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## WNYC News Blog

# Non-Profit Offers Seed Money to Lift Neighborhoods

Saturday, November 26, 2011 - 12:00 AM

By [Yasmeen Khan](#)

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Peter Kostmayer, head of Citizens Committee for N.Y.C., visits a community project. (Courtesy Citizens Committee for New York City)

The non-profit group Citizens Committee for New York City is calling on residents to take on a new project in their community.

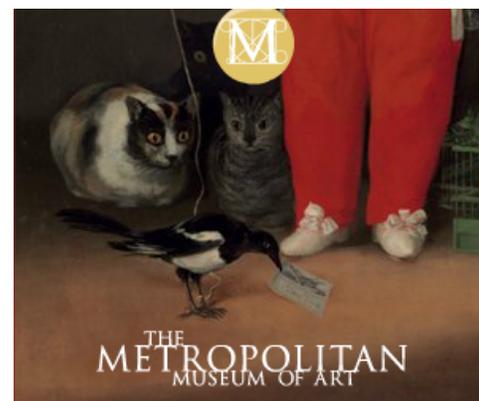
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The organization is taking applications for its annual [neighborhood improvement grants](#), a campaign known as New Yorkers for Better Neighborhoods, which focuses on low-income areas. Funds range

from about \$500 to \$3,000.

"I've talked to people who have had their lives and their communities improved with a relatively modest amount of money," said Peter Kostmayer, the group's chief executive officer. "So it's really not the money. It's really the idea of bringing people together to work on a project."

The neighborhood grant program started in 1977. Since then, residents have used the funds for graffiti removal, planting gardens, cleaning up parks and — in one Lower East Side neighborhood in the 1970s — buying whistles to scare away drug dealers at night.



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Kostmayer said the number of applications has increased significantly over the years. Last year, the organization received about 1,000 applications. About half of those proposals received grants.

The deadline to apply is January 31.

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YASMEEN KHAN

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Yasmeen Khan is an associate producer covering education. You can find her stories on the air and on SchoolBook.org, WNYC's education website.

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**k webster from nyc**

Citizen's Committee for NYC is a terrific vehicle for community change. It's geared to help volunteers who are committed to the work of their neighborhood and recognizes that these are already busy people. Unlike other grants, it has found a way to make them truly accessible. The grant application is straightforward - answering the questions doesn't require devoting a month to figuring out how to answer them.

You make a plan, you ask for funds to help, you do the work, you tell/show them how it went.

The staff is good, they work hard and have a sense of the communities they serve.

Nov. 26 2011 07:54 AM

Score: 0/0

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