

UUCA ALL-CONGREGATION SOCIAL JUSTICE PROJECT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Purpose

The Social Justice Coordinating Team (SJCT) of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Atlanta, mindful of UUCA's goal of

- leading peace and justice initiatives to become a more visible justice seeking congregation,
- building UUCA in Atlanta through social justice advocacy, direct service, and social witness,
- educating the congregation about unmet peace and social justice needs, and
- creating an infrastructure to empower congregants to perform, coordinate, and participate with community groups working for peace and justice,

adopts these policies and procedures for selecting and evaluating an all-congregation social justice project¹ that will make a difference in the lives of Atlantans.

Type of Project Sought

We envision a

- project (an organized, planned collaborative activity), that is
- intended to advance a social justice goal (or goals), such as immigrant rights, ending global warming, or fighting inequality,
- through specific means of direct service, contributions, advocacy, education, witness, and/or community organizing,
- that is intended to last one or two years, but that could evolve into an ongoing part of the congregation's social justice activities,
- in which all UUCA members and friends are offered practical opportunities to participate in one or more ways, and that will be
- integrated with our worship and religious education programs.

¹ The long-range plan uses both the word "project" (which sounds like something of limited scope and duration) and the word "mission" (which sounds like something intended to be permanent). The present draft uses only "project."

NB: Footnotes are intended to promote discussion of the draft; they are not intended for inclusion in the final document.

Project Proposal Submission and Approval

1. *Persons Entitled to Submit Project Proposals.* Any congregant or group of congregants—including one or more officially recognized social justice groups within UUCA—may propose a project by completing the attached application, in accordance with the Instructions and Preliminary Comments set forth at the beginning of the form.

It is anticipated that the group(s) submitting the successful proposal will also plan and implement the proposal.

2. *Review of Proposed Projects.* The SJCT, working with Rev. Makar and with a special All Congregation Social Justice Project (ACSJP) team selected and supported by the SJCT, will

- review the project proposals,
- recommend one or more project proposals for wider discussion within the congregation,
- guide the process of wider discussion, and then
- make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees with respect to a vote of the congregation to approve a proposed project.

3. *Anticipated Approximate Timetable for Submission, Review, Selection, Implementation, and Evaluation.*

Day 0: Inform the congregation—through the standard avenues of communication at UUCA—about the solicitation of proposals for an all-congregation social justice project.²

Day 0 through Day 60: UUCA groups and congregants plan their proposals, prepare draft applications, and work with the ACSJP team to make their proposals as complete and compelling as possible.

Day 60: Final deadline for completion of the attached application form.

Day 60 through Day 70: The SJCT and the ACSJP team, working with Rev. Makar, review the proposals that have been submitted and selects which ones to present to the congregation. The review and selection process are to be guided by the considerations described below under Criteria for Selection.

Day 70 through Day 100: Selected candidate applications are made available to the congregation (online and by other means) for discussion and debate. The ACSJP team will guide the discussion at town hall meetings, and there will also be opportunity for online comments and discussion.

² There are 106 days between February 1 and May 17, which I assume is the date for the first regular congregational meeting this year. Thus, on this proposed schedule, we could put out the initial call as late as the first week in February—preferably, Sunday, February 1.

Day 100: The congregation votes to approve an all congregation social justice project, at either a regularly scheduled congregational meeting or at a congregational meeting called for that special purpose in accordance with UUCA’s bylaws.

Day 100 through Day 180: The group or groups whose proposed project has been adopted plan the details of the project and take the first steps toward implementation.

Day 180 through Day 360: First phase of project implementation.

Day 345 through Day 375: The project’s sponsors, together with the SJCT, the All Congregation Social Justice Project team, and Rev. Makar do an interim evaluation of progress to date, and make any necessary adjustments.

Day 360 through End of Project (1-2 years after commencement): Final phase of the all-congregation social justice project.

30 Days Following End of Project: The project’s sponsors, together with the SJCT, the All Congregation Social Justice Project team, and Rev. Makar do a final evaluation and prepare a report for the congregation.

Following End of Project: Once the All-Congregation Project has concluded, if feasible and accepted by the SJCT and DCL, the project becomes an ongoing social justice program of UUCA

Criteria for Selection of Proposed Projects for Congregational Consideration

In considering which proposal or proposals to recommend for congregational approval, the SJCT and the ACSJP team will endeavor to exercise good judgment, in light of all relevant considerations, including information they glean from the project proposals themselves. Among the most important criteria for selection are the following.

