

# SOUP

## WHY AND HOW TO SOUP

**A guide to the practical application of starting and sustaining a community micro-granting dinner.**

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# WELCOME!

*September, 2015*

Dear You! Yes, *YOU!*

Thank you.

Thank you for wanting to build this beautiful dinner gathering people in your community.

In the beginning, a group of artists started this dinner to find and explore the ideas that were brimming in the minds of friends in our artistic community. These friends were sharing ideas about art that challenged tradition, were innovative solutions that could make something better, were imperfect ideas, were projects that were hard to discover funding for - situations that would have a hard time going to a traditional funding board. Over time, it was those challenging ideas that pushed us to think about our city in different ways.

Over the years, we have learned that people want to believe in the good of others and at the same time feel safe and comfortable. It is hard to push others outside of their comfort zones. This dinner provides the opportunity to feel safe while hearing from people with potentially uncomfortable ideas.

The guide we've created is pretty comprehensive, but it is not concrete. Please, use it as it is intended, as a guide. Like a guide when you travel a city, you don't follow it page for page, location to location. Feel free to veer off the map a bit. Your community is so different than Detroit. Perhaps your street lights work... but we're already digressing. This is a guide, it is not the Bible or a holy grail.

Use it until you don't need it anymore. Recycle it or give it away. Write your own guide. Share your stories.

Have fun! Be free! Don't panic! We promise you aren't going to do anything wrong. Just remember, it's not really about you so a lot of the pressure can be removed.

Enjoy and keep in touch!

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# 1

# STARTING A SOUP: BASIC INFORMATION

**SOUP. SALAD. BREAD. VOTE.**

## **BASIC PREMISE**

**A neighborhood/city/burrough/community-based crowdfunding dinner.**

- 4 pre-selected projects have four minutes to share their idea and answer 4 questions from the diners.
- The projects can be about ANYTHING! No restrictions.

## **THE ONLY TWO RULES OF SOUP**

- 1** Presenters can't use technology to present their ideas.
- 2** The idea has to be about the 138 square miles of Detroit.

## **DINNER**

Potluck-style (for our friends that don't use that word, that means everyone is encouraged to bring food for all to share). To attract diners, we give food-makers 60 seconds after the presentations to share anything they are working on in the community (events, questions, projects, businesses, etc).

## **DOOR PRICE**

**\$5 suggested donation.**

Why? SOUP wishes to eliminate barriers to participants, so some throw in \$20 while others \$0.20.

## **GOAL**

The winner goes home with the money raised at the door. Attendees have engaged and participated alongside other people who share in the desire for a better Detroit. Diners have shared resources and ideas with all presenters. Connections have been made. Conversations have been had. People have felt empowered.

## **SOUP PHILOSOPHY**

SOUP is a place for people to gather and to feel safe. Detroit SOUP is not the granter of the funds. Our job is to plan a dinner that creates an environment where participants can vote on what project wins the money from door. Each individual who walks through the door is agreeing to grant the money to the project they think is most deserving through democracy and critical conversation. We then ask past winners to come back in a few months to share with the community what they did with the money. That's it.

## **GENERAL PROCESS**

**It takes at least three months to host the first dinner**

- Build a board of community stakeholders
- Develop board vision, goals, and values
- Determine SOUP name, general boundaries, board leadership roles
- Research and decide first SOUP logistics (location, time, proposal deadlines, etc.)
- Outreach!
- Finalize SOUP event logistics and vote on SOUP presentations
- The event!
- Debrief and grow

## **OUR MISSION**

Detroit SOUP's mission is to promote community-based development through crowdfunding, creativity, collaboration, democracy, trust, and fun.

## **OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF SOUP**

With key partnerships and community leaders, we hope Detroit SOUP will change the way people engage with the democratic process by establishing neighborhood relational hubs across the city. We wish this for Detroit. We wish this for your community.

## **WHAT WE WANT TO DO**

- Empower residents
- Help create jobs
- Allow people to establish new relationships and networks
- Promote action and change
- Foster critical dialogue
- Instill neighborhood pride
- Provide a deeper understanding of democracy

## **THE WHY OF SOUP FROM AMY KAHERL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, DETROIT SOUP**

I get asked a lot about the beginning year, and I used to fixate on those beginning months thinking that we had struck it rich with understanding. I used to think that we needed to mine the nuggets of gold and truths from just year one. Over time we were experimenting without an end goal discovering the power and attraction this democratic micro-granting dinner had on our community. Now, almost six years later, we are still learning, growing, experimenting, and asking questions.

The beginnings look a little like this: Our friend Kate Daughdrill experienced the dinner from the originators (InCUBATE, a research group dedicated to exploring new approaches to arts administration and funding) of SOUP in Chicago and approached Jessica Hernandez whose family owned the Mexicantown Bakery, which had a loft above being used for storage. After a group (Amy Kaherl, Katie Barkel, Vanessa Miller, Amanda LeClaire, Phreddy Wischusen, Dan Demaggio, Erin Ellis, Tom Joseph) had collaborated on a women's event just months before, those same people continued to work together to make the first dinner happen. It started because the group wanted to collaborate and work together while there was an idea that we felt could empower and connect the community while exploring new art practices.

The first SOUP we planned on Super Bowl Sunday in 2010 was more like a dinner that created the vision of what a night like this could do for our friends and 'community.' At the second dinner, one of the presenters didn't show up and so the gentleman who presented on his photo book about Rust Belt architecture left with \$110. That is quite simply how our SOUP journey began! Those first few dinners were full of risk takers, many of whom were artists. What we did was execute on the idea. There wasn't months spent on planning, or building a manifesto, or creating a website, or filing 501(c)3 paperwork. We did the dinner with all the naivete it takes to start something. We literally just did the work and our meaning, value, and purpose developed over time.

Quickly, SOUP moved from just artists pitching at the event to ideas about land use, justice, small businesses, and urban agriculture. These other ideas quickly and organically made their way to the SOUP stage. We didn't have a solid structure in place yet. About six months in, there was a dinner where six ideas pitched. I remember sitting in the back of the room and thinking, when we reached idea 5, that I couldn't process any more information. That was the month where we put a limit on the number of proposals to 4 (more on this later in the packet).

I used to say a lot more frequently that when we started that the dinner and the city felt magical. I think it was because we, maybe naively, believed that anything was possible. I still believe in that magic today and that allows for participants to be believed, heard, and connected.

## WHY DO I (AMY KAHERL) SOUP?

I know why we started SOUP, but why I keep doing it is another story. We started SOUP because our friend stumbled onto something that clicked with a group of artists.

Why I still do it is within my being as a human...

- I believe in people.
- I believe that most people don't think they are good at much except for maybe what they do every day (and even that might not be their passion).
- I believe in mystery.
- I believe in creating environments that have something to do with me and nothing to do with me.
- I believe in creating safe space for all walks of life to gather together.

**SOUP is not about pushing a brand, a trend, a product, or a business strategy. SOUP is not a topical event where we sit in circles of like-minded individuals who want just art, or farming, or technology, or small businesses to succeed. It is convening all of these previously siloed people together and having a conversation about what matters.**

I live in a community where large corporations fled the city and people were left without their institutional anchors. I recognize that democracy is really setup for corporations to succeed. It seems like the everyday worker doesn't have power any longer, we have lost our voice. When this happens (I believe) people begin to search for connection and meaning. This dinner helps to support people with all their flaws, questions, risks, and ideations.

My favorite part of SOUP is that the ideas don't need official documents. I think we want things to be so formal that we do all the paperwork, the mission and vision, and the backend setup before we experiment. It is not the successes that teach us the most, but it's the hiccups, trips, and falls. It truly is when we get back up from those falls that we can look back and see how we got to this point.

