



# Overview



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# **Introduction**

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# Consulting Team

**Chuqi**  
Project  
Coordinator



**Chuqi Yan**  
MPA Fellow,  
2018  
Public and  
Nonprofit  
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**Diego Licon**  
MPA Fellow,  
2018  
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Technology  
Policy



**Diego**  
Editor

**Yifan**  
Researcher



**Yifan Wang**  
MPA Fellow,  
2018  
Economic and  
Financial  
Policy

\* Roles rotated within the team



## Project Background

It's all about the community...

The Community Foundation of Tompkins County (CFTC) is dedicated to working with all people committed to local philanthropy and civic engagement as a means to enhance the quality of life for all who live in, work in, and love Tompkins County. The CFTC supports organizations who address issues in or provide support to arts and culture, community building, education, environment/sustainability, and health and human services.



In 2016, CFTC received a gift from former Cornell Professor, Susan Christopherson. Susan's vision for the gift was to promote community engagement in decision making. The Foundation seeks recommendations on how to best use this gift. Such recommendations include reviewing grant making models used elsewhere in the United States as well as researching best practices to allow philanthropic organizations to become more effective.



**THE GIFT:**

**1 million**



**1.2 million**

**In Total**

**30,000~45,000**

**First Grant  
(2019)**

# Legacy of the Donor

Susan Christopherson



**Susan Christopherson**  
Former Professor and  
Department Chair of City and  
Regional Planning,  
Cornell University

**The team prioritized alignment to the donor's legacy throughout the project:**

Susan Christopherson was a beloved **professor in the City and Regional Planning Department**, where she was the first female to receive tenure and later the first female chair of the Department.

Her research and teaching focused on **economic development, urban labor markets and location patterns** in the **Central New York region**, as well as other areas across the world. Susan cared deeply about regional development, legacy cities, and economic growth, conducting studies throughout this region.

Susan was also **concerned about class**, recognizing that the poor often did not have opportunities to move up in class. She was passionate about her work and interested in understanding and addressing the economic and class factors dividing Ithaca, the region, and the country.




# Methodology

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Methodology

# Methodology



## Methodology for Interviews

We identified key stakeholders; Prepared questions for each interviewee(s);  
Conducted the interviews and took notes;  
Asked for more additional contacts;  
Organized and analyzed the notes from our interviews.



## LITERATURE REVIEW

We conducted a literature review to examine grant making models applied in other regions of the United States and researched philanthropic organizations to highlight effective strategies and innovative ways of practicing philanthropy.



## INTERVIEWS WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

We interviewed city and county officials to understand their approach in engaging community members to participate in decision making.



## INTERVIEWS WITH ORGANIZATIONS

We interviewed community leaders from functional institutions and community based organizations (CBOs) to better understand the challenges that different communities need to overcome before they can be engaged in decision making.



## RECOMMENDATION

After analyzing the literature and interview notes, we worked to propose three grant making models that aligned with the intent of the Susan Christopherson Fund, as well as the mission, vision and values of the Foundation. These recommendations include supporting arguments as to how grants would be administered.



# **Findings from the field**

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**Models and Organizations**

# Models & Organizations

## Literature Review

- ❖ We reviewed the following models and evaluated philanthropic organizations based on client and other stakeholder recommendations:

### Models



### Organizations

The National Committee for Responsive  
Philanthropy (NCRP)

The Grantmakers for Effective Organizations  
(GEO)

The Center for Urban Pedagogy (CUP)

# Summary of Findings from Field

❖ We summarized the takeaways from those models and organizations as below:

**Make  
it  
fun!**

**Soft launch:** Build on assets, center around activities that are positive, and build value around neighborhoods with small projects



**Student engagement:** The models suggests that Tomkins County can benefit from leveraging students by offering important service and professional experience while at the same time helping to solve community and regional issues

**Engage different stakeholders** into community development is essential for success projects. Therefore, it's important to conduct stakeholder analysis.

