



# Center for Family Life in Sunset Park

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## SCO Family of Services

October 14, 2016

345 43rd Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11232

T: 718.788.3500  
F: 718.788.2275

[www.cflsp.org](http://www.cflsp.org)

Dear Prospective Applicant Organization,

We are excited to announce the continuation of the New York City Worker Cooperative Development Initiative! We invite you to submit a proposal according to the guidelines offered in the attached Request for Proposals document. This letter serves as an introduction to the initiative.

This year's New York City Worker Cooperative Development Initiative is made possible through the generous support of the New York City Council. The funding will support worker cooperative development at four community based organizations (CBOs) in New York City. The project start date is January 2017 and its termination date will be through at least June 2017, with the possibility of continuation through December 2017, contingent on City Council funding. The Initiative provides 6-12 months of technical assistance, training, consultation, and legal services to CBOs through the Center for Family Life, a Program of SCO Family of Services, through three possible tracks: "Implementers", "Implementers Plus" and "Planners". The Initiative does not provide direct financial support to selected CBO applicants; it does provide technical program support and legal services for applicants interested in developing worker cooperatives among their members and community.

During the Initiative's term, staff members from Center for Family Life, Worker Cooperative Development Program, will provide each selected CBO with training on the role of the cooperative development incubator and model for incubation; guidance and support on the issues of market and feasibility studies as well as business plans for cooperative businesses; as well as guidance on curriculum development, recruitment and group facilitation for organizations launching cooperatives with members of their constituencies.

In addition, partner organizations will be supported in developing additional trainings for cooperatives on topics related to their particular industry, to develop marketing strategies and brands, and to work with a lawyer to select a legal structure, draft governance documents, and file legal documents to form a cooperative business entity.

CBOs that are interested in applying to receive technical assistance through this Initiative should have a history of exploring workforce development or entrepreneurship training within their organization, including as Planners through the Initiative. It is critical for selected CBOs to demonstrate a commitment to the model of worker cooperative development and its principles. If you are interested in receiving assistance through this Initiative please read the attached Request for Proposals and consider applying on behalf of your organization as either an "Implementer" or "Implementer Plus."

Thank you for your time and interest in this exciting project!

Strengthening youth | Supporting families | Building community



Center for  
Family Life  
in Sunset Park  

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SCO Family of Services

# New York City Worker-Cooperative Development Initiative

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

*This is not a solicitation for proposals for funding. It is an opportunity to obtain technical assistance to support programmatic work.*

### I. Our Goals

The Center for Family Life, a program of SCO Family of Services, has been awarded funding from the City Council to provide technical (not cash) support to community-based organizations (“CBOs”) in New York City that are interested in meeting their constituencies’ needs through the development of cooperative businesses. At this time, the Center for Family Life will provide technical assistance and training for 6 months, with the possibility of continuation through December 2017 contingent on City Council funding. CFL will provide the selected “Implementer” and “Implementer Plus” organizations with support to launch their first cooperative business. Additionally, the Center for Family Life will provide training and support for 6 months to “Planner” organizations as they learn about worker cooperative development and determine whether it is the right fit for both their organizations as well as their constituency. There will be a separate RFP in the spring of 2017 to apply as “Planners”.

The goals of the Cooperative Development Program and the NYC Worker Cooperative Development Initiative are to:

- Raise awareness about worker cooperatives as an economic opportunity for constituents, especially among communities that are isolated and/or marginalized
- Highlight the role of worker cooperatives as a strategy for building a socio-economic system that places people and the planet above profit, grounded in principles of democracy and equity

- Increase the number of organizations and individuals involved in worker cooperative development, along with the visibility and number of worker cooperatives, in New York City and nationally
- Build community and strengthen capacity among organizations involved in worker cooperative development and social justice work

Successful organizational applicants must demonstrate their capacity to have two dedicated project personnel participate in one of two cooperative development tracks: Implementers will participate in a 6-week cooperative development course and four monthly Lab Sessions (possibly ten, contingent on funding) at the Center for Family Life in Sunset Park, Brooklyn, in addition to monthly check-in calls following the initial training. Implementers Plus will participate in a monthly session which will include customized work sessions, Lab Sessions, and partner-led trainings.

