

# Tools to Use

# Funding Requests

**Good to know:** When deciding where to go for funds, NYC Councilmembers are your best bet. Though they have little legislative power over charter schools, they are the best vehicle for any small dollar, non-capital (permanent) budget request. Councilmembers tend to have individual procedures for funding requests; to start the process, write a letter with a description of your funding request to your Councilmember.

## CITY

**Capital Funding Requests for Non-Profits** can be requested either from the Borough President or from the City Council. The City Council's capital funding is administered by the Council borough delegations.

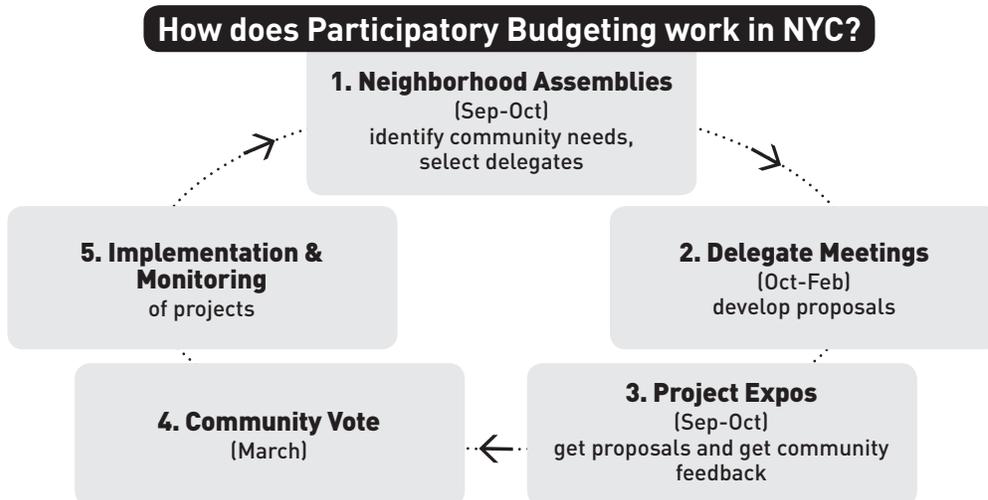
Requests to Borough Presidents:	Deadline: Late February
Requests to City Council:	Deadline: Early April
Both (if requesting both BP and CC for the same project)	Deadline: Late February

Full application at: [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov)

**City Council Participatory Budgeting:** (Some of) YOU get to decide how to spend (some of) your Councilmember's funds—up to \$1 million! It allows residents in the self-appointed Councilmembers' districts (see below) to vote on how to spend part of their district's capital discretionary funds.

**Who:** Brad Lander, Melissa Mark-Viverito, Eric Ulrich, Jumaane D. Williams, David Greenfield, Stephen Levin, and Mark Weprin.

How:



To learn more: [www.pbnyc.org](http://www.pbnyc.org)

## **Funding Request for Cultural Organizations via the Cultural Development**

**Fund (CDF):** An annual grant-making process for New York City’s nonprofit arts and cultural organizations.

### **Qualifications:**

- Located and operating in any of the five boroughs of New York City
- Incorporated in New York State and compliant with annual State and Federal filing requirements for nonprofit organizations, including NYS Charities Bureau filings
- In possession of a Federal Employee Identification Number (EIN)
- Certified tax exempt under Internal Revenue Service Code Section 501(c)(3). Incorporated non-profits without 501(c)(3) status may apply through a Fiscal Sponsor that is certified tax exempt under IRS Code Section 501(c)(3) and meets the above criteria

**To apply:** [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov)

**Department of Youth & Community Development:** A request can be made through the City Council. Any organization applying to the New York City Council to receive discretionary funding totaling more than \$10,000 must be prequalified by the City agency that oversees the services for which the organization is requesting funding support.

Organizations that are prequalified for the correct City agencies do not need to reapply or recertify to remain prequalified.

**More information at:** [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov)

## **STATE**

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State Assemblymembers and Senators make grants of discretionary funds, or “member items,” to charitable organizations in their districts, including schools.

