Resolution: Strengthening DSA From the Bottom Up Through National Matching Funds for Chapters to Hire Staff and Open Offices

Whereas, a key component of transforming DSA into a powerful mass organization rooted in the multiracial working-class is increasing our organizational capacity from the bottom up,

Whereas, it takes financial and organizational resources to build sustained political power,

Whereas, opening local DSA offices – from Louisville to San Francisco — has been proven to help strengthen DSA chapters and their organizing efforts by establishing a visible and sustainable presence in working-class neighborhoods, by facilitating in-person organizing, by solidifying collective political and social solidarity, and by creating a hub for our broader movement and electoral campaigns.

Whereas, hiring local DSA staff — as seen in NYC — has been proven to help strengthen local DSA chapters and their political campaigns by increasing their overall organizational capacity to build robust organizing campaigns of and for the multi-racial working class and to proactively recruit, develop, and retain new members. Far from substituting for membership involvement and leadership, hiring a staffer can free up DSA members and our elected bodies to focus on outwards-facing organizing and it can help build the internal structures to scale up these power-building efforts.

Whereas, national DSA can and should do everything possible to aid local DSA efforts to build up a strong, and financially sustainable, organizing infrastructure,

Therefore be it resolved that DSA will establish a national matching funds program administered by the National Political Committee to help local chapters and statewide organizations hire staff — full-time or part-time — or open local offices. While the precise financial and process mechanisms of the matching funds program can be flexibly adjusted as need be, the following criteria will serve as the general guideline to launch the program:

- The program will be funded from the national DSA budget as well as a national fundraising campaign for this effort, with the goal of providing equal national matching funds (50%, 50%) to be matched by local or statewide DSA formations for a minimum of at least one year.
- To apply for the matching funds, the requesting body should first raise at least 25% of the necessary funds and collectively adopt a proposal detailing a) the political, organizational, and recruitment goals that they will seek to leverage the matching funds for, with clear metrics for yearly assessments of progress; b) a fundraising plan to raise the other 25% of the matching funds by the proposed date to open an office or hire a staffer c) an off-ramp fundraising plan to ensure the financial self-sustainability of the project, with the goal of being self-sustained one year after the matching funds program kicks in.

- The 25% amount may vary due to differing regional costs and will be set by the NPC in advance so that local and regional formations have a clear and transparent fundraising goal.
- The NPC will review these applications and may make suggestions and send feedback so that the terms are mutually agreed upon to maximize the chances for success.
- After one year, partial matching fund financial extensions will be considered if the requesting body demonstrates both having made demonstrable progress in achieving its political and organizational goals, and has made significant progress on moving towards financial self-sustainability.