## **Requirements**

### Implementers

Beginning January 12, 2017, the Implementer CBOs selected for the New York City Worker Cooperative Development Initiative will be expected to attend 3-hour weekly learning sessions for 6-8 consecutive weeks (with one break week). At the conclusion of the 6-8 week training, the “Implementing” CBOs will have produced a business feasibility study.

From March 23, 2017 through June 30, 2017, with the possibility of continuation through December 2017, the Implementer CBOs will be expected to attend 3-hour Lab Sessions once monthly. The “Implementers” will receive participatory classroom-based technical assistance from CFL staff as the groups recruit members and develop curriculum for a worker cooperative training, as well as continue to work on their incubation model to determine the type of training and business consultation they will provide for the worker cooperative and its members. During these months, Implementers will have 30-minute check-in calls with CFL staff to provide resources and support.

At the conclusion of the Initiative, “Implementing” CBOs will produce an initial model for the CBOs’ incubation approach.

One of our goals is to provide an educationally stimulating and supportive environment for the CBOs as they venture into cooperative development. The use of the Lab Sessions that engage CBOs that have been part of the initiative over the years is intended to create mutual support, constructive feedback, and inquisitiveness among the group members

about the process of cooperative development and our evolving role as consultants and advocates to worker cooperatives.

During the final four to ten months of the project, the CBO "Implementers" will have (a) developed a revised incubation model, (b) begun developing the curriculum for an initial cooperative member training, and (c) recruited participants to one cooperative per site.

### Implementers Plus

From January 12, 2017 through June 30, 2017, or December 2017 contingent upon funding, the "Implementer Plus" CBO selected for the New York City Worker Cooperative Development Initiative will be expected to attend monthly learning sessions. These will include bimonthly (every other month) 2-hour work sessions, including online workshops, that will be customized toward the needs of the CBOs. During the alternating months, the two CBOs will have the option of either attending the Lab Sessions (described above) or a partner-led workshop that more closely meets their needs. During these alternating months, the "Implementer Plus" CBOs will also have 30-minute check-in calls with CFL staff who will provide support and resources.

By December 31, 2017, the "Implementer Plus" CBOs will have (a) implemented their initial cooperative training for members, (b) created a plan to launch the cooperative, including a timeline of projected activities, (c) developed an updated incubation model outlining member and developer responsibilities, and (d) created a CBO-cooperative agreement.

## II. Requirements for a Successful Candidate

Applications are welcomed from organizations that:

- Are recognized by the IRS as 501(c)(3) organizations; or can demonstrate the organizational capacity to launch a multiyear project with a community group.
- Are located within and serve any of the five boroughs of New York City;
- Are committed to cooperative development as a way to create income generating businesses in low- income neighborhoods and communities. The cooperative incubator would be designed specifically to address critical needs of disadvantaged and/or marginalized populations, particularly women and men of color; immigrants; lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender individuals; women and men with disabilities; older men and women; homeless men and women; survivors of domestic violence; ex-offenders; or other excluded populations.
- Are interested in exploring cooperative development as a strategy to foster a just and sustainable socio-economic system that places people and planet over profit;
- Willingness to join and actively participate in the growing cooperative ecosystem in NYC;
- Emphasize community organizing and/or advocacy strategies in order to create meaningful institutional change in their communities;
- Demonstrate commitment to principles of democracy, equity, solidarity and community self-determination;
- Are community-based, which may be defined by geography, community organizing focus, shared interest and/or heritage;
- Are committed to documenting impact and using data to inform program development;
- Demonstrate the ability to provide and/or to refer community participants to social, health and economic supports needed to promote stability and facilitate their ongoing participation in the business enterprise.

# III. Submission Requirements

RFP responses must be received by **Monday, November 21, 2016**. Responses will be received via email to Rachel Isreeli at [risreeli@sco.org](mailto:risreeli@sco.org). Applicants responding to the RFP should submit any questions regarding the RFP prior to the deadline to [risreeli@sco.org](mailto:risreeli@sco.org).

The following are the required elements of every RFP response:

- Email subject line must include "RFP for NYC Worker Cooperative Initiative" and either "IMPLEMENTER" or "IMPLEMENTER PLUS"
- Proposal and forms consolidated to one (1) single PDF document
- All text must be legible 12 point font, double-spaced, one inch margins on all sides
- Each page must include a header identifying the proposer

# IV. Proposal Package

## Applicant Requirements for “Implementer” and “Implementer Plus” organizations interested in cooperative incubation

42 points available for Implementers, previous participants; 45 total points available for Implementers, new participants; 48 for Implementers Plus.