In order to apply for these funds, schools must submit an application in early January to both their Assemblymember and State Senator. Each legislator has his/her own process and timetable for accepting these funding applications, but certain basic elements must appear in any application in order to pass legal muster.

### **Items that must be included in your application include:**

- Organization name and address, phone and fax number
- Organization tax ID number
- Contact person name, address, email address, phone and fax number
- The charitable purpose of the organization
- The amount of funding requested
- How the funding requested will serve a public need

### **Applicants must not:**

- Have violated state contract rules in the past
- Have a felon on the organization's board
- Be related to the legislator

### **Timeline and process for applying:**

- Determine your funding priority by **September/October**.
- Meet with your legislators from **October-November** to familiarize them with your school and discuss your funding request.
- Recruit school leaders, Board members and parents to participate in meetings.
- Determine who should receive office requests at the meeting, and the format for submission (some offices have a form they use, but not all).
- Confirm the deadline for submission.
- Mail and fax the submission to their office prior to the deadline, and call to confirm receipt.

### **A few important facts you should know:**

- Requests for funding should be reasonable; \$5,000 to \$25,000 will get serious consideration; requests for \$300,000 will not.
- Keep in mind that you are competing with numerous other groups vying for funding. Whenever possible involve parents and students, so there is a clear indication that the request is serving constituent needs.
- Funds should serve one-time needs, such as computers, a van, renovation of the library, etc. Requests to fund ongoing activities are not likely to be funded, as legislators don't like to fund requests that would result in the annual need for more funding.

Schools may also request funds for capital projects. These requests tend to be larger, and must also be for onetime expenses, including but not limited to building renovations, large equipment purchases, or new classroom furniture. Applicants seeking these funds should follow the process as outlined above for member items.

For more information or to receive sample letters for requesting discretionary funds, please contact David Golovner at [dgolovner@nyccharterschools.org](mailto:dgolovner@nyccharterschools.org) or at 212-437-8300.

# Sample State Funding Request

*(print on school stationery)*

## HIGHER PERFORMANCE CHARTER SCHOOL LEGISLATIVE INITIATIVE REQUEST

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### Contact Information

- The Higher Performance Charter School (HPCS)
- 123 Our Street
- Red Hook, Brooklyn
- School population: 450 students
- Grades: K-8
- Student demographics: Virtually all of the students reside in the surrounding neighborhood. The student body is approximately 91% African-American, 8% Hispanic, and 1% Caucasian, and 79% of HPCS students are eligible for free or reduced lunch. Our student body has the same percentage of ELL and special needs students as the surrounding community school district.
- Student Performance: our students performed 14 percentage points higher on math and 18 percentage points higher on English language arts than students in the community school district.
- Tax ID # is: 12345678
- Contact person: Principal Mary Smith, 718-123-4567; email smith@hpcs.or

### Our Need

As a public charter school, HPCS does not have access to categorical grant funding that traditional public schools receive. As such, we are at a significant disadvantage in funding a variety of school needs, including classroom technology. This poses a significant disadvantage for us in utilizing technology-based learning systems, and in training students in various important computer and web-based skills. This deficit harms the ability of our teaching staff to improve student learning in a variety of subjects, including math, English, science, and reading comprehension.

To address this need, HPCS requests a grant to support the purchase of 25 desktop computers and two laser printers. This purchase would enable us to establish a computer lab in our school that would become the technology-based teaching center of our school. The computer lab would also be made available to our parents between 3PM and 5PM daily, and on Saturdays from 10AM to 4PM, to enable our parents to learn computing skills and assist their students with computer-based assignments.

### Funds Requested

25 Personal Computers @ \$640 each	\$16,000
2 Printers @ \$2,000 each	\$4,000
<b>Total Requested:</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>

For more information about this request, please contact HPCS Principal Mary Smith at 718-123-4567, or at smith@hpcs.org

Thank you for considering our request.