I am excited that you want to make the dinner happen in your community. That means we did our job in thinking that SOUP is approachable, intuitive, and human-friendly. Thank you for being a fellow human looking for equitable safe space supported by your fellow neighbors.



## **SOUP IS:**

- a collaborative situation
- a public dinner
- a platform for connection
- a safe space
- a democratic experiment in micro-funding
- a relational hub bringing together various creative communities
- a forum for critical but accessible discussion
- an opportunity to support creative people in Detroit

I get asked alot about the beginning of SOUP. It was a bunch of people trying to figure something out. We didn't plan, think, or be conscious of others around us. The beginning was an experiment... this guide is 5 years of experimentation. This is SO important. The list above is the heart and the soul and the why and the how come and the reason why we continue to do this dinner many years after its origins.

## **WHAT SOUP IS NOT:**

- social enterprise startup competition
- tech startup pitch contest
- artist pitch competition
- food competition

Basically, what I am trying to say is that we use the tool of democracy as it aids in communal understanding. It is NOT your job to make a value judgement on the likelihood that these projects will take off or not. It is also NOT your job to feel like people will use and abuse the money. Maybe they will buy some food or put some gas in their car. Maybe that IS what they needed to get their idea moving forward. Your job is to create the opportunity to have people share and connect. The community holds them accountable for following up on what happens with the idea.

**SOUP is not a TV show.** It is not to embarrass, exploit, or profit. It is a community dinner that is built to uplift, empower, and find stories of amazing individuals who are thinking critically about their community/neighborhood/city. The ideas, like the humans that present them, are flawed and imperfect. The ideas, like the people, are in motion and in process.

You are building an environment. Your job is to create the safe space where the projects and ideas can pitch. This built environment is where people (strangers) feel like they can collide in conversation, asking what they will vote for, or what projects they were connecting with and why. In that type of environment, you begin, as the organizers, not to interfere with what is happening in the room.

The journey of SOUP is fun! You can't do this alone, and although we present it as easy (and it is), don't get caught up with rules and governing laws. This will break the spirit of the project. The following pages we are for guiding your thoughts through our journey. Make this yours.

So, let's begin this journey...

# 2 STARTING A SOUP

SOUP is all about people, collaboration, and growing together as a community. We encourage you to patiently think about and explore what your community looks like and what it might need to thrive. While digesting this guide, please know that this is what has worked for Detroit SOUP, but you will need to adapt from what you learn in your own communities. Be flexible, use this only as a jumping off point.

## 1. SOUP MATTERS

### SOUP PHILOSOPHY

SOUP is a place for people to gather. SOUP is not the granter of the funds. Your job is to plan a dinner that creates an environment where participants can vote on what project wins the money they contributed at the door. Each individual who walks through the door is agreeing to grant the money to the project they think is most deserving through voting, critical thinking, and a community conversation (or debate!). Your job as the facilitator is to ask that past winners come back in a few months to share with the community what they did with the money.

### WHAT WE WANT TO DO:

- Empower residents
- Help create jobs
- Allow people to establish new relationships and networks
- Promote action and change
- Foster critical dialogue
- Instill neighborhood pride
- Provide a deeper understanding of democracy

### TRANSLATION?

This is the philosophy, mission, vision, and values that Detroit SOUP uses to frame the work we're doing in the city, in the region, around the country and world. When creating your own dinner, hopefully these tenets will speak to you and help you frame the work you're also trying to do.

These thoughts are not mandated by any means, please feel free to take these and make them your own. We encourage you to work with your committee to come up with values and a vision that are important to your group, your community, and your mission. Try to honor these as you learn and grow with the SOUP concept.

There might be a moment where your group thinks, why don't we break up the months and focus on topics?

Here is the biggest piece of advice we can impart for long term sustainable funding:

**DO NOT DO TOPICS!** Your diners often feel like experts in almost anything and nothing at the same time. If you focus on a single topic at your dinner, you will only draw from that section of your community because they are empowered with specific knowledge, thoughts and opinions. Those are the people that already feel welcome and invited. When you open the dinner to humans with opinions and knowledge from different backgrounds and experiences, you will help to cross-pollinate past the confines of siloes. Now, you are helping people collaborate!

## 2. BUILD COMMITMENT TO SOUP

Diversity is key in cultivating a group of people to work on SOUP. Members of the planning committee should either live or work (or both) in the community so that there is a real understanding of the needs of that area - this transcends the scope of the SOUP. We try to remember that the audience will reflect those that planned the dinner.

Think about members from different experiences and perspectives:

- Young and old
- Different social and ethnic groups
- Nonprofit organizations
- Religious groups
- Business leaders
- Block clubs
- Artists, farmers, coffee shop goers, and lovers of the neighborhoods they live in

All are welcome and have a place at our table. The goal is to sit together and be a part of changing the ways we think about democracy, community, development, and safe space.

### THIS IS ABOUT COLLABORATION

When you're building a team, please remember that the implementation of SOUP requires a safe space in order to build toward an event that will also feel safe for the presenters and diners. Vulnerability is key as a team, so be kind with one another and experiment. This may require a strong facilitator; remember that while building a team.

### THE COMMITMENT?

You should be committed to the mission of promoting community-based development through crowdfunding, creativity, collaboration, democracy, trust and fun. That's it.

### TIPS FROM AMY

*“The more diverse group you have planning it, the more diverse it will be at the dinner.”*

*“You are not alone. Don't do it alone. Seriously. Don't. And, you don't have to take yourself that seriously in the process.”*

# 3. BUILDING YOUR SOUP COMMITTEE

(ONCE YOU'VE DECIDED ON YOUR ROLES FILL OUT [RESOURCE 1: COMMITTEE ROLES CHART](#))

We are committed to making SOUP a collaborative project that engages different parts of the community; this extends to, and is possibly most important in, the planning and implementation. Having a dedicated committee that takes on different roles in the process is essential to the success of each event and the concept in the community.

We have roles that have worked for Detroit SOUP, but if your community needs something different, empower the members of your committee to make those kinds of decisions with additions or subtractions.

**\*Resource 1 is a chart that you can fill in with the names and contact information of the people on your SOUP Committee for easy reference.**

## ROLES:

### LEADER / FACILITATOR / ENCOURAGEMENT DIRECTOR

The Leader is the manager and facilitator of each committee meeting and keeps track of the timeline and each member's responsibilities. They need to plan, build agendas, and facilitate each meeting. The Leader must be a skilled facilitator and be comfortable contacting committee members one-on-one to follow up on commitments and tasks.

### SECRETARY / NOTE TAKER / DOCUMENTER

The Secretary takes notes at each committee meeting and works closely with the Leader to clearly highlight decisions and commitments made at each meeting. It's best if this person can email notes to the group within 48 hours to make sure everyone stays up-to-date and is prepared for each upcoming meeting. It is important that this person documents how much money is raised at each event and who the winners, presenters, and proposal submissions came from for future reference. In some cases, the Leader assumes this role as well.

### OUTREACH CHAIR / MARKETING / STORYTELLER

Outreach should be the responsibility of the whole committee, however, the Outreach Chair is the organizer and manager dedicated to local outreach. At a planning meeting before the dinner, the committee should brainstorm local organizations, businesses, churches, events, etc. that they can reach out to for the event. Each member should commit to doing outreach to a few organizations on the list and the Outreach Chair will manage these commitments. They are responsible for making and printing a SOUP flyer, and creating a social media page to promote the event. At each dinner, the committee should collect a list of emails to notify attendees of future SOUP dinners and other opportunities.