**Keep track on existing or past projects:** Publishing studies that are made possible helps philanthropic organizations learn about what has worked and what has not in philanthropy driven projects

**Visualize the outcomes:** Create visual communications and products that are engage partners and community members

**Focus on connecting neighbors and rebuilding the social network**



# **Stakeholder Analysis**

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**Stakeholder Analysis**

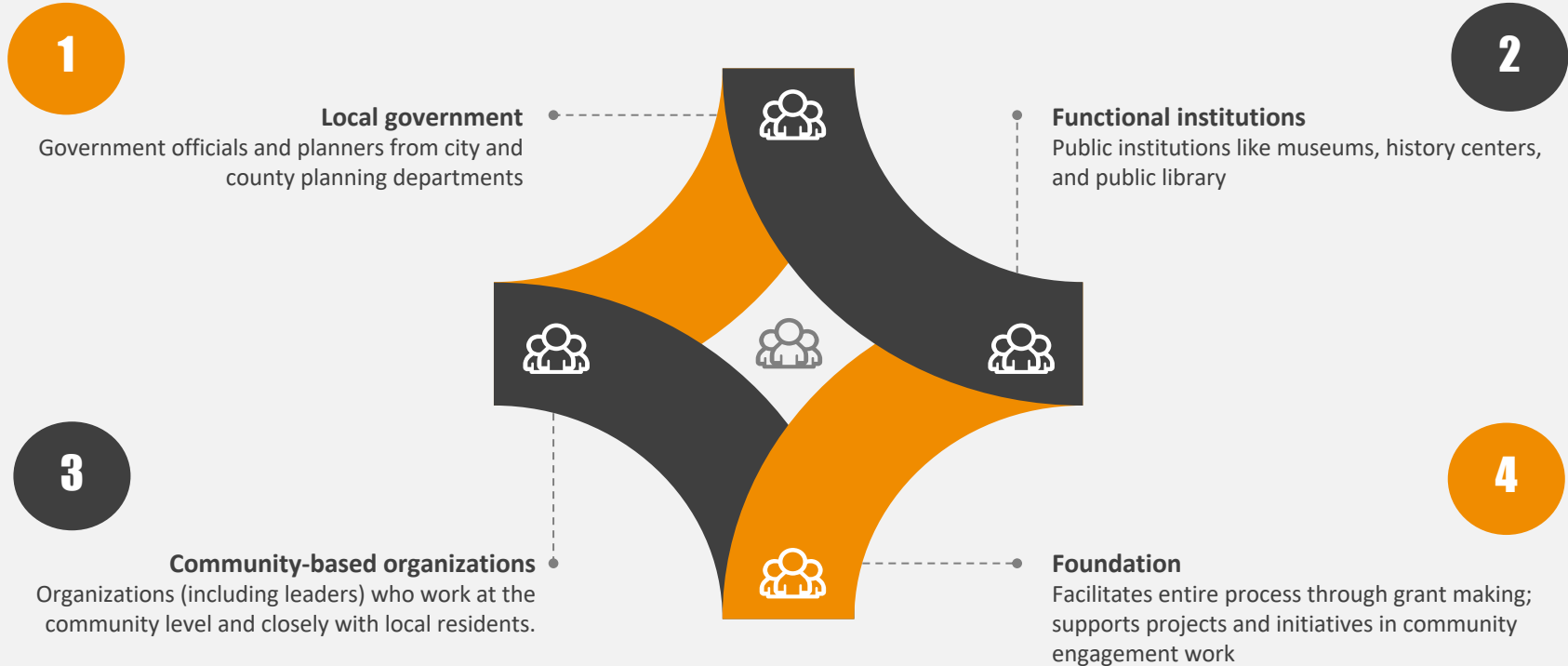
**Stakeholder Mapping**

**Stakeholder Relationship**



# Stakeholder Analysis

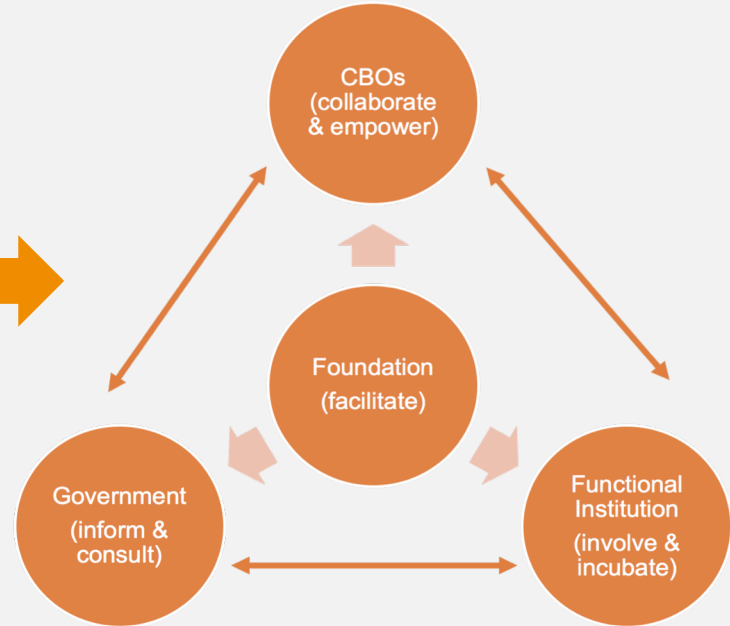
❖ We grouped stakeholders into four categories:



## Relationship Among Stakeholders



**Relationship Pyramid**



**Community Engagement Triangle**



## **Findings from Interviews**

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**Interviewed Stakeholders**

**Modification of the definitions**

**Challenges to Community Engagement**

**Recommendations by Interviewees**

## Interviewed Stakeholders



## Modification of the definitions

### Community

There is not just one community within Tompkins County, but many different communities.



### Participatory Planning

There is no common answer to what is meant by “participatory planning.” A goal of the fund should be to consider and explore the definitions and successful standards of “participatory planning” for different communities.

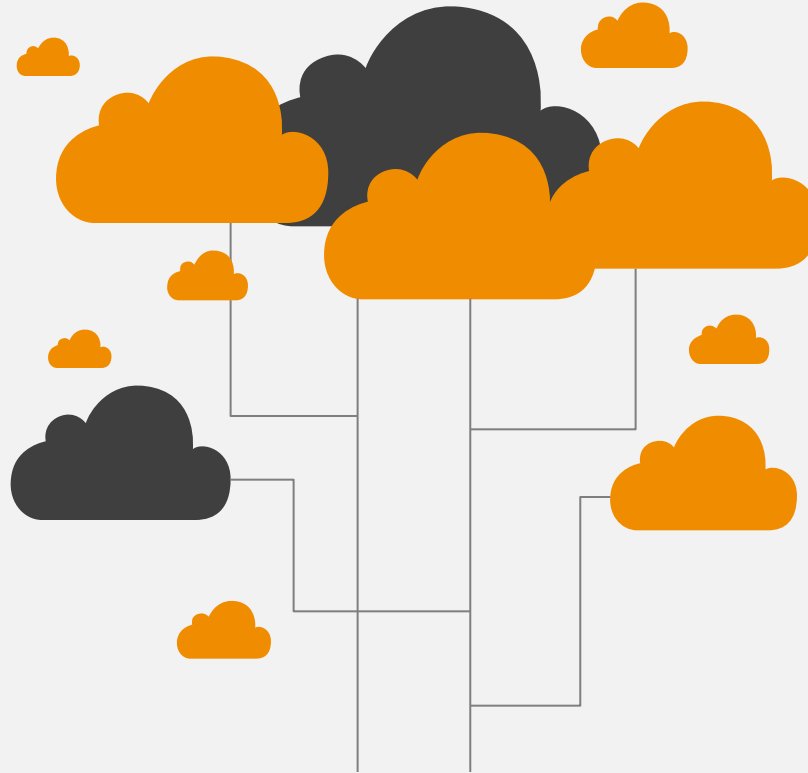


# Challenges to Community Engagement



## Recommendations from the Interviewees

- ❖ Allow for flexibility and iteration
- ❖ Increase communication throughout and between individuals and organizations
- ❖ Allow for relationships and trust to build



- ❖ Allow grantees the time to spend money effectively, rather than pressuring to spend
- ❖ Try something small and build on it
- ❖ Improve effective projects, shy away from new and shiny projects and



# Development Plan

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Development Plan



## Development Plan



- Knowledge gathering with various stakeholders
- Develop three recommendations for grant making models
- Identify challenges when engaging different communities

- Engage CRP at Cornell for summer internship opportunities, graduate teaching research specialist positions during the semester, and Design Connect
- Involve CIPA capstone to assist with additional planning

- Grants made will support a soft launch for the SCF
- Engage community members and build momentum at all levels including government and CBOs

- Incorporate community feedback and iterate
- Re-evaluate strategy
- Share and celebrate outcomes