# Sample Letter to Elected Official

January 10, 2015

The Honorable Keith L.T. Wright  
163 W. 125th St., Suite 911  
Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Bldg.  
New York, NY 10027

Dear Assemblyman Wright:

My name is Jane Doe and I am the Principal at ABC Charter School, which serves 540 students from your district. I am writing to you today to ask you to support legislation that will impact charter schools in Harlem.

Our school serves a diverse student body; 88% of them are living in poverty, and 16% are students with special needs. ABC Charter School currently shares a facility with District School 123. ABC is thriving and growing out of its space, but moving to private space is not an option due to a lack of facilities funding for charter schools.

ABC Charter School enjoys support from our entire community. Please vote yes on XYZ legislation to ensure the creation of a separate funding stream for charter school facilities.

I would like to thank you for your support of charter schools in the past. I hope you will continue to do so in the future.

Thank you for your time and attention to this very important matter. I would welcome the opportunity to speak with you in person or by correspondence.

Sincerely,

**Jane Doe**

Principal

123 West ABC St.  
New York, NY 12345  
(917) 555-1111  
janedoe@email.com

# Sample Press Release

Contact:

Jane Doe | 555.555.5555 | Jane@Charterschool.org

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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### **ABC Charter School Announces Community Partnership With Community Board 99**

*Students will see how change happens at the local level and make change with local officials*

Brooklyn, NY, February 14, 2015— ABC Charter School Principal Jane Doe and Community Board 99 District Manager Jimmy Smith announced a partnership today that will allow 150 high school students to experience city government in action. The partnership will be composed of two parts – students will shadow Community Board members and learn about their work, and then students will identify needs in their school community and work with the CB to address them.

“This is an historic partnership that will be life-changing for the students of our Brooklyn community. The impact of this partnership will be felt in the community for years to come,” said Doe.

“I think this is a natural step for our Community Board. These students will be much more involved in the community because of this. We have future Community Board members here,” added Smith.

The partnership will begin with a presentation by Smith at ABC Charter School explaining what community boards do, and then they will go to a board meeting together, where teachers will help students understand what is happening. Each CB member will then be assigned a small group of students that they will have shadow them on a day of work.

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ABC Charter School is a public school located in XYZ Neighborhood, committed to excellence and college preparedness. The school was chartered in 2005, and is working to close the achievement gap and deliver on the promise of equal educational opportunity for all children. ABC currently enrolls 450 kindergarten-high school students from the community.

# Good to Great: Online Advocacy and Organizing

Nothing beats a promise and a handshake. But for most of us, digital communication is the primary avenue for communication. Unfortunately, it can also mislead you into thinking you're doing a lot more than you are, so here are some tips to change that.

## Email

Over 80% of emails are never opened. To get past finicky recipients, include a catchy headline (google "Obama campaign email subject lines," for examples). While you're not the President, your emails will be read more if they're specific and personal. Consider emailing a few sociable parents individually to ask for their help in contacting others. The more personal the message, the better. And keep it short.

## Facebook

As a charter school leader, you could utilize Facebook by:

- Starting a page or group to advertise an event at your school, such as a fundraiser or concert.
- Posting a call to action, like a link to a petition in support of a piece of legislation.
- Updating your Facebook status to advertise for an event or bring awareness to an issue, then asking others to "share" it.

## Twitter

Twitter is worthless if you're not engaging in conversations. Tweet "at" people strategically to bring more attention to urgent issues and start real conversations.

Tweet from an event such as a rally or school fundraiser to bring awareness to your activities and encourage others to attend (known as "live tweeting").

Tweet about new legislation passed that will affect charter schools.

## YouTube

Post videos on YouTube of important events at your school such as school fundraisers, dance performances, or speakers. Then post them on Facebook and Twitter, and tag or tweet people you want to see it.

## Blogs

Blogs are online journals where people can log their personal views, post photographs, and encourage online discussion. They are usually written in first person and are generally less formal than traditional reporting. Some ways to utilize blogs are:

- Start a discussion among your peer schools about common challenges or successes.
- Comment on other blog posts with your own relevant experiences.