



Request for Proposals Faith Community Grants

March 17, 2021

The Greater Hartford region is fortunate to have many, diverse faith-based organizations. Our churches, synagogues, mosques and other communities of faith make essential contributions to the communities they serve, making an impact in providing food, shelter and other basic human needs, youth development, job readiness, healing from grief and loss, as well as community-wide improvement through safety campaigns, community organizing and civic engagement.

As the community foundation for the 29-town Greater Hartford region, the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving is pleased to announce a new grant opportunity to support faith organizations assisting residents disproportionately affected by COVID-19, addressing needs of congregants and the broader community affected by racial/ethnic, geographic and/or economic disparities, and/or advancing community engagement focused on social and racial justice.

The Foundation expects to award grants ranging from approximately **\$2,500 to \$10,000 to individual faith organizations**, and grants up to **\$25,000 to support collaborative projects of two or more partnering faith organizations and/or partnerships with other nonprofits**. All grant awards will be based on the size of the project, funding needed, and quality of plans responding to the criteria presented in this RFP. Applicants must complete the [online grant application](#) by **Monday, April 19, 2021**. Grant announcements are expected by **May 31, 2021**. While this new grant opportunity reflects a change in our policy and practice to allow funding to religious organizations, and we expect to support a range of different projects, we remain unable to fund activities that promote religious doctrine.

I. Background

In 2020, the Foundation convened Greater Hartford faith leaders representing various religious organizations and traditions to hear about pressing needs they see, ways they are addressing them within their organizations and collaboratively, and what more is needed to support their efforts.

We learned how the Greater Hartford faith community is leading to tackle the challenges arising from, and exacerbated by, the dual pandemics of COVID-19 and racism. Faith leaders told us how faith-based organizations are sharing resources and together providing a unified beacon where residents can go for critical human needs, nurturing and healing, regardless of whether they identify with a specific faith. We also heard how communities of faith are catalyzing their congregants and the broader community around social and racial justice issues and actions.

At the Foundation, our engagement and assessment make clear that the Greater Hartford region must achieve greater racial, geographic and economic inclusion to reach its full potential as a vibrant, thriving and contributing force for regional and state prosperity. We know that we must address the structural racism responsible for persistent disparities that serve as barriers to this vision being fully realized. Our [strategic framework](#) centers on our commitment to prioritize our resources in ways that advance racial justice and improve social and economic mobility for Black

and Latinx residents, and in 2021, to continue to respond to the impact of the pandemic for residents and communities most impacted.

Addressing the disparities in our region is urgent work that requires both inclusive leadership and partnership to meet the challenge. We need the region's faith leaders and organizations as essential and trusted partners. This new funding opportunity seeks to enhance the ability of the region's faith organizations individually and collaboratively in meeting the critical needs of Greater Hartford residents and galvanizing community engagement to advance social justice.

II. Funding Focus and Requirements

- 1) The Foundation welcomes grant requests to support individual or partnering faith organizations and/or other nonprofits in their efforts to address one or a combination of the following project areas:
 - Support for **residents disproportionately affected by the stress, isolation and compounding economic and health impacts of COVID-19**, *including, but not limited to, funding to allow safe reopening of faith organization programs and facilities, strategies to reach homebound congregants, grief counseling, funeral expenses for congregants;*
 - Support that addresses the **needs of congregants and the broader community affected by racial/ethnic, geographic and/or economic disparities**, *including but not limited to, food, shelter, youth development and engagement, and/or job readiness; and/or*
 - Support for **community engagement focused on social and racial justice**, *including but not limited to, projects designed with broader community residents working for social and racial justice.*
- 2) **Eligibility:**
 - Individual faith-based organizations in the Greater Hartford [region served by the Foundation](#).
 - Partnering faith and/or other nonprofit organizations in the Greater Hartford region served by the Foundation.
 - Faith organizations that have a 501(c)(3) designation or have a fiscal sponsor with a 501(c)(3) designation.
 - Organizations must not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, citizenship status, creed, religion, religious affiliation, age, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, veteran status or any other protected status.

This grant opportunity will not fund:

- Programs or projects with religious purposes or that promote religious doctrine.
- Budget shortfalls (previously incurred expenses).
- Fundraising events or campaigns.
- Unexpected funding losses due to COVID or other organizational emergencies.

3) Selection Criteria:

Competitive applications will:

- Contribute to the Foundation's strategic outcome areas as outlined on our [website](#).
- Respond to one or more of the three project areas presented above.

