Funding Social Change
& Technology Efforts

The following are some general characteristics that the Progressive Technology Project looks for when evaluating the strength of requests for technology support or funding:

- **Goal focused**—how does the request for technology advance the work—the application of technology should be expressed in terms of goals of work
  - Does it increase the organization's efficiency or effectiveness? Could it potentially transform their work?
  - Should be clearly connected to either program goals or organizational development goals

- **Evidence of organizational capacity to support the request**—particularly focused on people
  - Most of a request should be about technical assistance and training, not equipment
  - The clearer the articulation of the capacity building strategy the better
  - Evidence of an organizational strategy for dealing with technology—(training for all new staff

- **Reality** (particularly around the technology)
  - The request should reflect the level of capacity described in the proposal
  - Is the request too complex? Is it likely to do what the proposal requests?
  - Is it appropriate to the work at hand (Are they suggesting to build a super web site when only 5% of their constituency is online?)

- **Organizational impact**
  - Some articulated understanding of the impact of the technology on the organization
  - Will the technology present challenges to the work? Are there likely unintended consequences? Does it fit with the culture of the organization?
  - Is the funding request consistent with other areas of work at organization?

- **Sustainability**
  - Can the technology strategy be maintained overtime?
  - How does the organization budget for technology?
  - Does the request build the capacity of the organization or is it some new technology that only one staff person understands?

- **Built from an existing assessment and plan**—clear thinking about the components of technology use goes a long way
  - Overall strategic and deliberate approach to using technology
  - These tend to be strongest proposals—stops the technology tail from wagging the social change dog—does not have to be long, intense process

    Usually involves the following steps:
  - Identify current technological use and capacity
  - Identify technology strategies that advance the work
  - Identify what they need to implement the request (training, equipment, etc . . .)