

THE RALPH WALDO FIRESTONE FOUNDATION

GUIDELINES FOR GRANT APPLICANTS, REVISED MARCH 20, 2001

The Ralph Waldo Firestone Foundation (RWFF) is one of the nation's largest health care philanthropies. It was funded in 1972 through the bequest of the late Ralph Waldo Firestone.

When the foundation began, our assets were \$1.2 billion. Over the years they have grown considerably. They now total over \$7 billion, even though we have given over \$2 billion in grants. In 1997, we awarded \$330 million in grants and contracts. The amount awarded from year to year depends on the size of our asset base, which fluctuates with the value of our investments. At any one time, our grants support some 2,300 projects in communities nationwide.

The vast majority of our grant making is for projects that fit into one goal area: to promote health and reduce the personal, social, and economic harm caused by alcohol and illicit drugs, especially as regards the families, friends, and loved ones of the chemically dependent. Despite national progress in stabilizing or reducing the rates of abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, substance abuse remains a pressing challenge to our society. Of particular concern is the problem among the families, loved one, children, friends, employers and co-workers of the chemically dependent.

YES, RWFF DOES FUND UNSOLICITED PROJECTS.

We fund unsolicited projects--good ideas that come to us from the field. Grants for these projects are made throughout the year. There are no specific application forms or deadlines.

In general, the Foundation funds only applicants that are public agencies or are tax-exempt under Section 501 of the Internal Revenue Code.

We do not fund ongoing general operating expenses or existing deficits; endowment or capital costs; research; international programs and institutions; direct support of individuals; lobbying of any kind

FIRST-STAGE REVIEW: LETTER OF INQUIRY.

Rest assured that we welcome unsolicited proposals that address our goals and priorities. To apply, we ask that you submit a preliminary letter of inquiry, not a fully developed proposal. Once received, your letter will be examined to determine whether the proposed project falls sufficiently within our program guidelines and current priorities that it can be considered. If not, you will be notified promptly.

PLEASE FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY.
The initial letter of inquiry should be 500-1000 carefully chosen words and should be organized as follows:

Need: a brief description of the problem you propose to address, including mention of evidence of its importance

Project description: State the project's principal objectives and expected outcomes. State concisely and realistically how you will evaluate the outcomes. Describe the components of the proposed intervention.

Qualifications: mention evidence of the qualifications of the institution to implement the project. Be concise, but mention evidence which may later be substantiated.

Our review of the proposal will start with these key questions: Does this proposal address one (or more) of our goals? Does it fit our current grant making priorities? Is it new or innovative? Would other institutions, public or private, be more appropriate sources of support? How would this project make a difference?

The projects funded are the ones that best answer these questions.

Second-stage Review: Application.
If your letter of inquiry is accepted, you will be invited to submit a complete application. A packet of forms and instructions will be sent to you to help you in this process. You will be required to use our budget worksheets and budget summary.