### PROPOSAL CHAIR / IDEA FINDER

Having one person be the main point of contact for people submitting proposals can be very helpful, especially as the dinner date comes close. The Proposal Chair will work closely with the

Outreach Chair to find ideas in the community. This person will check in with proposal drop-off locations and manage an online proposal submission form. At least a week before the dinner, the board will need to decide which proposals should present at the dinner. The proposal chair should facilitate this process at the meeting and be the main point of contact for all proposal submitters. This means:

- Notify winners they will be presenting at the dinner and what to expect.
- Notify proposal submitters not selected to present and offer a few points of feedback, encourage them to attend the event (perhaps even to bring food and speak), and resubmit their proposal in the future.

At each dinner, the proposal chair should check-in with each presenter before the dinner begins to make sure they know the agenda, which order they're speaking in, and to answer any last-minute questions presenters may have before they speak.

### **FOOD CHAIR / HEAD CHEF / VOLUNTEER WRANGLER**

SOUP was conceived as a potluck where attendees are encouraged to bring a dish to share. In practice, this is an opportunity for people to make a 60-second announcement in front of all attendees to promote an organization, business, or upcoming community event. To ensure enough food is present at the dinner, the Food Chair often works with other committee members. They are responsible for getting enough food donations for the dinner, communicating with food-makers before the event, managing the list of potential food-makers from a sign-up sheet at each event, and helping set up and manage the food table during the dinner.

### **ART CHAIR / BEAUTY SEEKER**

To promote art and creativity in our communities, the Artist Chair is responsible for securing an artist feature for each SOUP. This person should also be responsible for making sure there is music (even just plugging in an iPod is fine) when people come in and during the dinner (unless this is part of the artist performance).

### **DIVERSITY CHAIR / INCLUSION ADVOCATE**

The Diversity Chair should be engaged with different aspects of your community and willing to speak out about important issues facing your events. As well, this person should work with the committee and the Leader to find ways to be more inclusive. This could include food choices, audience members, outreach, and other important conversations that arise.

**NOTE:** *Many of these roles and responsibilities are shared throughout the process of planning and implementing SOUP dinners, but empowering your committee to take the lead on certain aspects will instill a sense of ownership over the success of this project in your community. SOUP shouldn't feel like a lot of work, it should be fun and rewarding.*

## 4. PICK A LOCATION

Since people are the most important part of SOUP, it is important to be constantly thinking about the needs of the people that are coming to the event. When choosing a location, it should be accessible, familiar enough for audience members, comfortable enough, and accommodating. Detroit SOUP and its neighborhood SOUPs have used coffee shops, church meeting rooms, soup kitchens, event spaces, warehouses, empty storefronts, art galleries, urban gardens, and school cafeterias.

The Citywide Detroit SOUP event (in its current form) is held at an old film production studio, and it is a large enough space for the 250+ diners at the event brings in each month. Our events encourage people to step out of their comfort zones, so the space is raw with wooden floors, brick and cement walls, and high ceilings. To accommodate all sorts of people, seating options include floor seating, bleachers, some tables and chairs, and there are people standing during busier events. This can be and often is adapted, manipulated, and changed with each SOUP.

### A WORD FROM AMY ABOUT SPACE:

I love raw space. I love things that feel incomplete. It challenges the attendees to dream with the space and imagine the possibilities of what it could become. We have used three different locations for our Citywide dinner. By the time we left the first two spaces, they were left better than we entered them but still full of potential. Remember, this is not a wedding reception! Having the space be flawless says to the diners that the ideas need to be flawless as well. We encourage the space to reflect ability, so we aim to build a safe environment where all walks of life feel like this is interesting place to gather.

Of all the wonderful humans I have interacted with in starting SOUPs in different cities, this might be the most asked question. In Detroit, there's always another building begging to be revamped and to have a little love put in them.

### PLACES TO CONSIDER:

- **vacant storefronts:**  
With permission of the owners, we have collaborated with local artists to put a little paint on the walls, install some construction lights, and add a portable toilet. Just a few additions and we had a new space to reimagine possibilities.
- **church basements:**  
This could be a barrier to entry for some, but in some of our neighborhoods, it feels right.
- **coffee shops at night:**  
On off-hours, many of these can fit 75-100 people.
- **restaurants:**  
There are many restaurants that close often on Mondays or Tuesdays, so we use the space (and their chefs) to supply the space and cook.
- **community centers:**  
These are usually ready for any event needs.
- **school gymnasiums:**  
Amazing spaces because they are already set up for students with tables and this can be great way to involve families.
- **dance studios:**  
These can be fun, just be careful of the floors!

- **co-working spaces**  
These usually come with a small kitchen, a community of engaged entrepreneurs and a unique setting.
- **artist residencies or gallery spaces**  
Usually spacious, these offer an artistic environment that can aid conversations and collaborations.
- **parks or park pavilions:**  
In Detroit there are 4 seasons and it often rains, so you might need to come up with a second option. But, it's still a fun communal meeting space with great potential.
- **hotel banquet room:**  
I guess you could use a hotel banquet room, but that feels so stuffy and corporate and stodgy. I feel like people need to step up their game when this happens, and it's not the point of an event like this, but if this is available don't let me stop you!
- **dance club:**  
It is already set up with sound systems and vacant space. Often clubs need to find money making opportunities during the day or early on weeknights.

## 5. PICK A DATE & START

(FOR FURTHER GUIDANCE SEE [RESOURCE 2: MEETING SCHEDULE AND DISCUSSION TOPICS](#))

In the spirit of fun, unless someone is getting paid to run this thing, don't do it monthly - try quarterly or six times a year. It's a lot of work. You already are a hero for doing it. Don't sacrifice your life for this thing or it will swallow you and your volunteers up, and you might not be friends with the people when it's over.

In Detroit, we do a monthly dinner (minus July and August). We take this welcomed break in the summer because of beautiful Michigan summers and the need for refreshing rest. We don't want to sit inside when the sun is shining, and our attendance has never been spectacular in the summer for that reason. It works for us, but that's just our community.

For our neighborhoods, the committees are charged with three SOUPs a year. It works out lovely, we retain the gracious commitment of our teams and there is a nice break in between the dinners. If people are volunteering, this is a good way to value one another's time and efforts.

Try not to get stuck in the preparation stage when you're starting a SOUP. Once you have a committee dedicated to a shared vision and that's ready to start this project, then just start. Pick a date and a location, and then start telling people what's happening.

We've had the most success with committees that allow at least 2 months before their first event. Make sure to set some guidelines and set goals for your team, but remember that this is supposed to be fun and empowering - be flexible and kind to one another. We have a general timeline that works for Detroit SOUP's communities, but work with your committee and community to decide what works for your SOUP.

# 6. GET PEOPLE TO THE SOUP DINNER

(SEE *RESOURCE 6: EXAMPLE MATERIALS* FOR MARKETING IDEAS)

## A. PROPOSALS

Detroit SOUP is moving swiftly through its fifth year. We are now our own nonprofit (it took over 5 years of work to decide to make that happen) and we moved the model into our neighborhoods that need safe-space/dialogue/support. There are so many moving parts that make this sort of engagement work and be sustainable in any community. No matter what, though, the most important aspect has always remained the people.

Outreach for SOUP is two-fold. You need to get people to feel empowered to present their ideas to their community as well as people to come watch the presentations, learn about their community, and vote on the project that speaks loudest to them. Once details are set for your event, it is time to sharpen your message and start telling people about what impact SOUP can have for your community.

If you're starting a SOUP, it's probably a relatively new concept to most people. Not only that, but the thought of empowering people through democracy can seem like a foreign concept in many communities.

### PROPOSAL OUTREACH

For SOUP to work, you need to have people present about their ideas. That means, encouraging diverse sets of people to submit proposals about ideas they can share with people that are invested in that community. We've found that starting with people that the committee is familiar with and working out from there works well.

Develop lists of groups/individuals that have had a positive impact on the community and reach out to them about their possible future projects. The first couple of events are a bit more work on the outreach side, so make sure your whole committee is working on getting the word out.