- a) the likely success of the project in advancing UU values in the real world—taking into account, among other things, the extent to which the proposed project relates to social justice problems of particular concern to Atlanta,
- b) the likely cost to UUCA in budgeted funds, staff time, and building space, and whether this likely cost is commensurate with available UUCA resources,
- c) the extent to which the proposal seems to offer practical opportunities to all UUCA members and friends, including children, teens and youth, working adults, and older adults, through specific means of direct service, contributions, advocacy, education, witness, and/or community organizing—and the likely extent to which our members and friends will actually take advantage of these opportunities to work for social justice
- d) how closely the proposed project will integrate with UUCA worship and religious education

e) the likely extent to which the project proposal will advance the Atlanta community's understanding of what Unitarian Universalism is, and what opportunities are available at UUCA.

Criteria for Interim and Final Evaluation of Success

In conducting their interim and final evaluations the SJCT and the ACSJP team will consider all the factors listed above and, to the extent it is appropriate and feasible, focus on relevant metrics, including:

- concrete real world achievements
- how many UUCA members and friends participated, and how extensive was their participation
- actual cost in UUCA resources
- the success, if any, of the project in promoting UUCA in the wider Atlanta community.

UUCA All-Congregation Social
Justice Project Proposal Form

Instructions and Preliminary Comments

1. This is an application for a proposed UUCA all-congregation social justice project, as described in the UUCA Social Justice Coordinating Team's memorandum to the congregation of [_____, 2015].
2. Proposals may be submitted by one or more official UUCA social justice groups or by one or more UUCA congregants.
3. The completed project proposal form is due on [_____, 2015]. The preferred method of submission is to download this document in docx format, insert answers to each question, and submit a completed document to the SJCT and the All Congregation Social Justice Project team, as an email attachment to [acsjp@uUCA.org]. However, hard copy or other forms of submission may be acceptable. Please consult with the ACSJP team.
4. After submission, your completed project proposal may be made available to the congregation for review and discussion.
5. Incomplete project proposals will not be considered.
6. As you prepare your proposal, bear in mind the five main forms of social justice work in UU congregations:
 1. Service—meeting the needs of persons in distress
 - Direct service
 - Money donations
 2. Education
 - Sermons, religious education, other meetings, written communications
 3. Witness—making public our convictions on social justice issues
 - Demonstrations and marches, letters to the editor, congregational resolutions, press releases, etc.
 4. Advocacy—working for social justice by participating in the legislative process
 5. Community organizing
 - Often done by working in partnership with other organizations, including faith organizations, to achieve an important social justice goal

Questions for Applicants

1. What is the name of your proposed all-congregation social justice project?

2. Provide a one-sentence description of your proposed project. (The sentence should identify the social justice goal(s) that the project seeks to advance and the means by which this goal/goals are sought to be advanced.)

3. Who is submitting this proposal (see instructions, item 2, above)?

4. State the names of all the individual UUCA congregants and friends who have committed that, if the proposal is approved by the congregation, they will devote substantial time and effort to making it a success.

5. In reasonable detail, provide a timeline for activities in your proposed project. What specifically will take place, and when will it happen—for example, beginning in the summer or fall, and continuing for another 12-24 months?

It should be clear from your timeline how your proposed project involves (or does not involve) each of the five forms of social justice work.

6. What costs will be incurred, and how will they be paid for? Will a request be made for money in the following year's budget, and, if so, for how much?

7. How will UUCA ministers and staff be involved in the project? Describe the amount of time and effort that will be required on their part.

8. If your proposal is approved, how will it affect UUCA worship?

9. If your proposal is approved, how will it affect religions education across all UUCA generations?

9. We seek a project in which all UUCA members and friends are offered practical opportunities to participate in one or more ways. State how opportunities for service, advocacy, education, witness, and community partnerships will be afforded to

a) UUCA children

b) UUCA teens and youth

c) UUCA adult members and friends.

10. What would success look like for your proposed project? How will you know? Please consider all relevant factors, including (but not necessarily limited to)

a) changing the wider world for the better

b) percentage of UUCA members and friends involved with the project, the degree and intensity of their involvement, and the extent to which their involvement is a life changing experience, and

c) enhancing UUCA's visibility in our community.

11. To the extent not already covered in the timeline above, describe

a) how an interim evaluation of the project, after about six months, would be done, and

b) what you envision as a means to evaluate the success of the project, when it is complete, after 12-24 months.

12. Does this proposed project have the potential to evolve into an ongoing part of UUCA's social justice program? Explain.