### **A. Program Description**

Please answer the following questions in no more than five (5) double-spaced pages:

1. What fundamental principles underscore your organizational work, including both the *content* of your work and the *process*? How do these principles relate to worker cooperative development? (3 points)
2. What is your *purpose* and *goal* for worker cooperative development? How do worker cooperatives fit both into your (a) organizational goals and programming, and (b) the world or socioeconomic system that you want to create. (3 points)
3. State whether you are applying as an “Implementer” or “Implementer Plus.” Explain the reasons for your organization’s interest in increasing involvement in cooperative incubation and development. Include examples of work your organization has done in the last year which would contribute to the knowledge and skills needed to build your capacity for worker cooperative development. What steps have you taken to be ready to be an Implementer or Implementer Plus? (3 points)
4. Discuss your organization’s short term and long term commitment goals to cooperative development, including your objectives for this year of support from CFL. If you have received support from CFL in the past, please explain how these goals are different from goals of previous years, and how CFL can support you in achieving your goals. (3 points)
5. ONLY for organizations that have not previously applied as Planners or Implementers: Discuss the population that your organization works with and why cooperatives might be both appealing and helpful to your constituents. Please refer to your Community Needs Assessment. (3 points)
6. In what ways have you engaged with your community about worker cooperatives? What are your next steps? Discuss your organization’s engagement with community

participants as equal partners in an enterprise, with shared goals and objectives. (3 points)

7. Summarize your strategy for building leadership within your constituency. Please articulate your thoughts about roles and responsibilities of both your organization and community members.(3 points)
8. What challenges have you faced and do you envision facing in your worker cooperative development? You can consider knowledge, funding, relationship with constituency, issues of governance, etc. Please be specific and honest about your needs, concerns and limitations, as this will help us determine how we can support you. Please identify concretely how you intend to face these challenges. (3 points)
9. Implementers Plus ONLY: Briefly describe the business that you expect to launch. What were the key findings from your Feasibility Study? What challenges do you anticipate? How will you seek to meet these challenges? Do people in your community have skills for this work or need training? Is there true demand for this business? What is the cooperative’s value proposition, key services and break-even point?(3 points)
10. Additionally, please state if your organization can commit to attending:
  - a. All of the 3 hour mandatory training sessions for the 6-8 week course as well as the 4-10 month follow up lab sessions after the course (Implementers ONLY)
  - b. Monthly work sessions, lab sessions and/or partner workshops (Implementers Plus ONLY)
  - c. Ongoing lab sessions as a community of learners, beyond the grant period.

**B. Capacity Building**

A commitment to capacity-building and fundraising is critical to being selected. In our experience the funding sought should cover the following expenses. Please indicate your existing capacity as well as your plans. The questions below go into further detail.

Capacity Need (1 point each)	We have this	We don't have this	Notes/Our Plan
Meeting space that can hold up to 20 people			
2 staff w/ ~10 hrs weekly for cooperative development			

Assessment of community interest in cooperatives			
Plan for back office support of a new cooperative			
Initial business costs for new cooperative			
Funding plan for coop development			

We recognize that this work can require significant allocation of staff time and organization resources: We estimate that at least ten (10) hours per week be dedicated to worker cooperative development. Please identify two (2) individual staff members at your organization who will be primarily responsible for worker cooperative development at your organization (one of these staff members should be the “Cooperative Coordinator” detailed below). Please provide background information about those members’ qualification and experience with cooperatives and/or starting a new project.

1. **Cooperative Coordinator to oversee the program.** (3 points)
  - a. Please describe plans to either assign these responsibilities to an existing staffer, or recruit a staffer, (if you are planning to recruit a staffer, CFL can provide information about the qualifications of an individual appropriate for this position), where this staff member will be placed in the overall organizational structure, and the strategy for financially supporting this position.
  - b. Include an organizational chart indicating where this position will be placed in the overall entity.
  - c. Please provide a detailed percentage or hourly breakdown of this person’s current responsibilities, and a percentage/hourly breakdown of how these responsibilities will shift in order to dedicate time to cooperative development. Indicate how a commitment can be made to assign this individual to the project for at least the first two years of the cooperative enterprise’s function (the typical period for initial business development).
  - d. Please indicate if this person has been a past participant in the Initiative.
  