These groups and people are the ones that not only should PITCH at SOUP, but also these people should ATTEND. These are groups who are interested in community engagement as well as need small sources of funding. It is a win-win!

#### Outreach options that have worked for Detroit SOUP:

- Schools (all levels)
- Religious organizations
- Block clubs
- Community development groups
- Business associations
- Urban agriculture coalitions
- Incubators
- Social justice entities
- Artists
- Neighbors
- Business owners
- Nonprofits



## **SO, WHAT DOES THE PROPOSAL LOOK LIKE?**

The proposal form that Detroit SOUP uses is simple because we want all people to feel empowered to talk about their ideas with diners at SOUP. Not only do we make the questions simple, but we make sure to have both digital and paper copies of the proposal forms to break down some of the barriers that exist in low income communities. Be mindful of your community's needs. Remember: you are creating low barriers to entry for these ideas - be purposeful.

### **DETROIT SOUP PROPOSAL** *(Feel free to steal, adapt, empower.)*

- What is your project?
- Why does this project matter to the Detroit community?  
(This part would be community specific for you and for our neighborhood events.)
- How will you use SOUP grant funding towards the realization of your project?
- What is the time frame for your project, and how could you share about its progress/ completion at an upcoming SOUP?

Your job is to create safe space for people to access both human (volunteers, phone numbers, emails, connections) and physical (more money, dance shoes, a lawn mower, etc.) resources and to leave the evening feeling empowered. There are SO many networks of people in your community, so make sure to tap into as many as you can.

## **PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS:**

On our website we share the following with potential presenters so they understand our expectations for the application.

- Your proposal doesn't need to be a novel.
- Short, quick and to the point.
- Your idea can be about ANYTHING!
- The idea must be about the 138 square miles of Detroit.
- You do not have to be a resident to submit an idea, and age is just a number so please don't limit yourself or a child! We want to hear from all.
- When you hit the "submit" button, a screen will prompt you that we received it.
- You can submit your idea more than once.
- If your idea doesn't get selected for this month's SOUP, then SUBMIT AGAIN! There are often up to 20 ideas submitted a month and only 4 submissions are chosen to share at the SOUP.
- **Save your work ahead of time.** Once you submit your application, there isn't anything sharing the final submission.
- Save what you wrote, so if you want to resubmit later you have the language you want for later.
- Anything you submit will be used in printed packets at the dinners.
- Make sure you edit, look for spelling errors, etc.

## **PROPOSAL SELECTION**

When you're doing SOUP outreach, be sure to set a submission deadline for proposals. Then, before the event, the committee will choose the four presenters for the upcoming dinner. It is the proposal chair's responsibility to reach out and let those selected (and those that weren't) know about what to expect from the upcoming SOUP event.

As a group, when you choose who will present at the dinner, try not to make value judgments, criticize, or omit projects because they make you feel uncomfortable. The community will talk about it, and they know when it's a bad idea and now you have a platform to discuss it.

**Real talk:** This dinner is not about you, your agenda, or your political platform. It is a safe space to have members of the community of ALL political lines talk together and PRACTICE the skill of democratic debate. To have meaningful dinners, you need all walks of life to sit at the table together because this is how we become better humans. The internet exists so we can be jerks to one another behind a screen, and the dinner exists because it makes it really hard to be a jerk to someone's face.

Honest dialogue happens in this space. It is your job to create the opportunities of democracy and conversation, and then step out of the way. Allow the ideas to happen and empower the presenters to have interaction. Maybe this experience will get presenters to think differently about their ideas or maybe this will make them work harder. Let the diners do the work.

This isn't a TV show or going to the movies. You are here to provide an opportunity, not to entertain. This is your turn to challenge the diners to participate. Stimulate conversation by asking one simple question: "What project are you going to vote for?"

When selecting projects, remember that the diners will have the final voice in who wins the funds, so it's not up to the committee to vet the presenters beyond having a variety of project ideas. When you and the committee are considering the projects, try not to worry about the logistics of if they are ready for the money - that part is not up to you. Think about the project and if you like it, if you think it can get done, and if you think that the project makes the community better. Don't get caught up in the person with the idea. They will reveal their character and their readiness at the dinner. Give people chances. Let's not be the ones to suffocate potential.

### **ONE MORE THING...**

In the beginning of this guide we shared that **there are only two rules at SOUP:**

- 1 Presenters can't use technology to present their ideas.
- 2 The idea has to be about the 138 square miles of Detroit.

We really mean it. If people want to present again... let them. It surprises us when people say they can't do something at SOUP because nowhere ever does it state a "no"... there is always a "yes" or "we can make it work." We want the SOUP space to be a safe place where we can all dream together. NOs often are dream stoppers. Let things happen.

### **SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT: PITCH COACHING**

After four years of working on SOUP, we were approached by a group of young consultants that wanted to volunteer and work with the presenters to help them use their 4 minutes wisely. The chosen presenters are often nervous and anxious about leaving visuals or technology out of selling their idea. Honestly, most people hate talking in front of large groups. We have found that a simple pitch coaching session the day before the presentations help presenters clean up their message without overcomplicating it. We quickly saw that this was an invaluable resource and use of our time.

## **B. MARKETING**

Now that you're on a roll getting people interested in presenting at the event, they need diners to listen to their stories. The process is similar (and often overlaps) with proposal outreach, but the potential audience members need to know why they are committing their time, suggested \$5 donation, and energy to SOUP.

### **THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND WHILE MARKETING SOUP:**

- You need food at your event.
  - People that bring food get 60 seconds to talk about whatever they want. That's a powerful tool.
  - Talk to local restaurants, gardeners, or chefs and see if they will donate.
  - Have startup restaurants think of the diners as a test kitchen.
- You need diners.
  - This is an exercise in community, collaboration, democracy, conversation, and love.
- You need sustainable support.
  - Make sure you talk about what this will do for your community in the years to come. These projects and ideas are about supporting the longevity of your community through the passion and dedication of people that live, work, and play there.

### **OUTREACH METHODS THAT HAVE WORKED FOR DETROIT SOUP:**

#### **Committee members' networks**

Never underestimate the importance of your committee members' networks. Don't drain your resources, but remember to tell your friends about what SOUP is doing and see if they're interested in getting involved.

#### **Social media outreach**

This takes a certain amount of dedication and commitment, but Facebook pages, Facebook events, Instagram photos, and Twitter posts have made an impact on all aspects of SOUP outreach.

#### **Reach out to community organizations**

Find out about community calendars, neighborhood newsletters, email lists, and other places to promote the event.

#### **Talk about it**

SOUP will come up in conversation more often than you'll have ever anticipated. Make sure to talk to people in all sorts of places about its potential impact.

#### **Go to community events**

Before events (and even intermittently) you should go to events and pass out flyers and talk to people.

All of the outreach should not just be the chairperson's job. Instead, ask all of your committee members to take on a few responsibilities for outreach. Detroit SOUP encourages organizers to use a shared document that shows different outreach plans with deadlines for the upcoming events, then it's the chair's responsibility to make sure that deadlines are met. Transparency is important to building trust within your committee and making sure it's a team project. This way, everyone has the opportunity to contribute their share.

Outreach gets easier and easier with each event. People start to get it, and the story spreads on its own. We recommend having diners give you contact information (emails) at the door for future updates and make sure people follow your efforts on social media. During your event, make sure to mention future event dates. Make sure the diners know that they are important and valued.

## **TO RSVP OR NOT RSVP? THAT IS THE QUESTION.**

Detroiters are notoriously awful RSVPers. We threw an anniversary event once, where the day of the shindig, over 45 people emailed me asking for tickets. Since then, I have never done an event where people didn't feel like they needed to RSVP ahead of time.

