Application Guidelines and SVP Model

SVP Model

SVP Tucson is passionate about making Tucson a better place to live, through strategic and collaborative investments in our community. *We build powerful relationships with organizations in Tucson that are tackling complex and difficult social problems.*

Our venture philanthropy model is two-fold. First, we contribute our professional and business expertise to the non-profits to help them build long-term organizational capacity. Second, our partners together make multi-year, unrestricted gifts to carefully vetted, innovative non-profit investees that show strong potential for positive social change. Together, these efforts help make our investee non-profits stronger organizations that can make even greater impact.

SVP Capacity-Building Grants/Partnerships

SVP believes that stronger management, systems and infrastructure result in nonprofit organizations that are more effective in their program and service delivery. To achieve this, we give *more than* money. We build long-term strategic relationships with the nonprofits we fund (our Investees). With an eye to increasing the capacity of the nonprofit, we provide high-level volunteer or professional assistance, in addition to grant dollars, to meet the distinct needs of each Investee.

SVP Resources

In response to an organization’s capacity building needs, SVP provides skilled volunteers and training opportunities in the ten broad areas described below. Because of the ebb and flow of our Partnership and the volunteer nature of our work we don’t always have Partners available in each of these resource areas:

- **Financial Management** - Accounting procedures and systems, budget development, financial reporting, cash-flow planning and audit readiness.
- **Fund Development** - Fundraising - plan development, donor cultivation strategies, campaign planning, and assessments.
• **Information Technology** - Needs assessment, requirements gathering, technology planning, software and hardware analysis, systems networking, and database development.

• **Marketing and Communications** - Communications and marketing plan development, collateral material design, media training, marketing campaign development, and PR and media outreach.

• **Program Design and Evaluation** - Outcomes-based program planning, development of evaluation framework and tools, theories of change, logic models, data management and data analysis.

• **Human Resources** - Personnel policy development, Performance management strategies, hiring and recruitment procedures, job description development, staff planning, and succession planning.

• **Mission, Vision, Strategy and Planning** - Organizational assessment, business plan or strategic plan development, needs assessment, and retreat facilitation.

• **Legal Affairs** - Insurance review, employment law, real estate negotiation, intellectual property guidance, contract review, and corporate by-laws development.

• **Leadership Development** - Executive and team coaching, peer mentoring, formal leadership training, and management skills training

• **Board Leadership** - board development planning and training, policies and procedures development, skills assessment, board evaluation, and fundraising training.

By working together, our Investees and Partners develop a unique mutually beneficial relationship. Our Investees gain from the valuable expertise, guidance and mentorship of our Partners. In return, the experience allows our Partners to gain rich insight into community issues and the nonprofit sector, and develop a deep connection to the Investee and to the entire community.

SVP makes initial single-year grants (generally in the amount of $25,000) with the intent of establishing longer term partnerships with its Investees (typically 3 years). Twice yearly, the grant outcomes and relationship potential of each Investee are evaluated through our Portfolio Grant Review process to determine further support if it strategy and tactics need to be adjusted.

**Our Capacity Building Grant Focus – NEW FOR 2018**

Through our venture philanthropy (time + money) model, we help strengthen the organizational capacity of nonprofit organizations that are working to provide *Pathways out of Poverty for Children, Youth and Families*. By doing so we aim to break the
intergenerational cycles of poverty and give all of Tucson’s young people the opportunity to realize their full potential.

We intentionally define our focus in broad terms, recognizing that the most impactful work is dynamic and often multi-disciplinary. We seek to partner with nonprofits that are committed to creating positive change for youth and families, providing the tools to develop *Pathways out of Poverty*. Examples include organizations that work in one or more of the following areas:

**Educational Attainment:**

- Close the achievement gap by keeping students in school, helping them graduate, getting those who drop out back in school, preparing them for post-secondary education/training, supporting college access/retention
- Help students meet or exceed on-grade academic indicators (3rd grade reading, 4th grade math, 8th grade science, STEAM curriculum, etc.)
- Increase access to quality early learning and childcare programs

**Family Stability:**

- Build supportive parent and child interactions that create positive relationships
- Increase skills training, education, and career guidance for individuals with families, allowing them to earn a livable wage
- Provide tools and opportunities for families to build their savings and assets

**Youth Resiliency:**

- Provide positive role models and mentors to at-risk youth
- Help young adults develop the habits, skills, and self-efficacy required for meaningful employment
- Promote positive engagement in the community, or meaningful enrichment activities to at-risk youth

If your work does not fit into one of these categories, yet addresses timely and critical barriers to children, youth and family success, consider applying. We are interested in new approaches.

**How we define poverty:**

There are numerous formulas and metrics used to identify those in our community who are living in or near poverty. These include the federal poverty line, Medicaid eligibility, free and reduced lunch eligibility, and Title 1 school enrollment. Our definition is intentionally broad. We do not define a specific income level or metric. Instead we ask applicant organizations to share how they define their target audience and substantiate the need with client demographics, supportive data and metrics.
Our Sweet Spot

Our Sweet Spot is where the mutual opportunity for SVP, our Investees and the community is the greatest. We have found our Sweet Spot is at the intersection of four key elements. We are poised for success when we work with nonprofits that are making an impact on issues related to life skills, add SVP’s capacity-building know-how and unrestricted funding, and infuse our collective work with a collaborative and innovative spirit.

