



## Prize for Parent Organizing

### OVERVIEW

The Prize for Parent Organizing, an exciting new program of The ZOOM Foundation, supports nonprofit organizations inspired by the potential of parent power to contribute to the achievement of educational equity in Connecticut. Up to five selected organizations will each receive two capacity-building grants over the course of two years (totaling \$100,000-\$200,000) to develop and implement a parent organizing strategy in a Connecticut city or neighborhood. Organizing staff will be further supported through a leadership and professional development program. To encourage local support for organizing work, these organizations will also be eligible for a grassroots fundraising matching grant. Near the conclusion of the two-year program, one organization from this group will be awarded the Prize itself: a \$150,000 grant that recognizes achievement in successfully implementing an effective parent organizing strategy.

### THE CREATION OF THE PRIZE

Connecticut has the largest educational achievement gap in the country. The ZOOM Foundation has invested in organizations that endeavor to cause significant, lasting change and generate momentum in closing this gap. We believe that all children should have equal access to an excellent education so as to achieve their individual potential -- and that our communities depend on it. Too many families suffer the ill effects of poverty and racism and do not have equal access to the skills, opportunities and supports necessary to exit poverty, achieve their personal dreams and fully participate in our democracy. In Connecticut, children of color and those in poverty do not have sustained access to high quality teachers and schools. This directly affects their future, as well as the future of our nation. Connecticut can make sustainable gains in closing the achievement and opportunity gaps only if we invest in the development of local leaders and their collective action for great public schools. The Prize for Parent Organizing will explore community organizing

as a vehicle for empowering parents from underserved areas. We believe there is pent-up demand among parents and inadequate channels for their engagement as powerful change agents in their schools and communities.

While the goal of the project is educational equity, we are agnostic to the specific issues that the organized parents may choose to address. Instead, we are focused on learning from parents and organizers and in growing the capacity of education-focused community organizations in the state.

### CRITERIA FOR SELECTION

Nonprofit organizations of any size with operations in Connecticut may apply. Organizations with prior experience in community organizing will be favorably considered. The single most important selection criterion is the high potential of an organization to create and execute a realistic, yet aspirational, strategy for organizing parents. This strategy should contain a thoughtful game plan for measuring the success of the strategy and its implementation.

### TIMELINE

Interested organizations must submit an application by August 28, 2015 at 5:00 p.m Eastern Time. In September, a subset of applicants will be invited to pitch their strategy to a selection panel made up of civic leaders from across the state. Final decisions will be made by September 30, 2015.

### APPLY!

To request an application or for additional information, please visit [www.zoomfoundation.org](http://www.zoomfoundation.org), or email: [assistant@zoomfoundation.org](mailto:assistant@zoomfoundation.org).

**Thank you for your interest!**