# Recommendations

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**Recommendations**

## Recommendation #1: Incorporating Dialogues with Different Communities

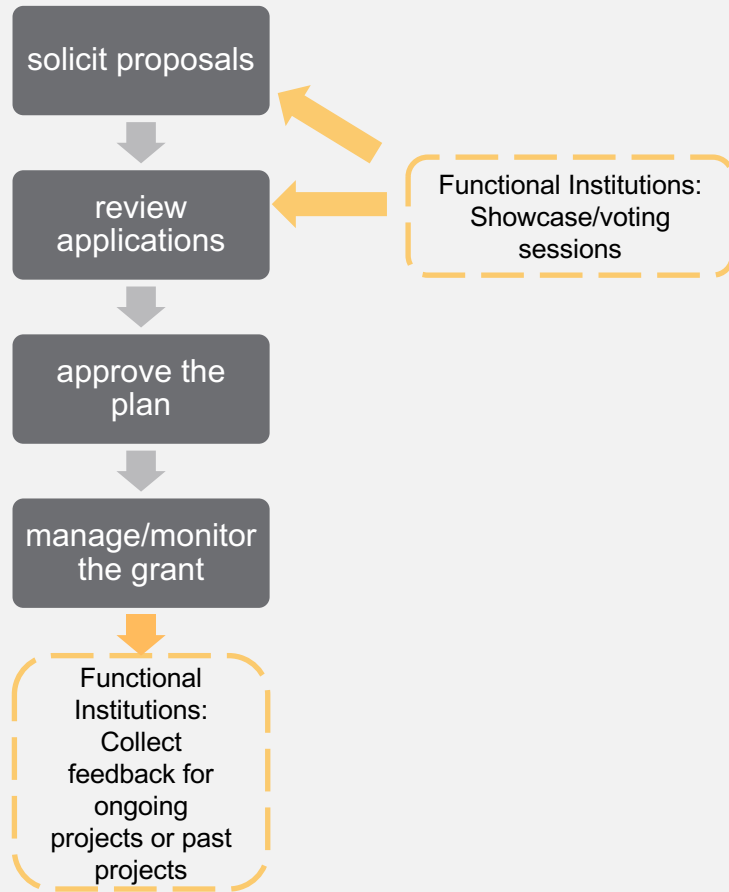


### Set up regular meetings in different communities

The Community Foundation should set up community meetings.

- Pros: time and personnel constraints
- Cons: collect opinions in a straightforward way

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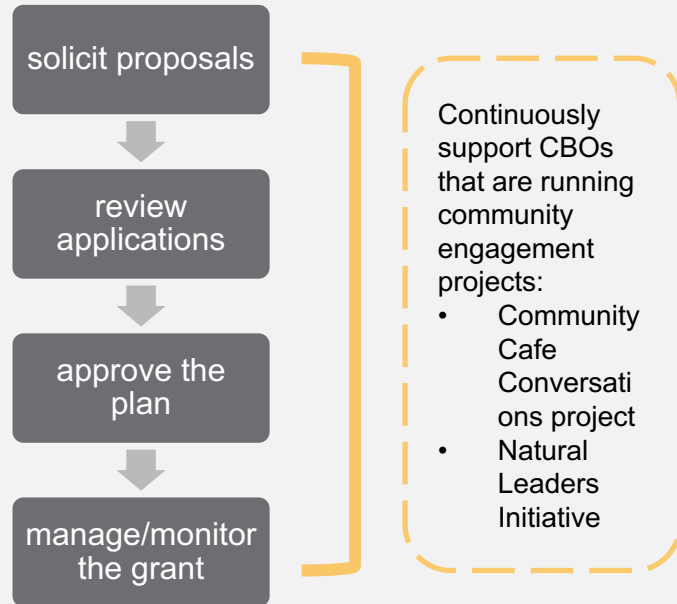
### Cooperate with Functional Institutions

Set up a showcase for local residents to give comments and to vote for proposals in local functional institutions.

Support local residents in providing feedback for ongoing projects or past projects.

- Pros: a long-term, steady project with a relatively low cost in implementation.
- Cons: it is hard to engage people with very low willingness to participate.