Key Success Factors

What organizations are the best candidates to become our investees? Over the years, SVP Tucson has learned there are several key factors to our success with investees. When most of these factors are already in evidence, we have the highest chance of achieving a highly cooperative and synergistic relationship. We seek organizations that:

- are collaborative and transparent,
- have a vision for the future of their organization,
- have programs that are evidence based,
- perform regular assessment/measurement of impact,
- routinely exhibit mutual respect and a shared partnership between staff and board,
- are stable operationally and in their leadership,
- exhibit a desire to self-reflect, learn and develop,
- are committed to enhance their effectiveness and have a clear sense of the organization’s developmental needs (management, governance, systems, etc.),
- have a long-term vision for the organization’s programs and infrastructure, and
- possess the capacity to undertake intensive self-assessment and work with volunteer and paid consultants.

Eligibility Requirements:

To be considered for an SVP Investment, your organization must:

- Be classified as a 501(c)(3) public charity,
- Have headquarters and key leadership staff located in the Greater Tucson Area,
- Provide a majority of its services in the Greater Tucson Area
- Offer programming that provides pathways out of poverty for children, youth and families, with this area representing a majority of your organization’s focus
Applicants should also demonstrate the following organizational characteristics (the more of these characteristics that are present, the stronger the application, but SVP will not eliminate organizations because only some of these characteristics are present):

- Employ at least three full-time or equivalent employees,
- Have a total operating budget between $300,000 and $5,000,000,
- Have been in operation for at least three years, and
- Programs serve at least 100 annually.

Additionally:

- SVP will not consider grant requests from individuals, public school districts or their schools, pure sports teams, or any organization that discriminates on the basis of religion, race, sexual orientation, gender, age, marital status, national origin, or physical ability, or organizations that promote specific religious activities or beliefs.
- SVP will not make grants to support auctions or fundraising events, debt reduction, endowment funds or capital campaigns.

Funding decisions at SVP are made by a committee of Partners, which allows them to learn more about the issue area, review proposals, and attend site visits. Partners will use both the programmatic and organizational criteria above as a guide in making their funding decisions.

For more and the most up to date information on how to apply for funding from SVP visit this link.

The Capacity Building Model in Action

1. New Grant Selection Process
To apply for a grant from SVP, prospective applicants must prepare our online application and include all requested information. As part of their written proposal, organizations define their organizational capacity building needs and propose areas for SVP assistance. SVP is interested in understanding a prospective Investee’s capacity building goals to determine if SVP can add value to the organization. During the proposal review and site visit process, SVP encourages potential Investees to evaluate SVP to determine how to most effectively work with us.

2. Grant Terms
SVP makes single-year grants with the intent of forming multi-year relationships with Investees. This operating principle stems from our belief that effective grantmakers must be willing to support nonprofits over a multi-year period. It often takes several years for organizational capacity building efforts to be realized. Although SVP is committed to the principle of
supporting Investees for a multi-year period, Investees are required to undergo an annual review process to ensure that grant dollars are being used appropriately, to measure progress on program and capacity building goals, to assess volunteer projects, and to determine the overall impact of SVP’s resources. Assuming reasonable progress is made in these areas, SVP expects that funding relationships with most organizations will last for 3 years. Grant funds can be used for general operating support, program-specific needs, or capacity-building projects.

3. Kicking off a Relationship with SVP
Once a grant is awarded to an organization, a few initial steps guide our work together:

a) Initial Meeting: New Investees participate in a heart to heart meeting to discuss and agree upon the terms of the engagement. The executive director and board chair (minimum) and the Lead Partner and SVP Executive Director attend this important expectation setting meeting. The Lead Partner is an SVP member that serves as the primary liaison between the Investee and SVP staff and partners.

b) Investee Introduction to the Partnership: SVP will hold a Partner event to introduce the new Investee to the full Partnership. The Investee will share information about their programs and engagement opportunities. This event is informative and fun and a celebration of the new partnership.

c) SVP Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool: Investees are asked to participate in a self-assessment process using the SVP Organizational Capacity Assessment Tool or OCAT. The tool assesses ten functional areas of non-profit capacity and is designed to help Investees evaluate their current capacity and establish goals for building those areas. The tool is also used as a baseline assessment of capacity so improvements can be measured over time. The tool should be completed by 3-5 key members from the organization including the Executive Director, key leadership staff and 1-2 board members.

c) Annual Workplan: Upon completing the OCAT, Investees and Lead Partners develop an Annual Workplan to define their goals for the grant period and indicate the areas in which SVP Volunteers or other resources will be requested.

d) Advisory Team: SVP supports the Annual work plan of our Investees through a team approach. Each team is made up of Partners that have both a strong interest in working with a particular non-profit and have the expertise and skills which match up with the needs stated in the work plan. Projects undertaken by the work team are prioritized by members of the team, SVP staff and the Lead Partner. The team approach allows for more learning and engagement for our Partners as well as a more seamless approach to the work. It also offers an opportunity
for Partners to learn a new skill which they may continue to use throughout their philanthropic journey.

