



[Date]

Dear [Primary Contact] and all members of [Partner],

Warm greetings from Thousand Currents!

We are happy to inform you that the staff and board of Thousand Currents are extending an invitation to [Partner] to join Thousand Currents' network of international partners. Thousand Currents would like to support the work that [Partner] is doing to strengthen [food sovereignty, alternative economic solutions and/or building climate resiliency] movements.

We would appreciate you discussing our invitation with your [Partner] members and providing us with a response at your earliest convenience.

If [Partner] was to accept the invitation from Thousand Currents, our first step would be to provide [Partner] its first Partnership Grant. Thousand Currents' grantmaking approach is to provide flexible, general support grants on a multi-year basis. These Partnership Grants are renewable every 12 months.

Our first Partnership Grant to [Partner] will be \$[Grant Amount] USD for a 12-month period starting [Date]. Thousand Currents provides [Partner] the flexibility to use the funds in a way that makes the most sense for your organization.

Attached is the Information Request for Partnership Grants, which includes a list of documents that Thousand Currents requests. Please review the Information Request and send in the requested documents by [Deadline]. Once the Regional Director for [Region] reviews the [Partner] organizational documents we will send [Partner] a Partnership Grant Agreement for you to sign. Upon receipt of the signed agreement, Thousand Currents will transfer the funds to the bank account you indicate.

We would like to take this opportunity to briefly explain to you who Thousand Currents is, how we work, and some of our expectations with regards to relationships with partners.

## **Thousand Currents' Partnership Approach**

Thousand Currents enters into a multi-year relationship with each new partner and works to support the partner in the areas of **Community Self-Determination** (programming that focuses on challenging local conditions through self-defined community-led solutions), **Organizational Resilience** (establishing a sound organizational structure with effective internal systems), and **Global Solidarity** (developing alliances and engaging with movements to deepen the work regionally and globally). Together we build on the values of mutual trust, respect, and solidarity, which are essential to a strong partnership relationship. In addition, Thousand Currents works in the US to promote **Social Justice Giving** by working within philanthropy to advocate for more resources to go to grassroots communities and partners like your organization, and to shift philanthropic practices to be more responsive to grassroots groups. These program strategies stem from Thousand Currents' Theory of Change, which can be found on our website (<http://thousandcurrents.org/about/#toc>).

## **Thousand Currents' Funding & Communications**

Thousand Currents raises funds from the general public and a range of foundations to strengthen the work of our partners. Partnerships grants are a minimum of \$25,000 USD per year. We are committed to cultivating long-term relationships with our partners and provide renewable annual grants. With our partners we also strive to create a relationship of mutual accountability, in which we expect open lines of communication. Just as we have requests and offer feedback to our partners, we are open to receiving feedback and changing our policies according to the requests and comments we receive.

## **How Thousand Currents Operates**

Thousand Currents is a public foundation registered as a non-governmental organization (NGO) with our head office based in Oakland, California in the United States.

### **Program Visits**

In order to understand the work of our international partners, Thousand Currents conducts program visits to the regions where we work to learn how partners operate, visit the communities with which they work, and to also gain a deeper understanding of the communal and regional context of the work that we are supporting. Conducting program visits also allows us more of an opportunity to hear stories from our partners and, where appropriate, and only when permission is given, to pass on to our funders and the general public. We will always consult with [Partner] first to identify the best time to visit and to make sure you have enough time to prepare.

Over the duration of our partnership, we will also endeavor to invite a representative from [Partner] to engage in international travel if funds are available. This, among other things, provides an opportunity to connect and build alliances with communities doing similar work, raise awareness of

the conditions faced by partner communities, share effective solutions, and visit with existing and potential funders.

### **Holistic Support in our Grantmaking**

In addition to providing annual Partnership Grants, Thousand Currents also offers support and, when possible, additional resources to our partners in the following ways:

- Promoting the work of [Partner] to other funding opportunities. Examples include: reviewing your proposals, connecting [Partner] to other foundations, nominating [Partner] for prestigious awards, etc.
- Supporting the participation of [Partner] in different alliance-building activities to build global solidarity. Examples include: sharing opportunities and inviting [Partner] to different global spaces in relation to your work, offering opportunities to be part of a learning exchange with other Thousand Currents partners, providing resources for [Partner] to travel to a conference/forum/gathering that you wish to attend, etc.

### **Staff**

We have a decentralized team of [Current Number of Staff]. Staff members fulfill the following responsibilities:

[Staff List]

### **Board of Directors**

The work of the organization is governed by the Board of Directors, which is currently made up of [Number] members. The members of the Board are in charge of approving the annual budget, approving the selection of new partners, and ensuring the proper functioning of the organization.

### **Our Fundraising**

Seventy-five percent of Thousand Currents' annual budget comes from other U.S. organizations, mostly philanthropic foundations, but also from some private businesses. Nineteen percent of our funds come from individuals whose donations can vary from \$10 USD to \$50,000 USD. The remaining six percent of our budget comes from earned income and consulting, which includes the Thousand Currents Academy. We raise funds through applying for foundation grants, hosting events, sending letters to our supporters, and personal appeals.

## Deepening our Relationship

Thousand Currents' relationships with our partners are most successful when there are good communication practices for sharing information that helps advance your important work.

We request that you keep us updated informally about:

- how the work of your organization is going,
- any changes that take place in the organization (such as staff changes, unexpected loss of funding, or a shift in organizational goals, etc.), and
- changes in the country (or countries) that affect your communities.

Where appropriate, and with permission from our partners, we share this information through our communications channels so that our donors feel connected to the communities whose work they are supporting.

We want to promote an honest dialogue and frequent communication with [Partner]. We understand that there are always difficulties, weaknesses, and even failures experienced by grassroots groups. We ask that these problems not be hidden from us. Rather we ask that they are shared with us so that we can best support you to strengthen your work at the community level.

There will be weaknesses, failures, and challenges in 'Thousand Currents' work as well, and we also ask that you evaluate us and tell us when we act in a manner that is not useful. This is the concept of "mutual accountability" - that 'Thousand Currents and [Partner] support each other with open communication, each agency taking responsibility for what they can contribute. We wish to be able to consult with you about our institutional policies or possible fundraising opportunities that arise that could benefit the work of both institutions.

We hope to create a strong and supportive relationship with [Partner] and look forward to working with you over the years to come. Please don't hesitate to contact us about any uncertainty or questions you may have about the information that we have shared.

We are excited at the possibility of partnership with you!

Sincerely,

Katherine Zavala  
Director of Grassroots Partnerships

[Name]  
Regional Director, [Region]