

JEWISH ORGANIZING INITIATIVE

2010 Request for Proposals (RFP)

For Partner Organizations

Deadline: March 12, 2010

This RFP gives background information about applying to become a partner organization for JOI. If you have any questions about the application or about JOI, please contact Catherine Bell at (617) 350-9994 x202 or cbell@jewishorganizing.org.

I. Summary

The Jewish Organizing Initiative (JOI) is seeking dynamic social change organizations to partner with us by hosting talented JOI Fellows in organizing roles for the 2010-2011 academic year. Partner organizations benefit from hiring capable young professionals recruited and trained by JOI throughout the year, and from salary subsidies that JOI may provide. Applications, including job descriptions of the community organizing work a Fellow will do, are due **March 12, 2010**. *Those organizations that have been accepted as a JOI placement in recent years may not have to complete the entire application – please be in touch with Catherine Bell if this is the case for your organization.*

II. Overview of the JOI Fellowship Program

The JOI year-long Fellowship Program, now in its twelfth year, recruits and trains excellent young community organizers and builds pathways for organizing as a sustainable career path by creating communities grounded in Jewish heritage and social justice values.

A central element of the program is the Fellow's full-time jobs as organizers at local organizations that partner with JOI. Typical partner organizations include unions, issue-based organizations, community development corporations, neighborhood organizations, and broad-based or interfaith organizations. The partner organizations are the official employers of JOI Fellows, paying the Fellow's salary, and offering high-quality supervision.

The Fellows, Jewish young professionals ages 21-30, gather for regular training sessions designed to develop the skills of an early career organizer. Fellows have access to JOI's network of experienced organizers and community leaders as trainers and mentors. Additionally, Fellows receive mentorship from JOI alumni and staff.

We ask our partner organizations to hire Fellows at a minimum salary of \$24,000 plus health benefits commensurate with other full-time employees. For eligible partner organizations, JOI can typically subsidize from \$1,000 to \$5,000 of the Fellow's base salary.

III. Benefits of Partnering with JOI

JOI helps maximize the potential and buffer the risk of hiring someone early in their career by providing professional training, a support network, and additional mentorship. For many of our previous organizational partners, getting a Fellow through JOI is considered an affordable way to add a new community organizing position to your staff, and providing existing staff with free, in-depth organizing training and mentorship.

Benefit #1: Recruitment of Talented Organizers

By recruiting a pool of talented emerging organizers, JOI adds value to your organization's next hire. Traditionally, JOI has attracted smart young leaders who are hungry for justice, both recent college graduates and more experienced recruits, with a particular emphasis on people who are looking to stay in the organizing field in the long run. Over the past 2 years, the number of applicants and the quality of our applicant pool has increased dramatically. Last year, 120 applicants applied for one of 10 positions. An in person, three day interview and matching weekend allowed us to thoroughly evaluate the 40 finalists from 22 states and 3 countries.

In our 2010 recruitment cycle, we expect to generate a pool of well over 100 applicants, whom we will selectively pre-screen before sending them into our matching process with our partner organizations. Thus, by the time your organization interviews JOI applicants, only the top candidates will have made it through a rigorous set of phone, in-person, and group interviews through JOI.

Benefit #2: Training and Professional Development

JOI Fellows add value to their placement organizations by undergoing a year of focused training in community organizing and other professional skills necessary for high-functioning non-profits.

JOI's training curriculum has been honed over a decade of implementation and evaluation, and it continues to evolve based on the changing needs of our partner organizations and Fellows. Fellows participate in interactive and practical trainings led by experienced organizers and social change leaders, centered on skills ranging from recruiting leaders and mounting campaigns to facilitating meetings and raising funds. Trainings are designed to be relevant to a range of organizing settings, including unions, neighborhood organizations and CDCs, issue-based organizations, electoral campaigns, and interfaith or broad-based organizations. More information about our training curriculum is available upon request.

Additionally, JOI provides our Fellows with regular, structured opportunities to reflect on their work and professional growth, to engage in best-practice sessions with other Fellows, and to seek mentorship from their peers and more experienced organizers.

Finally, the Jewish component of the fellowship encourages Fellows to connect their social justice work to their heritage, traditions, sense of spirituality, and community. Grounding the challenging work of organizing in a Jewish context helps Fellows to see the work as a sustainable career path, and to connect their work to a rich heritage of organizing for justice. Fellows do not generally "wear their Judaism on their sleeve" in secular settings, but are willing and eager to share this connection with others when asked.