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### Cooperate with CBOs that are running similar projects

Projects that focus on reaching out to people in rural communities or to people who have been systematically and historically neglected

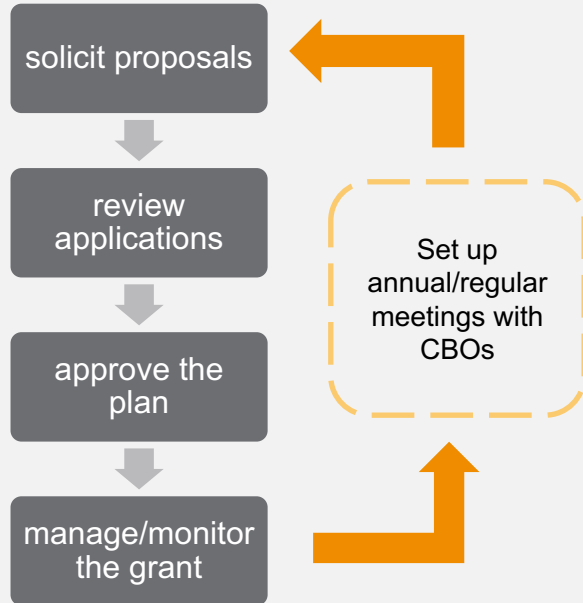
- Community Cafe Conversations project
- The Natural Leaders Initiative

## Recommendation #2: Incorporating Dialogues among Different CBOs

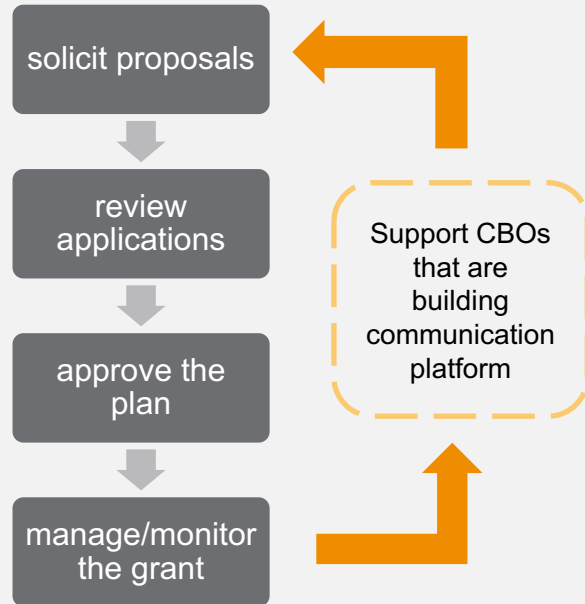


### Set up regular meetings with CBOs

- Discuss achievements and challenges in community engagement
- Function as a showcase and training session for potential grantees and incentivize them to apply for the SCF
- Help CBOs find potential partners who can strengthen current or future projects



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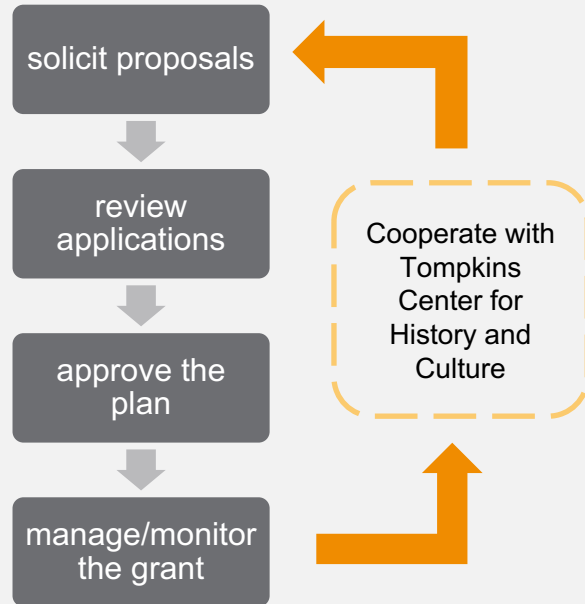
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### Support CBOs that are building communication platform

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- Pros: save time and personnel costs for the SCF
- Cons: there aren't many existing successful projects that involve creating a communication platform