Honestly, the space you choose for your dinner will dictate the number of people who can come. Keep doing the SOUP, and eventually your intuition will tell your committee if you need to grow the space. So what if people were crammed in there? Your dinner will keep growing and the diners will grow with the event. We're pretty sure that if you follow this packet, you will probably get 75-100 people to your space. Try not to complicate it.

If you feel like you might run out of food, just have your volunteers eat last and then go out to dinner afterwards. This is a great time to talk about the event, and it's a lot of fun! We've kept 4 volunteers for 3 years this way!

# **7. THE DAY OF SOUP**

(FOR FURTHER GUIDANCE SEE [RESOURCE 4: DINNER ROLES](#) AND [RESOURCE 5: AGENDA](#))

## **SET UP**

Try to make people feel uncomfortable sitting because it helps in talking about things that are uncomfortable later. We put old boards and doors on milk crates at our citywide events. Viola! A table! However, we recognize that we want our elderly friends to participate as well, so we make sure to also have tables and chairs but not for all. Put people in a position where they have to think about the needs of others before their own.

Create proposal packets with the information for your dinner. It should include the presenters' proposals and objectives with contact information on how to follow up. Also, this is a space for any thank yous or sponsorship information. Don't make enough for everyone so that people are put in a position where they have to share. It's a simple way to get people talking to each other.

## **SET THE SCENE**

On the tables are the proposal packets, a candle, some bread to snack on before and during the proposals, and any other promotional materials offered from the community. We also place sticky notes and pens on the tables in case diners want to share resources with the presenters (or others).

Make sure the room isn't silent when people walk in. We have some music playing to fill the dead space while people are entering. This sets the tone for the rest of the dinner.

The most important thing to remember about the setup is that it embodies the energy you are putting out for the remainder of the evening. If you're frantic, or if things are feeling chaotic, the people who are attending can feel that energy. Please, if you need to expend some nervous energy, do it outside. Be calm, be joyous, and have fun. The leadership of your SOUP needs to embody the energy you want for the event as a whole. The presenters are already nervous, so it's even more important for you and your committee to remain as a calming presence.

## **MATERIALS**

SOUP is simple, but there are some things that are important to making sure your event proceeds smoothly. Depending on your venue, your needs may vary widely, but essentials include soup bowls, napkins, and spoons and forks (we saved on costs and get sporks). At Detroit SOUP, the tables have tablecloths, there are some chairs, candles, napkins, a limited bar with alcoholic and nonalcoholic drinks, and a sound system with a microphone.

## **RESOURCE BOARD**

The funds raised at SOUP events are helpful to empowering different projects and ideas in the community, but the most important part of SOUP is and always will be the people. The connections made at SOUP are far-reaching, so we have a board where sticky notes with audience-generated resources is available to encourage resource sharing. The money is the thing that draws audience members and presenters, but without sounding cheesy, you begin to realize that money is the least interesting exchange at SOUP. It's creating the space for humans to network, connect, and empower.

Before the presentations begin, the diners are told that they have sticky notes and pens at their tables. If they have an idea or resource to share, they are encouraged to write it down and post it on the board for the presenter. Not only is this a great way to help all of the presenters, but it's also a great way to open up questions to pertinent, engaging inquiries.

## **PRESENTERS**

As a general rule, there should be no less than 2 but no more than 4. To be honest, more than 4 presentations is too much information to process at one time. Keep it simple for those in the room to hear the ideas. SOUP is absolutely possible without 4 presenters, so keep that in mind if you're not getting as many submissions as you'd hoped. For those projects that aren't selected, encourage them to submit again and/or bring food to the event to talk about what they are working on.

Make sure the presenters get there at least 30 minutes before the presentations start so they can feel out the room and so that you know they are ready.

## **VOTING**

Over the last five years, we have discovered some things that have worked and some things that have definitely not. The most tried and true is to create a voting booth and let democracy do its thing. Our booth was created in collaboration with a local artist, and it is reconstructed every month. In our neighborhoods, we have a simple voting box. For both, we create paper ballots where we encourage the diners to choose one of the presenters as their choice. We ask that they only vote once. It seems simple.

We constantly have conversations with the leaders in our neighborhoods about what works for them and their committees. There are lots of different ways to handle voting, but it is important to think about it from multiple perspectives. This may be the first time some people have ever voted for a variety of reasons. SOUP is a powerful time to teach people about the importance of their democratic voice.

You and your committee must do what feels right to you, but trust is a powerful tool. SOUP should be about fairness and equality, so we try to leave piles of ballots in the voting booth and just ask that people not cheat. We are not interested in policing the voting process - there is enough mistrust in society.

When Amy was in Tunisia, they took a cardboard box and simply wrote "VOTE" on the outside. Nothing should stop the process, but voting and debate is something that SOUP allows us to practice. Be patient with yourselves and your community.

## **FOOD: SOUP. SALAD. BREAD.**

Food is an important part of SOUP, but it isn't THE most important part of SOUP. The event is supposed to be a potluck, so diners are encouraged to bring a dish to share (it doesn't have to be soup or salad, it's just a concept). It's helpful if the food chair has some idea about what food will be at the event, so you can plan accordingly with other options if necessary. This is definitely a learning experience about your community.

Food-makers are given 60 seconds to talk about the food they brought and anything else they want to share. People often make announcements about upcoming events, projects they're working on, or a new business. Food is a gesture, so make sure donations are encouraged and appreciated.

It's been a learning experience for Detroit SOUP, so we've adapted to several different styles for food at our dinners. In some of the neighborhoods, the committee makes all of the food and hopes for some supplemental items from diners while some engage neighborhood organizations or restaurants to donate the food for each event. Many Detroit businesses are generous in their donations to SOUP events, including a local bakery that donates day-old bread to share at the dinners. It's a matter of learning what works for each community.

Recently, our citywide events have featured food entrepreneurs from FoodLab Detroit. "FoodLab is a community of food entrepreneurs committed to making the possibility of good food in Detroit a sustainable reality. We design, build, and maintain systems to grow a diverse ecosystem of triple-bottom-line food businesses as part of a good food movement that is accountable to all Detroiters." We give these entrepreneurs an opportunity to share their food with our audience and take part in the 60-second sharing portion of the evening.

## **DINNER ROLES**

Before your SOUP, make sure to assign committee members to specific roles during the dinner. Some roles align with the committee roles prior to the event, however, there are a few other necessary aspects to consider. [Detailed descriptions of roles and checklist available in RESOURCE 4.](#)

## **AGENDA**

Remember to adapt this general premise to what works for your community, but for Detroit SOUP dinners we take about three hours for each event. [More detailed agenda available in Resource 5.](#)

### **• DOORS OPEN AT 6PM**

- People arrive, pay a suggested donation of \$5, enter the space and find a seat or mingle. Music is playing, attendees are encouraged to talk with neighbors, learn about presenters, and settle into the experience.

### **• PRESENTATIONS BEGIN AT 7PM**

- We introduce the story of Detroit SOUP and talk about what to expect from the evening.
- Each presenter is invited to talk about their idea for four minutes, and then the audience is allowed four questions.

### **• DINNER AND VOTING STARTS BEFORE 8PM**

- Food makers are welcomed to talk about what they brought and anything else they'd like to share for 60 seconds.
- Audience members are encouraged to eat, talk with presenters, utilize the resource board, and vote.
- Encourage people to talk with people they don't know, but don't force them.

- **WINNER IS ANNOUNCED BY 9PM**

- When the audience starts to finish up dinner, the money is counted from the door and the votes are tallied.
- Each event features an artist, so this is a time for them to perform for 5-10 minutes or talk about what they are working on, or recite their work.
- Following the artist, a past winner talks about their project and updates the audience on the impact of their SOUP funds.
- Finally, the winner is announced and the money is handed over.
- We encourage everyone to help clean up and remind them of upcoming SOUP events.