Last year, we changed several crucial program components to make our training curriculum more competitive and efficient, including meeting fewer hours a month for Friday training sessions. This change in our program from previous years allows Fellows to effectively serve as full-time staff members at their placement organizations while retaining the training and community benefits of participating in JOI.

Benefit #3: Funding

Many social change organizations that would value a JOI Fellow are limited by budgetary constraints. JOI is aware of the challenges of funding social change work, and responds to this need by subsidizing some of our Fellows' positions. Pending available funds, for organizations that meet our general criteria and subsidy eligibility, JOI can provide averaging \$1,000 to \$5,000. Subsidies are awarded quarterly. In some cases, we are able to jointly fundraise for additional funds.

IV. Criteria for Eligibility

JOI is seeking partner organizations that will provide excellent opportunities for the emerging organizers who participate in our fellowship to gain experience in community organizing. These criteria were developed to ensure that organizations that partner with JOI will provide a supportive and challenging working environment for their Fellow, and that, in turn, JOI's training curriculum will be most relevant to their organizational needs.

In the application below, organizations must demonstrate that they meet at least three of the five following criteria:

- 1) The **supervisor** of the JOI Fellow has significant organizing experience and/or is currently an organizer and takes primary responsibility for the development of the Fellow as an organizer.
- 2) There is a demonstrated **organizational commitment to organizing** as a method used for social change.
- 3) The Fellow's work has a significant component of **in-person recruitment and training of leaders**.
- 4) The Fellow plays a **key role in a project or campaign** the organization is undertaking.
- 5) The project or campaign the Fellow works on is something that builds towards a **measurable social justice goal** in the outside world.

V. What People Are Saying About JOI

“JOI provided me with an opportunity to make a career change in my late 20s, transitioning from public school teaching to a career as a community organizer. The training components of JOI helped me to better understand important aspects of organizing and the integral link between my own Jewish heritage and the work I was doing throughout the week. After my JOI year, I continued to organize with the same organization and have deepened my commitment to a career in organizing. The combination of the fantastic on the job training that I got through my placement organization and the training I got through JOI was a solid foundation and invaluable for my work as an organizer.”

-- Lisa Vinikoor, Lead Organizer, Merrimack Valley Project, JOI Class of 2007

“We’ve had three JOI fellows and all of them were terrific finds for us as young organizers. One fellow, Jesse, became such a vital part of our organizing team that we hired him onto our permanent staff, staying for three additional years until he left for grad school in the community development field! Our current fellow, Cecily, is tackling new work in jobs organizing and service that we’ve been building for over the last two years. JOI screens its applicants very well, and develops a pool of bright young organizers who can thrive in a community-based organization that includes solid community organizing. It’s a great way to start up in filling a new organizing position.”

--Danny LeBlanc, CEO, Somerville Community Corporation

“I’ve had the pleasure of hiring four JOI Fellows, all of whom contributed tremendously to Keshet during their JOI years, so much so that I wanted to hire them as full-time staff after their JOI year ended. Throughout each of their JOI years, it was clear that the organizing training, community of other young Jewish social justice activists, and mentoring by veteran organizers – all of which was provided by JOI – enabled them to grow in their skills and confidence as organizers. Keshet did hire Orly Jacobovits as a full-time Community Organizer at the close of her JOI year, and she has made a huge difference to Keshet – helping to build our membership, develop leaders, and mobilize the broader Jewish community on GLBT rights issues. Every day I see how she is applying what she learned in the Jewish Organizing Initiative to her work at Keshet, and now she is supervising our current Fellow, Joanna Ware.”

-- Idit Klein, Executive Director, Keshet, JOI Class of 1999

VI. Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: I know JOI is a year-long fellowship, but I really want someone who will stay on longer. Is this possible?

A: Absolutely! More than half of JOI Fellows stay on after the year-long fellowship program is over. In fact, we recruit many individuals with the desire to see this as their first year of a job rather than a one-year commitment. Indeed over 50% of our Fellows are hired in permanent positions following their placement year. If you are looking for a long term employee, hiring a JOI Fellow is a good way to invest in an emerging professional's first year at your organization.

Q: I have someone on my staff already who fits the profile of your Fellows, and who would benefit from being a part of the program. Can they participate?

A: Yes! JOI encourages our partner organizations to consider this option – you may already have a potential JOI Fellow on your staff. If your staff member is between 21-30, identifies Jewishly, and is organizing at least 20 hours a week, s/he may be eligible. JOI staff is happy to speak with anyone considering the option of gaining professional training and supportive community through JOI next year. The person would need to complete the written application and screening process to determine eligibility for the program, but if accepted, would not need to participate in the matching event on April 12th 2010.

