# COVID-19 Emergency Funding

## Resources for Funding Applicants

APIRG recognizes that writing funding applications can be nerve-wracking and confusing. Each funding org wants you to use a particular set of terms to describe your project in a way that reflects their own values, politics and mission. Writing applications can seem to be more about fitting your ideas into the funders' boxes than about really presenting your brilliant project. This also often leads to 'gatekeeping,' where only folks who are 'in the know' about a particular cultural or political scene have access to the funds.

APIRG, too, uses specific language to describe our values and politics. The language and political frameworks we use - anti-oppression, intersectionality, accessibility, etc - emerged from the thoughts and practices of generations of folks fighting for a better world. **We are committed to upholding the ideas that this language represents, but we understand that the language isn't familiar for everyone.** And we don't want to make you change the way you speak!  Therefore, we want to make sure the ideas behind the words are clear, so that you can know exactly what kinds of projects we're interested in funding, and why. Then, you can decide if your project fits with APIRG's mandate, and if so, explain how in your own words. **We are always happy to review and discuss your application before you submit it, to make sure that you understand what we're looking for, and we understand what you're presenting.**

Here is an intro to the ideas we consider when reviewing funding applications. Click the title to watch a video on the term, if that's better for you!

## 1. Mutual aid (click for link to video)

Mutual aid projects are political acts that seek change by supporting one another and creating new relationships. Marginalized groups often do not have their needs met by either public or private service systems. When a group of people come together to support each other, taking their needs into their own hands, this is mutual aid. From an interview with Ejeris Dixon on mutual aid during the COVID crisis:

" Mutual aid is about co-creating the systems we need to survive these conditions – so that we can continue to fight against the oppressive systems. Mutual aid work is life-saving.  And as long as we ensure that we are doing this work in ways that are fueling movement building, then it's the exact work we need for these times." Dixon makes an important distinction - mutual aid is not charity. The goal of mutual aid is to build collective power and reciprocal relationships, rather than continuing the cycle of the 'rich' giving to the 'poor.' *Examples of mutual aid include organizing childcare cooperatives, maintaining housing squats,  teaching each other important skills or histories,  serving community meals that strengthen collective power rather than class divides, etc.*

## 2. Advocacy (no video link yet, sorry!)

While mutual aid is critical to survival and to building collective power, we also need to fight back against the systems that harm and neglect us in the first place. Advocacy is making your grievances and demands heard on a larger scale in order to pressure folks in power to listen and take action. *Examples include organizing letter-writing and phone-calling campaigns, organizing rallies and marches(not now, obviously), writing in popular media, putting up posters and banners and hosting workshops and teach-ins.*

## 3. Direct action (click for video about direct action!)

Direct action are acts where participants use their own resources and power to attain their objectives. This is when you stop waiting for those in charge to

act in your interest, and you and your community act on your own behalf. Both mutual aid and advocacy can be considered forms of direct action, depending on the methods and circumstances.

## 4. Diversity of tactics (click for video link! Skip to 3:10 if you're in a rush)

A key component of community organizing is respecting a *diversity of tactics*. There are many ways to create change in our society, and it is almost always the combination of different tactics that allows us to meet our goals. At APIRG, we recognize that there is no single 'best way' to create positive social change, and appreciate the diversity of tactics - including mutual aid, advocacy and other forms of direct action - used by different groups.

## 5. Anti-Oppression (click for video link - and click here for an example.)

**Oppression can be defined as:**

• Unequal access to power, resources, opportunities and acceptance based on social categories that an individual or group fits into (eg. race, ability, gender).

• Structural inequality that allows certain groups of people to assume a dominant position over other groups.

• Oppression is rooted in the past and continues into the present.

Systems of oppression work on many levels:

• SOCIETAL LEVEL: Societal norms are what is considered normal, acceptable, valued and desired by society. All forms of oppression are based on a norm that is valued more, ex. whiteness is the norm valued by racism.

• INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL: Oppression operates at the institutional level to embed societal norms and values into the policies, laws, rules and processes of governments, institutions (ex. health and education systems).

• INDIVIDUAL LEVEL: Structural and institutional oppressions often get enacted at an individual level, through people's attitudes and actions.

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**How to communicate that your work is anti-oppressive:**

● Avoid individualizing language of lifestyle and personal choices when talking about your cause. Instead, think about what structures, institutions, cultural forces are involved in the issue.

● Don't be afraid to call it what it is: use the language of racism, classism, sexism, ableism etc when talking about what you are trying to change.

● Reflect on and acknowledge the privileges/advantages that you, the project organizer, may have and how you will engage with them in your work.

## 5. Intersectionality (click for video link!)

APIRG also focuses on work that has an intersectional lens. Simply put, we want you to think about how all systems of oppression are connected and to inform your actions with this knowledge. The term was coined in 1989 by professor Kimberlé Crenshaw to describe how race, class, gender, and other individual characteristics "intersect" with each each other to affect the social experience of an individual.

For example: if you were looking to run a workshop for queer youth, an intersectional lens would acknowledge that homophobia and transphobia intersect with class, ability and race. You would work to make your event more accessible for individuals who live at these intersections (racialized, disabled, and/or poor queer youth). If you aren't sure how to do this, ask us!

**How to communicate that your work is intersectional:**

● Acknowledge the systems of oppression that impact your issue or project participants

● In your advertising/outreach plan explain how you will connect with individuals who live at these intersections

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## [6. Accessibility](#) (click for video link!)

The final important consideration is how you will make your event/project/activities accessible. At APIRG, we take a holistic and anti-oppressive approach to accessibility. This means it's not just about physical accessibility, though that is important! We ask that our applicants think about the barriers that might be created by systems of oppression. Think about how class, race, sexuality, gender as well as ability may play a role in who attends your event and who doesn't. Ask yourself, who would normally attend this event? Are there certain structural privileges that are shared by these individuals? Who is missing from the event? What structural issues may be causing them to not attend?

**Ways to make your event more accessible:**

• Hold it in a physically accessible venue with ASL interpretation

• Make your event free or pay-what-you-can

• Offer bus tickets to facilitate transport to and from the event

• Offer childcare or financial assistance for childcare

• Have food at your events

• When advertising,  invite people to contact you with any access needs

• Explicitly outreach to communities that exist at intersections of oppression

• Consider the language you use to outreach your event: academic or jargony language can be a barrier

• If space is limited, explicitly acknowledge that people who experience structural oppression will be prioritized over those who don't. Ask privileged people to identify their privilege and give up their space if there is not enough room.

**If you have any questions about these considerations, contact us!**