## **FEATURED ARTIST**

SOUP was based on a model that was used for experimental artist funding. Detroiters asked if it could be used for anything and we responded with the current model, but we have never lost our desire to share the work of local artists. Sometimes, we highlight performances, photos, paintings, spoken word, a novelist sharing a chapter, or a musician sharing a piece they have created. Anything is possible, but please highlight their work. It makes things even more interesting and it is a platform to present new ideas.

## **A FEW “PRO TIPS” ABOUT THE AGENDA:**

- Allow diners to eat after presenters share their ideas because now the diners have a shared experience. People will want to talk about what they experienced before they vote, so give them the time to do that over their meal.
- This isn't a TV show or going to the movies. SOUP is there to provide an opportunity, not to entertain. Challenge the diners to participate. This is about them.
- After the shared experience of listening to the presenters, encourage the diners as they are waiting to eat, vote, or at their tables to ask one simple question: “What project would you vote for?”
- ALWAYS. ALWAYS. ALWAYS. Have fun! This is fun because you are alive. Don't take it too seriously. The anxiety you bring into the space will spread. Fun spreads, too. Do that instead.
- We promise, you aren't doing anything wrong. You are doing SOMETHING. It's better than staying home and watching Netflix and hoping the community will get better because you sent a Tweet. This is action.

## 8. LEARN FROM SOUP AND IMPROVE

After SOUP, it is imperative that committee members meet to debrief and talk about ways to improve for the next event. This is a learning experience. Be gentle with one another, be vulnerable about what worked and what didn't, encourage one another, and celebrate what happened. This is a space to experiment, engage, learn, and grow.

### **SOME THINGS THAT HAVE WORKED FOR DETROIT SOUP:**

- Take pictures, post on social media, and share stories
- Make lists of past winners' (and presenters') projects, the money raised, and contact information
- Document the approximate number of attendees at the event
- Store contact information from sign-in sheets and other gathered resources
- Write newsletters and talk about accomplishments
- Create lists of things that worked and didn't work
- Check-in with committee members to make sure they are happy with their roles, the vision, and the events
- Keep communicating

## 9. KEEP BUILDING, GROWING, AND COLLABORATING

Detroit SOUP has been working at this for nearly 6 years. With each SOUP, the process makes more sense and so many lessons are constantly being learned. Be patient with the experience and remember that this is supposed to be fun in order to be an effective community event. Always think about your committee's philosophy, mission, vision, and values. Are you helping people to collaborate and connect? Are you seeing the impact in your community? Are there new conversations happening? Discover what is sustainable for your SOUP and keep learning.

## 10. COMMITMENT TO SOUP

To use the SOUP name please commit to the following:

- No dinners with silos.
- Accessible dollar amounts (suggested, if possible), except for special events.
- Meet at least quarterly.
- You won't organize and execute alone.
- You will be relaxed and enjoy the process.



# 3 RESOURCES

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# RESOURCE 1

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## COMMITTEE ROLES

# SOUP

ROLE	NAME	PHONE	EMAIL
LEADER / FACILITATOR / ENCOURAGEMENT DIRECTOR			
SECRETARY / NOTE TAKER / DOCUMENTER			
OUTREACH CHAIR / MARKETING / STORYTELLER			
PROPOSAL CHAIR / IDEA FINDER			
FOOD CHAIR / HEAD CHEF / VOLUNTEER WRANGLER			
ART CHAIR / BEAUTY SEEKER			
DIVERSITY CHAIR / INCLUSION ADVOCATE			

# RESOURCE 2

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## MEETING SCHEDULE + DISCUSSION TOPICS

Before the first dinner, there are certain meetings / discussions that need to happen to make the most of your committee's time and accomplish all that needs to happen before the doors open the first time. Try to think carefully about each meeting's agenda. Meetings should be as short as possible while remaining useful and fun. At the end of each meeting, review each person's commitments and set the next meeting date (we use things like [Doodle](#) to coordinate busy schedules).

Since you're trying to build a diverse team, most of the committee members probably don't know each other well. Ice-breakers and introductory moments are important to developing trust and communication.

Try asking questions like: Describe yourself in one word. What do you bring to this group? What were you most proud of this past week? What is your favorite part of this community? It could be fun to ask committee members to come to the next meeting with a question similar to these to get the conversation started.

### MEETING ONE

- **Describe:** What is SOUP? (Visit [detroitsoup.com](#) and check out some videos, print this packet, show global impact, etc.)
- **Discussion:** How it could work in this community?
- **Develop:** Vision, goals and values, and philosophy for your community.
- **Commitment:** Are you in? Who else needs to be here?

### MEETING TWO

- **Brainstorm:** Vision, goals and values, and philosophy for your community. (For some communities, this meeting needs more attention and should take up a whole meeting. Use your best judgment and make sure your committee is on board.)
- **Share:** Logistical information
  - **Review *estimated* timeline (Resource 3):** use the materials and the timeline outlined in this resource packet.
  - **Review committee roles:** Assign if people are ready to commit, otherwise let people think about how they could be most useful and make commitments at the next meeting.
  - **Review the budget:** If you have access to some funds, talk about what those are so everyone understands and feels involved.
- **Brainstorm:** Possible locations, dates, and times.
- **Commitment:** Who is reaching out to each location? What do they need to report back at the next meeting? (Contact person, cost, size, availability of tables and chairs, etc.)

### MEETING THREE

- **Review / approve:** Vision, goals and values, and philosophy for your community.
- **Report:** Locations and vote on the place to hold the first SOUP (your locations can change).
- **Assign:** Committee roles (if you haven't already done so).
- **Set:** Dinner logistics (time / place) and proposal drop-off locations.
- **Create:** Outreach plan.
- **Commitment:** Who is each committee member reaching out to and by when? Who's checking in with team members? Who is printing flyers, creating social media, emailing community allies, etc.

### MEETING FOUR

- **Report:** Each committee member reports progress / commitments.
  - Outreach Chair / Marketing / Storyteller
  - Proposal Chair / Idea Finder
  - Food Chair / Head Chef / Volunteer Wrangler
  - Art Chair / Beauty Seeker
  - Diversity Chair / Inclusion Advocate
  - Leader / Facilitator / Encouragement Director
  - Secretary / Note Taker / Documenter
- **Plan:** Dinner logistics
  - Set roles for dinner (**For descriptions of these roles, see Resource 4**)
  - Write agenda (**We have an example! See Resource 5**)
  - Try to set approximate next dinner date so you can announce it at the event

### MEETING FIVE - LAST MEETING BEFORE SOUP!

- **Report:** Each committee member reports progress / commitments.
  - Outreach Chair / Marketing / Storyteller
  - Proposal Chair / Idea Finder
  - Food Chair / Head Chef / Volunteer Wrangler
  - Art Chair / Beauty Seeker
  - Diversity Chair / Inclusion Advocate
  - Leader / Facilitator / Encouragement Director
  - Secretary / Note Taker / Documenter
- **Plan:** Final outreach plans and any last minute details.
- **Select Proposals:** Which four projects are going to present at the dinner?  
Do these projects illustrate a variety of projects? Practice democracy.
- **Finalize Room set-up** (it's best to hold this meeting at the venue SOUP is taking place).  
What will the room look like? Who can help with set up? What time?
- **Review:** Dinner roles / logistics / get the jitters out.