2. **Supervisor for the Cooperative Coordinator.** (3 points)

A senior level staff person at the organization who will provide supervision for the Cooperative Coordinator. Please indicate the qualifications of the individual(s) to lead this project, the time available to provide supervision, and what funding currently supports staffer’s work. Indicate how a commitment can be made to assign this individual to occasionally participate in required lab sessions, as required, and in

site visits at the organization. If this person's job responsibilities and allotment of time will change in order to support this project, please provide a percentage/hourly breakdown.

3. **Back office accommodations to support a newly incubated cooperative for at least the first two years of the cooperative enterprise's functioning.** (3 points)

- a. Does the applicant intend to host back office accommodations for the newly incubated cooperative, or does the applicant intend for the cooperative itself to manage the administrative and back office tasks related to its business operations? These accommodations could include but are not limited to space for office and meetings, utilities, supplies, equipment rental, telephone and internet. If the organization intends to host these functions, a part time position may be sufficient for supporting one cooperative business. This position can be added once the cooperative launches.
- b. If it is the applicant's intention to host the back office function, please describe where the staff member will be placed in the overall organizational structure, the strategy for financially supporting this position, and the strategy for financially supporting these functions.
- c. If there would be an option for purchasing shared back office with other coops, would the organization be interested in considering this option?

4. **Initial business costs for each cooperative business for the initial six months to one year.** (3 points)

These costs include, but are not limited to, website development and hosting, marketing material design and printing, a business telephone line or voicemail, uniforms, industry specific trainings, products/tools for business, and child care during cooperative meetings. Please indicate the strategy for financially supporting these functions over the initial six months to one year of the cooperative's development. Specify if it is the organization's intention to cover these costs, or if the organization will have the worker-owners pay directly for these costs.

5. **Fundraising.** (3 points)

Please identify in detail your organization's plan to staff and fundraise for this program during this year's Initiative and beyond. Please state names of foundations, individuals, government grants/contracts, etc., which your organization plans to seek resources from to support this work. Consider the following personnel coverage: 0.3 FTE project coordinator; 0.1 FTE supervisor; 0.1 FTE back office.

**6. Data management capacity.**

If selected, we require your organization's commitment to recording and maintaining ongoing tracking of the following data about the cooperative business participants. Can the organization commit to data sharing for the period of the project, and for 18 months after the conclusion of CFL's involvement in the project? (Yes or No; please also indicate if data will be managed in an electronic format, and the organization's capacity to explore or share this data)

- a. Gender of cooperative member.
- b. Age of cooperative member.
- c. Borough where member resides.
- d. Member's last paid job, how long they held the job and their hourly/weekly wage.
- e. Number of members recruited for the cooperative.
- f. Total number of jobs obtained for all members at the end of the grant period.
- g. Average hourly wage for each member per month.
- h. Average hours worked by each member per month.
- i. Total earnings for the cooperative.
- j. Total amount of hours worked by entire cooperative.
- k. Average hourly wage for entire cooperative.
- l. Retention of members at 3, 6 and 12 months following formation of the cooperative business: Reason for departure for any member who has left the cooperative.
- m. Number of children under 18 residing with each member.
- n. Education level of member when joining the cooperative.
- o. Barriers to employment for each member.
- p. Member's work outside of the cooperative: type of job, how many hours, hourly rate, and schedule.

**C. Company Profile and Additional Information** (needed ONLY for organizations that did not apply as Planners in 2016, OR if any information has changed)

1. Two most recent Form 990s.
2. Most recent audited financial statement for organizations with a budget of \$250,000 or more.
3. 501(c)(3) designation letter.

4. A list of your Board of Directors including organizational affiliation, occupation, race, ethnicity, and gender of each board member.
5. Brief (approximately 100 word) resumes or biographical statements of key staff, including the Executive Director. Include the names, titles, and relevant qualifications for each.
6. An organizational chart.
7. Please have your proposal signed by an authorized officer for your organization.



Center for  
Family Life  
in Sunset Park  
SCO Family of Services

New York City  
Worker-Cooperative  
Development Initiative

# PROPOSAL COVER SHEET

Organization:	
Address:	
City/State/Zip:	
Main Tel:	
URL:	
<i>Please complete the following information for the proposal's primary contact person</i>	
Name:	
Title:	
Tel:	Email:
Address (if different from above):	
Executive Director Name:	
Executive Director Signature:	
Date:	