

Polycentric USSF3 2015 Site Selection(s)

INTRODUCTION

Over the past several months the National Planning Committee (NPC) of the U.S. Social Forum (USSF) has engaged in multiple discussions on the organizational and political form of the next U.S. Social Forum. At the heart of this discussion has been a call for a social forum of a new type, predicated on our deep need for political alignment and cohesion. On the December 2013 NPC call this new type was affirmed as a multi-sited (polycentric) forum. Concretely this means that the social forum will encompass 2 or more sites, connected politically and technologically. It was decided on the December 2013 call to select Philadelphia, PA as the first site, and on the February 2014 call to select Jackson, MS as another site. We are now reaching out in a very intentional way to identify one or more additional sites. Our desire is for regional diversity and your community is invited to apply!

Thousands of grassroots organizations, social movement-building coalitions and activists like you have participated in U.S. and World Social Forums since 2001. The third U.S. Social Forum will bring together people from every state in the U.S. and beyond for five days of social movement power strategizing, base building, skills sharing and collective political agreements in more than one site. This polycentric form is a request to grassroots organizations and social movement-building groups, alliances and networks to submit city-based, organization-anchored proposals for hosting the third U.S. Social Forum in their local.

The Site Selection Team will hold one to two conference calls with additional information on this process and an opportunity to ask questions. Upcoming calls will be in late February and early March. Call-in number: (712) 432-0075, code 388105#. Participation in the conference call is not required but may provide additional information to assist in your decision-making and/or support your application.

Proposals must be completed online by April 4, 2014 at 11:59pm, Pacific Standard Time. Another World is Possible, Another U.S. is Necessary was the theme that brought over 15,000 activists, labor and community organizers, students/youth and movement leaders together from all 50 states and over 30 countries to Atlanta in 2007; and 20,000 to Detroit in 2010. The 2015 USSF will build on the dynamic events of these Summer convergences with the multi-sited format, of 5,000-10,000 participants, dispersing the numbers but multiplying the impact. The multi-sites will be a continuation of activities that are part of the World Social Forum (WSF).

Learn more about USSF [Political Principles and Framing](#), including goals and direction.

MULTI-SITE SELECTION APPLICATION PROCESS

Being selected as one of the polycentric sites of USSF3, we are sure, will be an exhilarating experience! It's an unprecedented opportunity for your organization and community to network with national social movement groups, build political alliances and show off your city, your way.

Over the next several weeks we will undergo a national process to identify one to two additional potential sites: host cities, anchor organizations; and build the logistical spaces and outreach campaigns needed for an international convergence of grassroots, social movement groups and forces.

For each site we are seeking applications from a collective of local grassroots organizations willing to work together as Anchors for one of the USSF sites in their city. Past USSF organizing experience indicates that local coordination efforts are strongest with an Anchor group of 3-5 organizations sharing in the responsibilities and division of labor. Local organizing will be done in conjunction with the USSF National Planning Committee through support from working groups and committees.

If you believe your city has a coalition of grassroots organizations and venues with the capacity to be one of the polycentric sites of the next U.S. Social Forum, we invite you to submit an initial application. Please review the following political and logistical criteria required for application consideration. The date of the U.S. Social Forum in 2015 will be determined in conjunction with the site cities' anchors across the multiple polycentric sites.

(1) Political Criteria:

Grassroots organizations interested in anchoring the next USSF must be in alignment with USSF political principles and goals. They are summarized in the USSF **Political Principles and Framing** positions. You are strongly encouraged to read them prior to applying.

➤ Additionally, each potential Anchor organization/locality should have experience with and/or express a commitment to several of these political priorities:

- Has legacy of community building: historic and current organizing movement building, organization committed to movement building

- Works with people of color alliances.

- Understands history of economic oppression and legacy of genocide.

- Is disproportionately affected by climate change, environmental and food injustices.

- Understands mass criminalization of poor and working class, gentrification, poverty and dispossession.

- Has a relationship with the immigrant rights movement.

- Can offer an analysis of economic landscape leading up 2014.

- Has a base of youth, Indigenous Peoples and grassroots organizations.

Can serve as leading the social forum of a new type as one of the multi-site cities.

Is willing to join USSF National Planning Committee.

Shows people of color and working class leadership, community organizing, base- building, intersectional work.

(2) Logistical Criteria

As a polycentric site the USSF requires local grassroots organizations and cities to have an identifiable capacity to manage the logistical and political coordination of an international convergence that is smaller than a single city but likely will draw 5,000-10,000 people with a variety of needs and perspectives. Eligible organizations and cities should have the capacity to meet most of the following logistical capacity criteria:

➤ Anchor organizations support and capacity:

Has participated in USSF 2007 and/or 2010 and/or PMA (Peoples Movement Assembly) process.

Has previous experience organizing logistics for a national meeting, including travel, lodging, transportation, security, food, child care, communication, budget, etc.

Has organizational capacity, strength and willingness to sustain a lengthy logistics process and outreach campaign; and actualize USSF3 goals, as best as possible.

Has bookkeeping-accounting experience, including budget drafting and management.

Has network of local and regional support and contacts (including political, legal and financial) to assist with identified needs and services.

Has ability to support and communicate with local organizations and groups that are interested in participating in the USSF Local Organizing Committee process.

Has capacity to have multiple representatives sit on the NPC, working groups and committees and to communicate back to the local and/or regional committees.

➤ Site venue requirements include:

Indoor and outdoor spaces for 5,000-10,000 participants.

Proximity to an international airport (within 30 miles).

Logistical capacity to support multiple large and small meetings, cultural events, media- technology center.

Lodging options for people with the ability to pay and people with very limited means: hotels, motels, hostels, dorms, churches, solidarity housing, tents, etc.

Affordable public and/or private transportation (and parking) options to/from the host city and between host city meeting sites.

Existing (or the ability to build) safe spaces for persons who are LGBTQIA, undocumented, exiled, homeless; and children, youth.

Accessible sites, facilities, transportation and lodging options for persons with disabilities.

Grassroots budget affordability: use of public and private facilities and vendors

that offer (significantly) discounted costs to meet limited grassroots budgets.

Get the Initial Site Selection Application: Proposals must be completed online by April 4, 2014 at 11:59pm, Pacific Standard Time.