46th District Democrats

Cole Fund Application Guidance

This document is essential reading for members of the 46th District Democrats who are considering submitting a grant proposal. The Cole Fund was formed through a generous bequest to the 46th Democrats by long-time member and activist Raymond T. Cole. The bequest defines specific criteria for grants that may be funded. Projects that do not align with these criteria cannot be funded. Please carefully review this guidance and the application form.

Additional questions about the application process or project eligibility may be submitted to the Cole Fund Committee via email to colefund@46dems.org

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Projects Eligible for Funding

Under the Standing Rules of the 46th District Democrats, Project proposals must meet the following criteria to be considered for funding:

1. **Consistent with the vision and mission of the 46th District Democrats**; (See the Who We Are page for a description of our goals and purpose.); and
2. **For purchases or projects that build the 46th Democrats through**
    - **increasing skills of leadership or members; and/or**
    - **enhancing the district's reputation; and/or**
    - **increasing members or volunteers; and/or**
    - **building partnerships or alliances; and/or**
    - **supporting capital projects.**

    Some examples include, but are not limited to:
    - Projects that improve diversity, equity, and inclusion in the membership of the 46th Democrats.
    - Events that promote growth and capacity building of the 46th District Democrats membership.
    - Activities that increase the visibility of the 46th Democrats as an organization and promote our democratic ideals.
    - Fundraising projects that supplement the organization's normal fundraising efforts. Fundraising proposals must include an explanation of how the money used from the Cole Fund will be paid back in full. Proceeds from fundraising may only be used to reimburse budgeted expenses, reimburse the Cole Fund, or supplement the operating budget of the 46th Democrats.

        - Capital projects should focus on durable expenditures, but could include equipment or other purchases to benefit the district's outreach or operations.

The Cole Fund cannot be used for purchases or activities that are historically covered in the district's annual operating budget;

- Current operating budget categories are listed below, and describe expenses that are not eligible for Cole Fund projects:
    - ELECTIONS - standard costs of our work to elect Democrats, including hosting candidate forums, voter guide printing, and Get Out The Vote efforts.
    - INFRASTRUCTURE- costs for regular operating expenses such as website hosting, P.O. box., etc.
    - COMPLIANCE - costs of filing and maintaining required legal, financial, and PDC reports and documentation.
    - EVENTS AND FUNDRAISING - costs of regularly held events such as the summer picnic, as well as fundraising events. *See notes above on allowable uses of the Cole Fund for events and fundraising.*
    - REAL RENT - monthly payment to the Duwamish Tribe.
    - PROFESSIONAL SERVICES - payments for accounting, legal and other professional services.

About Proposal Review by the Cole Fund Committee

The Cole Fund Committee is tasked with responsibly managing the Cole Fund, evaluating grant proposals, and making recommendations to the District membership on proposals that should be funded. An approval vote of the Membership of the 46th District Democrats is required for disbursement of funds.

To be eligible for review, a project proposal must:

- Be submitted by at least one active member in good standing of the 46th District Democrats. Multi-person teams are encouraged.
- Be adequately described by submission of a complete Application for Project Funding.
- Align with the eligibility requirements described above, as assessed by the committee.

The committee's review of eligible proposals will include consideration of:

- How the project builds and strengthens the District, such as in membership, volunteers, reputation, effectiveness, diversity, empowerment, or activism.

- Level of demonstrated support of the project by multiple members in good standing.
- While not a requirement, the committee will assign higher value to projects that can show the initial funding of the project is expected to be recouped after the project has finished, leading to a more sustainable Cole Fund.
- How the project addresses an unmet need for the 46th District Democrats.
- Feasibility of the project with the team's skills, timeline, and budget.

The composition of the committee is defined in Cole Fund sections of the Standing Rules and members are nominated by the District Chair and approved by the membership. The committee shall include:

- A minimum of three voting members;
- the District Chair as an ex officio voting member; and
- the District Treasurer as an ex officio non-voting member.

At least half of the voting committee members shall be members of the district who are not members of the Executive Board.

Funded Proposals

Projects recommended to and approved by the District membership will be funded, with an individual payment or reimbursement plan worked out for each project.

One or more members of the Cole Committee will be assigned to each funded project to assist the team, and monitor progress and expenditures.

At the end of the project, a one page final report must be submitted by the recipient of the grant, outlining the process of the projects and its accomplishments, to deliver to the membership.

See the Cole Fund sections of the Standing Rules for all the rule language governing the Cole Fund uses and the grant application process.

May 20, 2026