## **MEETING SIX - HOST AFTER EACH SOUP EVENT**

- **Debrief:** S.W.O.T. Analysis
  - Strengths of the dinner
  - Weaknesses of the dinner
  - Opportunities to take on at future dinners
  - Threats that can get in the way of hosting SOUP
- **Create task list and set commitments:**
  - How will you continue strengths?
  - How will you avoid weaknesses?
  - How will you take on opportunities?
  - How will you avoid threats?
- **Set next meeting to start planning the next dinner:**
  - Be sure to take a break, but work backwards from the date of your next dinner to set a first meeting to get ready and start planning.

Preparing for the first dinner is the hardest, so after that event the planning process will get easier and easier. With each dinner, you will notice that you'll need fewer meetings to accomplish all of your goals. Make sure you're following up on commitments from the debrief session!

# RESOURCE 3

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## SOUP TIMELINE + MATERIALS CHECKLIST

Creating a rough timeline of getting to the first SOUP date is important for managing expectations and keeping the committee on track. Be flexible.

Use this checklist to stay on track!

### ABOUT TWO MONTHS BEFORE SOUP:

- **Set:**

- Date
- Location
- Committee roles
- Online and/or physical proposal drop-off locations

- **Initial outreach:**

- Announce the date and call for proposals
- Develop flyer, social media graphics, and marketing materials
  - Post on all social media
  - Update website
  - Newsletters
  - Handout flyers
  - Word-of-mouth

- **After the first dinner, check with past winner and confirm their attendance at the upcoming dinner to give a 4-minute progress report on their project.**

### A MONTH BEFORE SOUP:

- **Send a call out / find:**

- Featured artist
- Food makers
- Continue looking for proposals

## **2 – 3 WEEKS BEFORE SOUP:**

- **Secure:**
  - Artist
  - Food makers
  - Volunteers and roles for the dinner
- **Outreach for proposals and/or diners:**
  - Speak at community events to promote the dinner
  - Email residents, other community groups, and SOUP supporters
  - Pass out flyers to residents and at popular community locations
  - Use social media regularly
    - Announce event
    - Look for proposals
    - Engage with others in the community
    - Announce artist feature, venue, etc.

## **1 – 2 WEEKS BEFORE SOUP:**

- **Intensify promotion and outreach for attendance**
- **Select presenters**
  - Notify all proposals
  - Encourage attendance
- **Develop agenda**
- **Confirm**
  - Food makers
  - Artist
  - Roles and responsibilities for dinner
- **Arrange for dinner materials**

## **SOUP DAY:**

- **Set up the room**
  - Put a sign out front
  - Position volunteers and committee members
    - Review responsibilities

**HAVE FUN!**

## **SOUP SUPPLIES:**

- **Basics**

- Bowls
- Sporks
- Napkins and/or paper towel
- Trash cans and bags
- Cups and/or drinks
- Extra serving utensils
- Tables and chairs

(Detroit SOUP has a lot mixed use seating: floor, bleacher, chairs and lots of people standing if it gets too full. You want to have your audience slightly uncomfortable—get them to move around and talk!)

- Voting mechanism  
(ballots and voting box, marbles and jars, whatever you can do!)
- Sticky notes
- Pens
- Resource board
- Sign-in sheets
- Proposal packets
  - Presenters' information
  - Agenda
  - Any thank yous or announcements
- Sign for the front (even if it's just a piece of paper posted to the door!)

- **Extras:**

- Soup warmers
- Tablecloths
- Music and speakers
- Centerpieces (candles, flowers, something creative)
- Creative lighting and room decorations (Christmas lights, art, a mural)
- Rugs for floor seating
- Creative sign for the front
- Voting box and/or booth



# RESOURCE 4

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## DINNER ROLES

SOUP dinners should be fun and easy. It's simplest to assign committee members and any volunteers into specific roles so everyone has a clear task / expectations for the evening.

### **SET-UP TEAM:**

A group of people who can meet at least an hour before the doors open to set up tables, arrange chairs, prepare food table, stage area, decorations, etc.

### **DOOR:**

A team of two people to stand at the door, greet diners, and accept donations as they enter the space. These people should be welcoming and be able to answer questions about the event.

### **BAR:**

Offering drinks for a donation can be another way to raise money for presenters or an easy way to raise a small amount of money to help cover costs of the dinner. Depending on the space and the audience, you can offer water, coffee, tea, beer and wine for a cash donation. This person (or people) is responsible for managing the bar area and keeping track of the money.

### **FOOD TABLE:**

As attendees come in with their potluck contributions, the person assigned to the food table will manage the table, thank the volunteer for their donation, ensure there is a sign for each dish and a serving utensil. At dinner, this person is responsible for making sure the food table remains well-stocked and relatively clean.

### **PROPOSAL:**

This person is responsible for checking in with evening presenters as they arrive. Each presenter should understand the evening's agenda, their responsibilities as a presenter, which order they're speaking, and any other logistical information.

### **MC:**

The MC is a very important role. This person should be a confident speaker, understand how to control the room's energy, and should be comfortable talking about SOUP's values and history. The MC (can also work well as a two-person team) facilitates the evening, tries to stay within the recommended agenda, and supports a fun, community-based environment.

### **TIMER:**

To make sure each presenter only uses about 4 minutes during their presentation, have a timer sit in the front row and give the presenter a 1-minute warning.

### **FLOATERS:**

If possible, it's helpful to have a few people assigned to mingle with guests, encourage conversation, and be prepared to step in to support or replace other positions.

### **CLEAN-UP TEAM:**

It's important to encourage all SOUP attendees to help with cleaning up the space (the MC should direct where to put trash, tables, chairs, etc.), but assign committee members to stay after and make sure the venue is left clean and all SOUP supplies are well organized.

# DINNER ROLES

# SOUP

ROLE	NAME	PHONE	EMAIL
SET UP TEAM			
SET UP TEAM			
SET UP TEAM			
DOOR			
DOOR			
BAR			
FOOD TABLE			
PROPOSAL			
MC			
TIMER			
FLOATER			
FLOATER			
CLEAN UP TEAM			
CLEAN UP TEAM			

# DINNER ROLES

# SOUP

ROLE	NAME	PHONE	EMAIL
FOOD MAKER			
FOOD MAKER			
FOOD MAKER			
FOOD MAKER			
FOOD MAKER			
FEATURED ARTIST			
PAST WINNER PRESENTER			

# RESOURCE 5

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## AGENDA

### 6:00 - DOORS

All board members and volunteers in place, make sure floaters are mingling and encouraging people to talk and explore. Turn on music (or ask your artist performer to start playing)... This is it!

People arrive, pay a suggested donation of \$5, enter the space and find a seat or mingle. Attendees are encouraged to talk with neighbors, learn about presenters, and settle into the experience.

### 6:55 - FIVE-MINUTE WARNING

MC remind folks to use the bathroom, get something to drink, and then get in their seats.

Detroit SOUP and most neighborhood dinners give a whole hour for people to arrive. In this first hour, we try to create a comfortable environment and encourage people to get to know each other.

### 7:00 - PROGRAM BEGINS

#### WELCOME:

The MC welcomes the audience and gets things started.

In about five minutes explain:

- What is SOUP, brief history, and why you're doing the dinner in this community?
- Values and goals of the SOUP
- Describe resource sharing on the sticky note board
- Review the dinner's agenda and how SOUP works

*Keep it brief, fun and exciting! If the MC is excited, the audience will be!*

#### PRESENTATION #1:

Invite the first presenter up and allow four minutes to present. Following the presentation, MC asks the audience for 4 questions.

- Remind audience to get more information on this project over dinner.
- Remind audience to use the resource board to share ideas or resources with the presenter.

#### PRESENTATION #2:

Invite the second presenter up and allow four minutes to present. Following the presentation, MC asks the audience for 4 questions.

- Remind audience to get more information on this project over dinner.
- Remind audience to use the resource board to share ideas or resources with the presenter.

### **PRESENTATION #3:**

Invite the third presenter up and allow four minutes to present. Following the presentation, MC asks the audience for 4 questions.

