**2016 Soulard Community Improvement Grants**

Request for Proposals and Grant Application

**Purpose**:

The Mardi Gras Foundation (MGF), founded in 2002, provides physical improvement grants to the Soulard community, which has hosted Soulard Mardi Gras since 1981. Mardi Gras has become the region’s largest single event (Grand Parade Day) and the largest calendar of events for a single festival season (14 events over six weeks, including the Mayor’s Mardi Gras Ball).

Money raised by Mayor’s Mardi Gras Ball is the source of funding for the Soulard Community Improvement Grants, through the MGF. To date, the MGF has issued more than $200,000 in Soulard Community Improvement Grants, including funding for:

1. The development of the Soulard Entryway at Gravois and Tucker;
2. Wrapping Soulard Market Park and Pontiac Square Park in historically appropriate ornamental iron fencing;
3. New park benches in Soulard Farmer’s Market;
4. Installation of permanent electric power at Soulard Market Park to facilitate the production of community activities throughout the year;
5. Installation of historic lighting at Soulard Market Park and Pontiac Square Park;
6. Soulard inclusion in the Convention and Visitors’ Commission Wayfinding Program;
7. Soulard neighborhood marketing brochure;
8. Phase 1 capstone and expansion funding for the Frenchtown Dog Park;
9. Seed funding for neighborhood markers;
10. Reforestation of Soulard, with more than 160 new trees;
11. Capital improvements to Gene Slay Boy’s Club.

**Criteria**:

The Mardi Gras Foundation (MGF) Grant Application consists of the following components, which should be submitted in the order listed below. This checklist is provided to help ensure a complete proposal. It does not need to be submitted with the proposal.

□ **Section I: Cover Letter**

Include the purpose of the grant request and a brief description of how the request fits with the MGF purpose and grant-making priorities.

□ **Section II: Narrative**

Provide an overall project narrative, including any context for your request that you think may not be covered in our grant-making guidelines below. Please limit your narrative to three (3) pages.

□ **Section III: Satisfaction of Grant-making Guidelines**

The criteria below are a set of guidelines, framed as questions that the MGF board considers when awarding grants. These questions should be addressed in the Grant Application.

1. **How will the proposed project benefit the Soulard community?**
2. **Does the proposed project have broad community support and/or multiple community organizations as applicants?**
3. **Is the proposed project a physical, permanent improvement to the community?**
4. **Would the MGF funding be decisive in terms of the ability of the applicant to complete the proposed project?**
5. **Would the MGF grant be the only source of money for the proposed project, or are there other funding sources which could be leveraged by an MGF grant?**
6. **Does the applicant have the ability to successfully complete the project?**
7. **Is/are the applicant/applicants a Soulard-based not-for-profit organization?**

Final decisions on all grants are at the sole discretion of the MGF. MGF reserves the right to reject all applications and issue a new RFP should all applications fail to meet MGF objectives and guidelines..

**RFP Process:**

1. Soulard-based not-for-profit organizations are invited to visit STLMardiGras.org and download a copy of the Request for Proposals.
2. A copy of the Request for Proposals will be delivered via email to all not-for-profit organizations listed in the most recent Soulard Restoration Group (SRG) NFP catalogue, the most comprehensive neighborhood list available. [All applications will be equally considered, regardless of whether the applicant appears in the SRG catalogue.]
3. All applications must be delivered either in person, via U.S. Mail to **MGF Community Grants, 2200 Dolman, St. Louis, MO 63104,** or via email to **mardigrasfoundation@gmail.com** by no later than **5 p.m. Monday, October 31, 2016. No Applications will be accepted after that time.**
4. MGF will consider proposals at the Q4 2016 board meeting.

2016 Soulard Community Improvement Grants will be announced via email to all applicants, and available on the web at STLMardiGras.org **no later than November 20, 2016..**

**Soulard Community Improvement Grant Application**

**Legal Name of Organization:**

**DBA** (if applicable):

**Mailing Address** (and physical address if different):

**Phone:**  **Fax: EIN:**

**Website:**

**Organization Email Address:**

**Name of CEO or Executive Director:**

**Phone:** **Email:**

**Application Contact & Title** (if *not* the CEO or Executive Director)**:**

**Phone:** **Email:**

**Organization Information**

**Year Founded:**

**Mission Statement:**

**Geographic Area Served** (specific to this proposal)**:**

**Tax Exemption Status:**

□ 501(c)(3)

□ Using a fiscal agent/fiscal sponsor

Name of fiscal agent/sponsor:

□ Other than 501(c)(3), describe:

**Number of Employees: Full-time: Part-time:**

**Grant Request Information**

**$**

**Type of Grant Requested** (select one)**: Amount of Request:**

□ General Operating Support

□ Program or Project Support

Name of Program or Project:

□ Capital Request

□ Other

**How will the proposed project benefit the Soulard community?**

**Does the proposed project have broad community support and/or multiple community organizations as applicants?**

**Is the proposed project a physical, permanent improvement to the community?**

**Would the MGF funding be decisive in terms of the ability of the applicant to complete the proposed project?**

**Would the MGF grant be the only source of money for the proposed project, or are there other funding sources which could be leveraged by an MGF grant?**

**Does the applicant have the ability to successfully complete the project?**

**Is the applicant a Soulard-based organization?**

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 **Organization’s Current Budget for Fiscal Year Ending:**

**Income: Expenses:**

**Program or Project Budget:**

**Income: Expenses:**

**By signing below, I certify that the information contained in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.**

**CEO/Executive Director Date**