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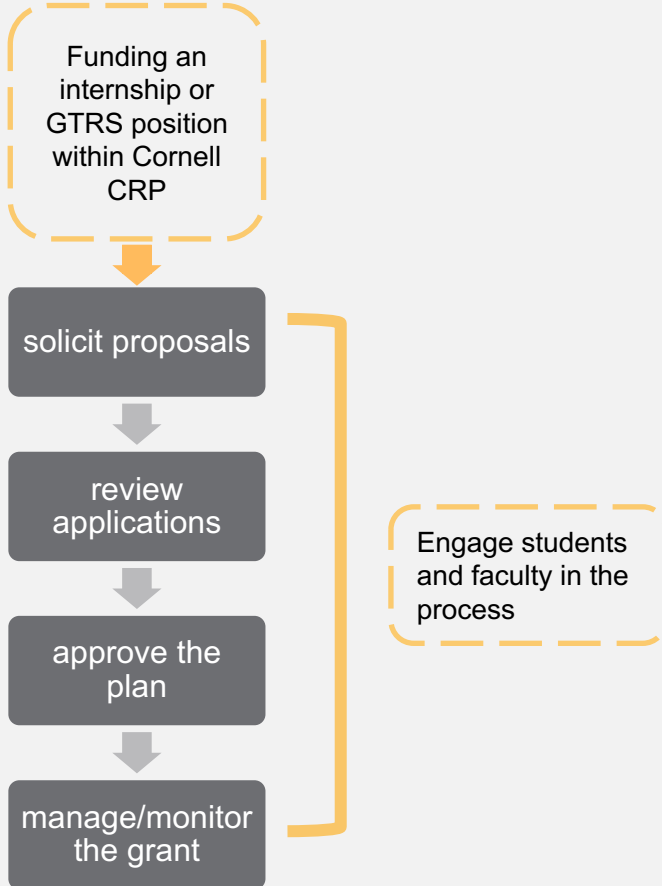


### Cooperate with Tompkins Center for History and Culture

- The Community Foundation should allocate funds to allow CBOs to rent space inside the new center to set up an exhibition.
- Pros: bring CBOs and local residents physically together; cooperate with the city government to attract tourists; engage local schools and students
- Cons: depends on the new Center's development strategies



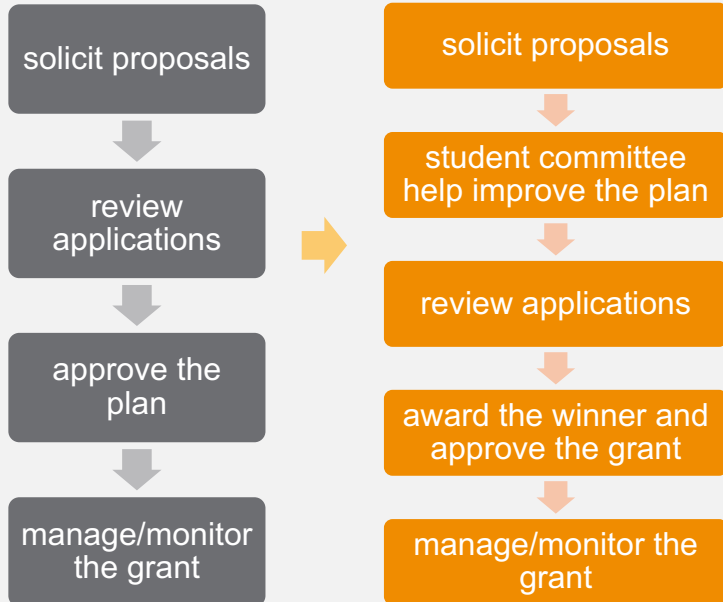
### Recommendation #3: Supporting Professional Development and Community Capacity Building



#### Funding an internship or GTRS position within Cornell University's City and Regional Planning Department

- To continue developing and building on the work that the CIPA capstone team completed
- This person should collaborate and engage CRP students and faculty in reaching out to different communities and CBOs to help them identify problems, develop projects, and search for existing academic research that can be applied into practice in the collective planning space.

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### Cooperate with student associations

- Cooperate with DesignConnect from CRP and other students from Cornell University or Ithaca College to set up a competitive grant cycle for the SCF.
- A student committee could be set up to hold a competition in regional planning and to encourage CBOs and different communities to propose their projects to win the grants.
- The student committee can further help them improve their proposals and complete the project during a longer time frame.

## Other Recommendations

## Policy Advocacy

- Support community members in sharing their feedback and opinions to the local governments
- Support the capacity building projects for the community members to do policy advocacy
- Support community members or CBOs in contacting the government directly
- Support other policy advocacy organizations

# Communication

- Strengthening communication through local newspapers, television, social media, mailed informational brochures/pamphlets, etc.
- Communicate best practices from active community participation in policy and planning
- Engage and inspire community members to continue participating in the collective planning decision making process in the future



The background of the slide features a warm-toned photograph of a workspace. In the foreground, a black pen with silver accents lies diagonally across an open, blank notebook. Behind the notebook, a portion of a laptop keyboard is visible, slightly out of focus. The overall lighting is soft and golden, creating a professional yet inviting atmosphere.

**Q&A**

**THANK YOU!**