Q: I'd like to be a partner organization and have someone on my staff get the benefit of JOI, but I'd like to recruit my own staff member outside of your process. Can I do this?

A: Yes! We encourage our partner organizations to meet their organizational needs by recruiting their own JOI Fellows. The person would need to be screened by JOI to determine eligibility for the program. Please contact us for further details.

Q: I'm nervous that I may not find someone who fits our organization's needs. What if I don't find someone I want to hire at the matching event? By submitting an RFP and participating in the matching event, am I required to take on a Fellow?

A: Not at all! Applying to partner with JOI does not mean you are required to hire anyone who doesn't meet your organizational needs. Partner organizations only hire JOI Fellows when they find the right fit – this may happen at the matching event, in the weeks immediately after it, or not at all. If you are uncertain whether your organization has the financial resources to hire a fellow or whether you will find the right person through our process, we encourage organizations to keep their options open by applying to partner with us.

Q: When do Fellows begin working?

A: The JOI program year officially begins in late August at our Orientation retreat, and traditionally, Fellows begin work at their placements right at the beginning of September. However, many Fellows make arrangements with their placement organizations to start working earlier, and some begin working as early as the Spring preceding the fellowship year. If you require someone who can start work earlier, this can be negotiated directly with the Fellow you are planning to hire.

Q: How frequently will a JOI Fellow be out of the office for training sessions?

A: JOI Fellows meet 1/2 day per week on Fridays. Fellows also participate in a total of 4 training retreats that begin on Thursday and end on Sunday – one before their placement year begins, one in December, one in March, and a final reflection retreat at the end of the program year.

VII. Application to be a JOI Partner Organization

Please submit your completed application to Catherine Bell at cbell@jewishorganizing.org by **March 12, 2010**. Emailed applications are encouraged.

Please contact us with any questions:

Catherine Bell, Program Director
Jewish Organizing Initiative
99 Chauncy Street, Suite 600
Boston, MA 02111
617-350-9994 x202
617-350-9995 (fax)

Part 1 - Organizational information

Organization:

Executive Director:

Contact Name:

Address:

Phone Number:

Email address:

Briefly describe your organization's mission, history, programs, and key accomplishments. (*Up to 500 words*)

How would you describe your organizational culture?

How large is your staff, overall?

If your organization is accepted as a potential partner organization, we expect a staff person in charge of the hiring decision for your organization to be available to perform 1st round interviews at our JOI Spring Matching Event on **Monday, April 12, 2010**, from noon to 5:00pm. Will someone from your organization be available on that date?

Yes

No

If yes, please indicate the name, email address, and cell phone number of that person in the space below. We ask for a cell number so he or she can be contacted on the day of the event, if necessary.

Part 2 – Role of Organizing

1. What do you consider the primary method(s) your organization uses to work towards social change? (For example, education, advocacy, service, organizing, etc.) If organizing is not the primary change method, please comment on how organizing is supported within the organization.
2. How many organizers do you have on staff currently? How long have they been at the organization?
3. How many new organizers have you hired over the past 5 years?
4. If you had the resources, how many organizers would you like to have on staff?
5. What is your salary range for entry level organizers?

Part 3 - JOI Fellow Job Description

1. Write a brief job description for the position you are hoping a JOI Fellow will fill. Include organizing responsibilities as well as other projects they may be involved in, and what their role will be in these projects. *(up to 500 words)*
2. What social justice issue is the Fellow going to be working on, and how will you measure the success of the initiative/campaign for your organization? *(up to 250 words)*
3. JOI believes that a good supervisor is a crucial element in a successful JOI match. Please give the name and title of the potential supervisor and describe their experience, giving particular attention to the years of organizing experience and their ability to take primary responsibility for the development of the Fellow as an organizer. *(up to 250 words)*
4. Please describe if and how the Fellow's work will involve leadership development and face-to-face work with people. *(up to 250 words)*

Part 4 - Funding Subsidy (optional)

The cost of hiring a Fellow is at least \$24,000, plus benefits (which must include health). Partners may offer higher salaries at their discretion. JOI may be able to provide a subsidy based on available resources and organizational need. If applying for a subsidy, please provide the following information:

1. Please attach an organizational budget for the most recently completed fiscal year, with a budget narrative explaining any changes expected for the coming year.
2. What sources of funding will support the bulk of the JOI position?
3. What will you do if you do not receive subsidy funds from JOI?
4. Please tell us your tax exempt ID (501C3) number. (We cannot subsidize C4s.)

Thank you for applying to be a JOI Partner Organization!