



*Asha for Education
Silicon Valley Chapter
P.O. Box 641741
San Jose, CA 95164-1741*

New Project Proposal Template

Project Name: Mountain Children's Forum

Date Received:

Referred By: Dinesh Srinivasan

	Project Contact Information	Asha Contact
Name	Mountain Children's Forum	
Contact	Aditi P. Kaur (in India) Smita Patel (in the US) Dave Grey (in the US)	
Address	63-A Vyom Prasth, G.M.S Road, Dehradun, Uttarakhand 248001, India	
Phone(s)	91-135-6532937; 91-135-2722097 (in India)	
Fax	--	
E-mail	mcfglobal@mymountains.org smita@mymountains.org dave@mymountains.org	

Part I: Information about your group/organization

Please feel free to attach any additional sheets and/or information such as brochures, press reports etc.

1. Name of the group/organization requesting funds.

Mountain Children's Foundation

2. When was the group established?

May 2002

3. Briefly describe the motivation for starting this group.

To provide a forum for young people to express their views, share their concerns and learn from each other, to empower the children to change their lives and communities through local, collective action.



4. Name the key people running the organization and describe their background

Aditi P. Kaur, President: Aditi has worked in the NGO sector in Garhwal since 1997. She has been running the MCF since it was founded in 2002. Aditi has built a strong network of partner organizations as well as developing working relationships with officials in the Uttarakhand government.

Sudhir Bhatt: Sudhir is a child of the mountains and joined the MCF in 2005. He too has been working in the NGO sector in Garhwal since 1989 and was associated with the MCF since 2002.

Smita Patel: Smita helped launch the MCF and has worked as a roving volunteer since 2002. Her focus is on writing and managing the website.

Dave Grey: Dave joined the MCF team in 2003. A retired journalism professor, Dave has led the MCF's outreach and communications efforts.

5. Briefly describe the aims of your group.

The MCF aims to improve the lives of people in rural mountain communities by tapping into their own resourcefulness and energy, particularly the energy and resourcefulness of the children. Working primarily with young people between the ages of 12-18, the MCF works towards broad-based change in attitudes (e.g. sense of apathy and helplessness in changing their lives, gender bias, casteism, etc.) and the physical, economic, environmental and social health of the community. We have found that that children can be powerful agents of change, because they are able to influence the attitudes and beliefs of the entire community. Furthermore, in a few short years, they will be the adults in the community, so by empowering and engaging them now, we are making a significant investment in the future.

6. Does your group have any religious or political affiliation? If yes, please describe the type of affiliation and the reason for it.

No. None. The MCF is all about breaking down barriers between people and helping the young people tap the power of collective action. It is essential to the MCF's success that the young people be able to work with and access the local government, so we have made a great effort to build strong relationships with government officials while remaining apolitical.

7. What non education-related community development activities is your group involved in?

The MCF's work is primarily focused on non-traditional education. Working through locally based voluntary organizations, the MCF helps children think about themselves differently by asking them to identify the problems in their community and to start thinking about ways in which they, the children, can solve them by working together as a children's group (also known as *PABAM/bal sangathan/bal panchayat*). Although education continues to be the children's highest priority, they also work on such diverse issues as health, birth registration, agriculture, reforestation, disaster preparedness, and child advocacy.



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8. Does your organization have FCRA (Foreign Contribution Regulation Act of 1976) clearance from the Indian government? This is required for you to receive foreign funds. If yes, please provide FCRA details. If no, have you applied for Prior Permission (one time acceptance of foreign funds)? If yes, when was the application submitted?

The MCF is currently in the process of applying for an FCRA as well as a Prior Permission. In addition we have a relationship with an FCRA-bearing organization in India that has agreed to help the MCF receive funds while we wait for the FCRA to come through.

Part II: Details about your educational project/s

1. List the school/s run by your group, and their locations. If you are requesting funds for only a few of several schools, please specify which one/s.

N/A (The MCF does not run any schools)

2. Who owns the school legally? Is it the organization or trustees or an individual. Please provide details.

N/A

3. Location of school/s Urban Rural Other N/A

4. Specify the type of education provided (e.g. basic literacy, vocational training etc.).

N/A



5. Please tell us about your teaching techniques (conventional vs. alternative).

Our techniques are definitely non-traditional. We work by talking with the children and asking for their inputs. Our workshops focus on group activities in which the children sit down and discuss a topic, come up with their recommendations, and then present (and defend) those ideas before the rest of the group.

6. What is the literacy rate in your local community? Please give a breakdown between boys and girls if possible.

Overall figures for the state of Uttarakhand, as stated by the department of education. However, these figures do not reflect the reality of the abysmal quality of education in the state:

Total	72.28	Rural	69.95
Total Female	60.26	Rural Female	55.52
Total Male	84.01	Rural Male	82.74

7. Describe the socio-economic background of the children and their parents (e.g. education, occupational). If any of your students are employed, please tell us about that as well.