4. Getting to Work

Once an Investee has completed the OCAT, Annual Workplan and defined work projects, the real “work” begins. SVP provides three layers of support:

a) **SVP Partners** are the primary resource to fill volunteer requests and meet the capacity building needs of Investees. SVP profiles all of its Partners to understand their skills, time availability, interests, and educational and professional background. SVP staff uses this information to match Partners with the Volunteer Job requests submitted by Investees.

b) Each Investee has a **Lead Partner** who serves as the primary liaison to SVP as well as the key contact for SVP volunteers. The Lead Partner works with Investees on an ongoing basis to assist in the definition and creation of volunteer job requests, to ensure that new volunteers are provided adequate orientation to carry out volunteer projects, and to assure that project goals are met. The Lead Partner also acts as an advocate for the Investee during key evaluation phases such as the midyear review and annual refunding review process.

c) **Extended Support** refers to the network of companies, individuals, technical assistance providers, universities, and other community organizations that can provide services or resources to Investees. Extended support can also include friends or professional associates that Partners identify to contribute skills and pro bono services. SVP uses these connections to enrich the resources that we offer.

5. The Portfolio Review Committee

The Portfolio Review Committee (PRC) is a standing committee of SVP Partners who oversee the annual refunding decisions for Investees. The PRC conducts mid-year and end-of-year reviews for each organization. The mid-year review is a formal meeting designed to give SVP staff and PRC representatives an opportunity for a status check and ensure that projects and goals outlined in the Annual Workplan are on track. The end-of-year review involves submission of a written proposal and in-person discussion with the PRC. As part of the refunding proposal, Investees may complete an updated version of the OCAT, report progress on their Annual Workplan, provide a draft Workplan for the coming year.

6. Long-term Vision

Because SVP strives to develop long-term, productive partnerships with its Investees, it’s critical to establish a vision for the partnership and ensure that there is shared understanding of the next stage of organizational development that the Investee wants to reach and how SVP can
support their efforts. During the first year, SVP staff, the Lead Partner and the Investee will mutually develop a longer-term plan and vision that lays out overall goals for building capacity and will be used to jointly assess progress over time. The long-term vision is unique to each SVP-Investee relationship.

**Understanding SVP’s Approach**

SVP seeks to develop true partnerships with nonprofits. SVP’s model is not appropriate or desirable for every non-profit. SVP’s approach is unique and most non-profits are not accustomed to a funder being involved with the internal work of an organization. For those non-profits that are willing to engage in this type of relationship, SVP offers a compelling opportunity for financial and organizational capacity building support. However, it takes appreciable time and effort from SVP and Investees to understand how to effectively engage SVP’s resources, develop trust with SVP to jointly address organizational needs; and provide orientation and management of volunteers. To optimize the relationship, an Investee must be willing to spend time and resources, especially up front, to accrue the benefits.

**Examples of SVP projects with Investees: projects are dependent upon Partner availability and expertise**

**Financial Management**
- Creating a new financial reporting system merged from two separate accounting systems
- General review of accounting policies and procedures to prepare for an audit

**Fund Development**
- Developing a plan to diversify revenue sources
- Coaching fund development staff

**Information Technology**
- Building a new database to track program outcomes and/or individual donors
- Setting up a network, email accounts and file servers to improve connectivity

**Marketing and Public Relations**
- Guidance in writing a marketing or communications plan
- Developing or re-writing existing marketing materials and brochures

**Program Design and Evaluation**
- Assisting in the creation of a Logic Model and evaluation plan
- Providing training on program evaluation design, data analysis, and summary of program results

**Human Resources**
- Revision of personnel policies and procedures
• Assistance with job description creation, recruiting, and evaluating candidates for a new position

**Mission, Vision, Strategy, and Planning**
• Development of an expansion plan to extend program offerings or significantly grow local sites
• Facilitation of a staff and board strategic planning retreat

**Leadership Development**
• Hiring an executive coach to work closely with an Executive Director
• Providing a scholarship to attend an intensive leadership development program

**Board Development**
• Providing training on board roles and responsibilities, including fundraising
• Development of board policies and procedures

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**About SVP Tucson**

**Our Vision**

SVP Tucson envisions a community where everyone thrives. We achieve this vision by connecting and investing in our community to enhance social impact.

**Who We Are**

We are an ever expanding community of engaged philanthropists (we call them partners) dedicated to building the capacity, strength and impact of nonprofits in addressing social problems.

We accomplish this through:

• Thoughtful and strategic investments and collaborations
• Our Partners’ engagement and expertise, and
• Inspiring and equipping Partners to be more strategic and effective with their giving