



## Racial Equity Initiative

### Overview

Stonewall was awarded a \$150,000 matching grant from Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues to develop and implement a four-year grantmaking and capacity building program to support and strengthen autonomous LGBTQ people of color organizations and projects in New York City. The grant is to be matched over four years, making it a \$300,000 initiative for Stonewall.

Stonewall Community Foundation is the public charity for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) New York. Our mission is to promote the well-being of LGBT individuals and strengthen the LGBT community. We do this by increasing resources; targeting those resources strategically to areas of greatest need; and by serving as a catalyst and clearinghouse for ideas and solutions. Through grantmaking, donor-advised funds, endowment funds and charitable education, Stonewall supports LGBT organizations and helps donors realize their philanthropic goals. Stonewall believes that a vibrant, fully integrated LGBT community will catalyze the creation of an all-inclusive society. **Since its inception in 1990, the Foundation has awarded more than \$14 million in grants to more than 450 organizations.**

Founded in 1982, Funders for Lesbian and Gay Issues (FLGI) seeks equality and rights for LGBTQ individuals and communities by mobilizing philanthropic resources that advance racial, economic and gender justice. FLGI is particularly committed to redressing the inequity in funding for LGBTQ people of color in the struggle to achieve full inclusion, acceptance and rights for all LGBTQ communities. **In 2005, foundation giving to LGBTQ organizations explicitly supporting people of color made up only 6% of all LGBTQ dollars granted to U.S.-based organizations.**

The intent of the Racial Equity Initiative is to build the organizational capacity and leadership of autonomous LGBTQ people of color organizations and projects *and* to support and strengthen the commitment and capacity of LGBTQ public foundations and funds to institutionalize their investment in LGBTQ people of color communities.

Racial Equity Initiative **foundation partners** include one national and seven regional public foundations:

1. Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice – New York City (national)
2. Community Foundation for SE Michigan - Detroit
3. Delaware Valley Legacy Fund - Philadelphia
4. Horizons Foundation – San Francisco
5. Liberty Hill Foundation – Los Angeles
6. PFund (PhilanthroFund Foundation) - Minneapolis
7. Pride Foundation – Seattle
8. Stonewall Community Foundation – New York City

**Baseline agreements** for the Racial Equity Initiative include:

- An understanding that racism exists within the broader LGBTQ movement.
- A recognition that it is morally and strategically important to achieve racial equity within the LGBTQ movement.
- An appreciation that autonomous LGBTQ people of color organizations have a unique role to play in communities of color.
- An acknowledgement that autonomous LGBTQ people of color organizations and projects have specific funding challenges.

An **autonomous LGBTQ people of color organization or project is defined as** having a mission that is specifically about, programs that explicitly focus on, and leadership that primarily reflects queer communities of color.

Racial Equity Initiative foundation partners are also expected to develop explicit policies and procedures to insure racial equity within their foundations.

**Stonewall's Racial Equity Initiative** has three components:

Grantmaking – Multi-year grants to autonomous LGBTQ people of color groups with a supplementary technical assistance stipend. Each grant will be a one-year grant renewable for two additional years. Grants will range from \$1,500 to \$15,000. (The grantmaking component will not start until the fall of 2008.)

Capacity Building – High quality, assessment-based training, technical assistance and networking opportunities for grantees and a wider network of autonomous LGBTQ people of color organizations and projects. Modeled after the *Stonewall Institute*, the capacity building component will include skills-building workshops, networking opportunities and political dialogue.

Documentation – Tracking and recording key outcomes, observations and opportunities throughout the initiative to inform Stonewall's program development and the overall Initiative.

Next steps include conducting a planning assessment; forming an advisory committee; convening – for strategic discussion and input - autonomous LGBTQ people of color organizations in the late spring of 2008; and issuing a Request for Proposals in the fall of 2008.

**For more information** on Stonewall's Racial Equity Initiative, please contact Director of Programs Roz Lee at 212-367-1544 or [roz@stonewallfoundation.org](mailto:roz@stonewallfoundation.org).