The MCF works in rural mountain communities in the North-Indian state of Uttarakhand. It is an area almost completely bypassed by India's current prosperity.

The primary livelihood is subsistence agriculture. Many of the able-bodied men migrate to the cities to work in hotels or as domestic servants. The women are left with the tasks of farming, caring for the homes, the children, the elderly, the cattle, etc. Many villages still lack electricity and running water so women, and children, walk great distances to fetch water and firewood. Many girls drop out of school by the 5th grade, because they need to help with chores at home. The quality of education is abysmal in most of the schools with few instructional materials available and teachers who often don't bother to show up for work.

8. What is the admission criteria for the students to join your school? Have you ever turned away students? If so, why? How many children attend your school currently? How many teachers do you have? How many full time students? How many part time teachers? How much is the fees? Is there an admission one time fee? Do you have parent teacher meetings (parent involvement)?

N/A



9. In addition to education, does your group provide any other services to the children in your schools (e.g. food, health care, clothing, etc.)?

N/A

10. How do you perceive that education will improve the lives of the children in your village?

Education and engagement is the key to improving life in these communities. In many places, people live the way they have lived for generations – eking out a marginal existence, without electricity, adequate water, health care, or any hope that things will change in the future. In many mountain villages, women still give birth in the cowshed. Girls are still undervalued though they, along with the women, do most of the work. Education is their best hope for changing their circumstances.

11. Does your school have: N/A

Its own building(s): Yes No Number _____

Number and type of classrooms (e.g. Pukka): _____

	Yes	No		Yes	No		Yes	No
Toilets	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Playground	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Toys	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chairs & Tables	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Blackboard	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Library	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drinking water	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Electricity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Computers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Laboratory	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Teaching aids (e.g. books/slates)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. What is the age group of the children currently enrolled in your school(s)?

N/A (Though the MCF works primarily with children aged 12-18)

13. How many staff are employed at your schools? N/A

Teachers _____ Minimum Qualifications _____

Other staff _____

14. Average distance the children travel to attend your school N/A



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15. Please answer this if your school has existed for atleast 5 years. How many children have gone through your program in the past five years and what are they doing currently? Please tell us about their future education possibilities. How would you visualize their future employment possibilities?

N/A

16. Do you help your students with their future education efforts after they have completed school? If so please describe your efforts.

N/A

17. Do the students who have studies or graduated get involved in the school afterwards and help the next batch?

N/A

18. Are there any other schools (Kindergarten/Balwadi, Elementary school, High school) in the area? If so, please list the schools and the range of classes each of them offers.

N/A



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19. Is your program different from that provided at these schools? Please explain.

N/A

20. Why are the children in your school/s not attending government/other schools in the local area?

N/A

21. Do you try to involve the parents of the children in the running of the school (e.g. in setting the syllabus etc.)? Please specify.

N/A

22. What are your expansion plans for the future (e.g. adding more classes or schools)? How do you see your school impacting the village five years from now?

N/A



23. Any additional details you would like to provide to us.

The MCF does not operate schools. We hope by mobilizing and empowering the children in local communities we can improve the quality of the existing government schools as well as boost to motivation of the children to stay in school and make the most of the educational opportunities offered to them.

24. If possible, please provide us with the contact information of two individuals from your community(not related to the school) who can describe the impact of your program.

1.	Name	Cyril Raphael
	Address	201 Indra Nagar
		Dehardun
		Uttarakhand
		India
	Phone	+91135 2761951

2.	Name	Sehba Hussain
	Address	C-842, Mahanagar,
		Lucknow
		Uttarpradesh
		India
	Phone	+91 522 2327355

25. Asha for Education requires reports from its projects every six months to continue funding. Please provide the contact information for the person from your group who will be responsible for these reports.

Name	Smita Patel
Address	82 Coburn Ct, San Jose, CA 95139
	smita@mymountains.org
Phone	408-513-7863; 408-629-7799



3. Salary expenditure details: N/A

	Number	Salary Range
Teachers		
Paid Staff		
Volunteer Staff		

4. Please provide details of the fixed costs of your school/s for the next three years.

N/A

6. What amount are you requesting from Asha, and for what specific purpose?

Line Item	Amount	One time / Annual
RTI facilitators training in Dehradun	\$1,290.93	One time
Village-level RTI workshops (90 workshops through 18 partners, with 30 children each, for a total of 2,700 children)	\$16,209.07	One time
Two state-level workshops with 75 children	\$14,252.90	One time
Dedicated RTI facilitator (to follow up on activities, data collection, and applications)	\$3,273.55	One time
Coordination expenses	\$3,000	One time
RTI brochure (3,000 copies)	\$806.05	One time
RTI poster (1,500 copies)	\$1,007.56	One time