- Remind audience to get more information on this project over dinner.
- Remind audience to use the resource board to share ideas or resources with the presenter.

### **PRESENTATION #4:**

Invite the fourth presenter up and allow four minutes to present. Following the presentation, MC asks the audience for 4 questions.

- Remind audience to get more information on this project over dinner.
- Remind audience to use the resource board to share ideas or resources with the presenter.

## **AROUND 7:30 - PRESENTATION OF THE FOOD**

MC describes that SOUP is a potluck dinner and we need people to bring food in order for the dinner to work. Remind attendees to sign up or talk to the food chairperson to bring food next time.

- Highlight that bringing food is also a way to announce a community event, business, project, or organization in front of the group.
- Invite food makers to the front allowing up to 60-seconds per person to talk about what they brought and to make an announcement.
- MC describes the flow of the food table, where trash and bathrooms are located, and remind folks about what's coming up, etc.
- Remind people to talk to the presenters, each other, and to vote on the project they like the best. Make sure everyone knows where the voting box is and how to cast their vote!

## **ABOUT 7:45 - DINNER**

Put on music and give people a good amount of time to eat, talk, and vote. Make sure someone is monitoring the food table and volunteers are spending time with diners.

- Remember: Encourage people to talk with people they don't know, but don't force them.

After the food line shortens, remind diners to cast their votes and use the resource board. The committee members at the door and bar should be organizing the donations, counting the money, and combining the total to give to the winner.

When it seems like everyone has voted, count the ballots and determine a winner.

## **AROUND 8:30 - ARTIST FEATURE**

MC gathers everyone together and requests that diners are quiet in their seats to introduce the featured artist. Depending on the type of art, this can be a time to share, perform, or just talk about the work. This should only use about 5 minutes while committee members finish up tallying the ballots.

### **8:45 ISH - PAST SOUP WINNER REPORT**

After your first dinner, of course, invite the last SOUP winner to speak for 5 minutes about how their project is progressing, how they used the funds from SOUP, and to share stories about their successes and challenges in the past few months.

### **BY 9:00 - ANNOUNCE THE WINNER**

Thank all of the diners and presenters for being a part of SOUP, be sure to highlight the importance of each person in the room and their contribution to the conversations happening in the community.

- Recognize / thank committee members and volunteers for their work
- Thank the venue for using their space
- Announce the date of the next dinner and tell folks how to stay updated—sign up at the door, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, website, etc.

### **ANNOUNCE THE WINNER AND FUNDS RAISED**

Invite the winner to the front to accept the money and publicly ask them if they will come back to report on their project at the next event.

### **CLEAN UP**

Ask everyone to help! Explain where to put tables, chairs, tablecloths, paper products, pens, etc.

***PAT YOURSELVES ON THE BACK, YOU'VE DONE IT. CONGRATS!***

# RESOURCE 6

## EXAMPLE MATERIALS

The following pages contain some examples of the flyers and other promotional material we've created.

### FACEBOOK POST



**DETROIT  
SOUP**

 **SUN**  
**4/17**

 **The Jam Handy**  
**(2900 E. Grand Blvd.)**

**\$5 for soup, salad, bread, and a vote!**

### FACEBOOK EVENT COVER



**SOUP**

 **12/13**

 **The Jam Handy**  
**(2900 E. Grand Blvd.)**

# DETROIT SOUP

**A DINNER FUNDING MICRO-GRANTS FOR  
CREATIVE PROJECTS IN DETROIT**

**SUN. 4/17 @**

**The Jam Handy  
(2900 E. Grand Blvd.)**

**\$5 for soup, salad, bread, and a vote!**

Fund your Detroit community project with support from your neighbors – anything from filling a pothole, to funding a class field trip, to starting a new business.

Attendees pay \$5 for soup & salad and vote on which project they think benefits the community the most. The winner goes home with all of the money raised at the door to carry out their project. At the dinner, Detroit residents and supporters connect, share ideas and community resources. Each dinner also features a local artist!

**SUBMIT PROPOSALS by 4/10:**

**drop-off:** Ponyride,

1401 Vermont St.

**online:** [www.detroit soup.com/submit](http://www.detroit soup.com/submit)

**SCHEDULE FOR THE EVENT**

**DOORS** at 5pm

**PROPOSALS PRESENTED** at 6pm

**DINNER** around 7pm

**WINNER ANNOUNCED** by 8pm

**FOR MORE INFO ABOUT HOW SOUP WORKS GO TO [DETROITSOUP.COM](http://DETROITSOUP.COM)**



# CITYWIDE SOUP PROPOSAL

Name and email/phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Project name & summary:

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How will you use SOUP grant funding towards the realization of your project?

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Why does this project matter to Detroit?

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What is the time frame for your project, and how could you share its progress / completion at an upcoming SOUP?

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# RESOURCE 7

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## EXAMPLE EMAIL TO PRESENTERS

The following is an example of a form email we send out to presenters. Feel free to modify as needed.

### **Congratulations!**

Your project has been selected to present at Detroit SOUP on Sunday! We are so excited that you will be sharing your story with us. Please confirm that you will be attending the event by replying to this email by Thursday at 2pm. If we don't hear from you, we will be connecting with the next top submission.

### ***The Event Details:***

DATE

ADDRESS

\$5 for soup, salad, bread, and a vote!

**Doors** at 6pm

Proposals presented at 7pm

Dinner around 7:45pm

Winner announced about 8:30pm

Parking can be found on \_\_\_\_\_.

### ***Presenting Details:***

You will have four minutes to share your idea and have four minutes to take questions from the diners. At about the 3:30 minute mark, I will politely come into eye shot and let you know we need to wrap it up.

Your proposal submissions will be printed, and on tables, for people to read prior to the presentation. This doesn't mean that everyone will see it, so please note in your presentation to hit on these points:

- Who you are
- What is your project
- What you will do with the money

As always, we do not use technology so if you want to use props they need to be everything but a Powerpoint or something where a projector or sound would be needed.

Please, let the folks at the door that you are presenting and have them point out (NAME OF SOUP LEADER) to you so they know you are in the building, and we can communicate prior to the event and they can answer any last questions.

### ***Sharing Event:***

Feel free to let people know what is happening! Please invite your network of friends and coworkers to be a part of the evening!

***Please, share our Facebook event:*** LINK

You may also direct people to [www.detroit soup.com](http://www.detroit soup.com), especially the FAQ section if they have not experienced a dinner before.

If you Tweet, or use Instagram, please direct people to @DetroitSOUP!

***Pitch Practice:***

We have a pitch practice for you on DATE at TIME.

Refreshments will be available, and please, have your pitch ready like you would on Sunday. Experts from the community will help you build your best pitch with questions and feedback before Sunday!

Location: ADDRESS

Please, call NAME when you arrive at NUMBER, and they will be happy to answer the door for you.

***PLEASE LET US KNOW IF YOU WILL BE IN ATTENDANCE AT BOTH SATURDAY AND SUNDAY!***

***Press:***

Lately, we have had many requests to film our dinner. We just want to give you the heads up that there might be a video camera or two present. You may be on a local, national, or international story! Please, let us know if you have further questions about this, and if there is a group scheduled to be in attendance and wish to share your story, I will be connecting them to your email addresses.

With thanks,

The Detroit SOUP team!

# RESOURCE 8

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## EXAMPLE BALLOT

We print several on a sheet of paper and cut out the strips. Attendees are told to circle their choice.

Project #1 / Project #2 / Project #3 / Project #4

Project #1 / Project #2 / Project #3 / Project #4

Project #1 / Project #2 / Project #3 / Project #4

Project #1 / Project #2 / Project #3 / Project #4

Project #1 / Project #2 / Project #3 / Project #4