevention program.
- ❑ A timeline showing the organization of the steps in the planning process, with target dates.

**For Demonstration Grants:**

- ❑ Clear identification of which of strategic objectives the plan will address.
- ❑ The process, organizations and individuals who will be involved in the planning and implementation of the program. Discuss the organization's ability to implement the proposed plan and/or submit the plan already in use.
- ❑ The organization's ability to coordinate this effort, including evidence of successful collaborative relationships (past or current).
- ❑ A timeline showing how the steps in the project will be organized, with target dates.
- ❑ An evaluation outline showing how progress and outcomes will be reported and tracked.

**2. Proposal Summary (continued): (Suggested 2-3 pages)**

**For Advocacy Grants:**

- ❑ Whether you will provide research or direct advocacy services
- ❑ Your organization's ability to coordinate this effort including evidence of successful collaborative relationships (past or current)
- ❑ A timeline showing how the steps in the project will be organized, with target dates
- ❑ An evaluation outline showing how progress and outcomes will be reported and tracked

**3. Budget Request**

- ❑ A budget template including all resources that will be dedicated to the planning/demonstration/advocacy efforts.
- ❑ A detailed budget narrative of the proposal expenses must accompany the budget.

The five- to seven-page Letter of Intent can be double-sided, with a font type no smaller than 11-point. Send one unbound original, including a completed application form to:

Supportive Housing Proposals  
The Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland  
The Halle Building, 1228 Euclid Avenue, Suite 330  
Cleveland, OH 44115

If you are developing a Letter of Intent and have questions, please feel free to contact the Director of Program and Evaluation Leslie Strnisha at [lstrnisha@socfdncleveland.org](mailto:lstrnisha@socfdncleveland.org) or call 216/241-9300.

## Full Proposals: Due August 27, 2007

Applicants whose Letters of Intent best demonstrate the ability to meet the proposal selection criteria will be encouraged to submit a full proposal. Applicants will have the opportunity to more fully develop their proposed work-plan, timeline or budget in the full proposal. Applicants may be contacted by staff for additional information and potentially, a site visit. Additional information on the requirements of a full proposal and criteria for selection will be provided at the June 15, 2007 workshop.

## Criteria for Full Proposal Encouragement

- Clear identification of which one of the strategic objective areas within permanent supportive housing the program addresses.
- A solid planning method with specific outcomes and benchmarks.
- A realistic implementation plan including a timeline demonstrating an understanding of the collaboration planning process. Or, evidence that the organization is ready to implement a demonstration program in an expeditious manner.
- Evidence of ability to collaborate with others. Details regarding collaboration for planning purposes needs to be included.
- A realistic budget with justification.
- Evidence that affected populations are involved in the planning or advocacy process.
- Alternative/additional resources that can help to develop and sustain this effort have been identified.

## Important Dates

July 6, 2007	<b>Letters of Intent Due in the Foundation Office by 5:00 p.m.</b>
July 27, 2007	<b>Notification of Encouraged Proposals</b>
August 27, 2007	<b>Full Proposals (invited) Due in the Foundation Office by 5:00 p.m.</b>
November 15, 2007	<b>Foundation Board of Directors Meeting/Awards Made</b>

*Thank you for your consideration and interest in our goal to reduce poverty in Cuyahoga County and increase the availability of quality, permanent housing with supportive services to help those most in need.*



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The Sisters of Charity  
Foundation of Cleveland was  
established by the Sisters of

Charity of St. Augustine Health System in 1996. In January 2006, the Sisters of Charity Foundation joined with the Saint Ann Foundation to form a single organization. The Saint Ann Foundation was formed by the Sisters of Charity of St. Augustine in 1973 with an endowment from the sale of Saint Ann Hospital which served Cleveland women and children for 100 years. The combined Foundation is a resource for non-profit organizations primarily focused on poverty, health and the Saint Ann legacy of caring for women and youth.

<sup>1</sup> Family Housing Fund Public Education Initiative. (2005). *Children Pay the Price for Homelessness*. [On-line] Available: [www.fhfund.org](http://www.fhfund.org)

<sup>2</sup> Magee, M. & Burt, M. (2005). The Family Permanent Supportive Housing Initiative: Family History and Experiences in Supportive Housing. [On-Line] Available: [www.schwabfoundation.org/index.php/articles/623](http://www.schwabfoundation.org/index.php/articles/623)

Proscio, T. (2006). More than Roof and Walls: Why Resident Services are an Indispensable Part of Affordable Housing. Enterprise Community Partners. [On-Line]. Available: [www.enterprisecommunity.org](http://www.enterprisecommunity.org)

<sup>3</sup> Burt, M.R., Pearson, C.L., Montgomery, A.E. (2005) *Strategies for Preventing Homelessness* U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Policy Development and Research. [On-Line]. Available: [www.huduser.org](http://www.huduser.org)

Cunningham, S. & McDonald, M. (2006). *Promising Strategies to End Family Homelessness* National Alliance to End Homelessness. [On-Line]. Available: [www.endhomelessness.org](http://www.endhomelessness.org)

Granruth, L.B. & Smith, C.H. (2001) *Low Income Housing and Services Programs: Towards a New Perspective*. National Low Income Housing Coalition. [On-Line] Available: <http://www.nlihc.org/doc/Housing.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Granruth, L.B. & Smith, C.H. (2001) *Low Income Housing and Services Programs: Towards a New Perspective*. National Low Income Housing Coalition. [On-Line] Available: <http://www.nlihc.org/doc/Housing.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> Cunningham, S. & McDonald, M. (2006). *Promising Strategies to End Family Homelessness*, National Alliance to End Homelessness. [On-Line]. Available: [www.endhomelessness.org](http://www.endhomelessness.org)