



**Request for Proposals
Community Organizing Grants
April 30, 2024**

The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving seeks proposals from nonprofits or community groups conducting community organizing efforts led by people of color and/or people representing communities traditionally marginalized as they engage and activate residents locally for the purpose of more inclusive civic participation.

Successful proposals could support 1) community organizing efforts, broadly or around specific issue campaigns, 2) increasing community organizing group or organizational capacity, and/or 3) community organizing infrastructure to benefit the field in Greater Hartford.

The Foundation acknowledges that while residents frequently assemble to achieve shared community goals, community organizing as a practice has the additional goal of increasing the collective power and internal capacity of people of color and traditionally marginalized and/or underrepresented populations. This RFP will support organizations or community groups with a mission to increase power sharing between underserved communities and the institutions meant to serve them, for example, state or municipal governments.

Requests can address issues such as housing, education, health care, the concerns of returning citizens, and issues affecting LGBTQIA+ persons, or other issues identified by community members with **preference given for efforts related to the advancement of racial justice**. Scope of work considered could take place over the span of **one year**. Grant awards will range from **\$5,000 - \$40,000**.

Timing: This opportunity is available from April 30, 2024 – September 10, 2024. The Foundation estimates applicants will know whether they got a grant approximately 4 to 7 weeks from the date they submit their application. [Click here to complete the application.](#)

I. Background:

The Hartford Foundation seeks to create lasting solutions that result in vibrant, resilient, and inclusive communities for all residents in Greater Hartford. The Foundation’s broad strategic goals seek to advance equitable economic and social mobility and contribute to the dismantling of structural racism. For more information about the Foundation’s current strategic priorities, please visit our website (<https://www.hfpg.org/index.php/what-we-do/our-strategic-commitment>).

II. Project Description:

The Foundation is seeking proposals from nonprofit organizations or community groups with a fiscal sponsor for community organizing efforts, increasing community organizing group or organizational capacity, and/or community organizing infrastructure to benefit the field in Greater Hartford.

Community organizing efforts might include conducting one on ones, information gathering and research meetings, hosting community meetings or forums, leadership training, and supporting community members as they identify common problems, develop strategies to address them, and support for community members as they participate in civic activities including advocacy.

Funded requests could include but are not limited to efforts that increase racial/social justice issue awareness, increase civic education/issue awareness, increase community organizing organizational capacity (e.g., software, working with a consultant), increase resident leadership on racial/social justice issues, and/or increase community organizing network infrastructure to maximize effectiveness among multiple organizations. Examples of shared field infrastructure could include shared technology, meeting space or training providers/materials across groups in the Greater Hartford region.

Requests can address issues such as housing, education, health care, the concerns of returning citizens, and issues affecting LGBTQIA+ persons or other issues as identified by community members. **Preference will be given for efforts related to the advancement of racial justice.**

Applications will be assessed against a rubric which is available here.

III. Eligibility:

Applicant:

- Applications must be submitted by a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Community groups can use a 501(c)(3) organization as a fiscal sponsor.
- Board of directors and staff must be reflective of the racial/ethnic diversity of the community members engaged. If the applicant 501(c)(3) is serving as a fiscal sponsor, community group leadership must be reflective of the racial/ethnic diversity of the population served.
- Nonprofits may serve as a fiscal agent for multiple projects.
- Applications can be submitted for projects that support more than one group or nonprofit.
- Organizations and groups with applications denied during the open process should contact Foundation staff before submitting another application to make sure the initial denial wasn't based on something you can't change.
- As a rule, if a nonprofit organization or community group is currently the recipient of multi-year core or project support from the Foundation, we will not review an application through this opportunity (excluding those serving as a fiscal agent).
- As another rule, if you are awarded a grant during the 2024 Community Organizing or Resident Engagement process the Foundation will not review another application through this opportunity.
- The Foundation does not consider the typical activities of professional networking groups and associations to be community organizing (e.g. professional networking, business-related skill building).
- As a caveat to the rules: due to the emergent, shifting, and responsive nature of this kind of work the Foundation is open to reviewing applications from organizations and groups who can provide evidence that extra resources have a good chance of achieving impactful change shortly.

In addition, if your group or organization has an open grant through the following previous funding opportunities, contact your grant's Community Impact Officer before applying to this RFP:

- 2023 Community Organizing
- 2023 Resident Engagement
- 2023 Housing Policy and Advocacy

Use of Funds:

Line items requested from the Foundation may include but are not limited to: materials, software or equipment, stipends for residents, payment for professional services, organizational staffing and overhead. The Foundation will not support the hiring of new, permanent staffing with this funding opportunity.

Please note public charities (all 501c3 nonprofits) can engage mobilization activities provided that these activities are conducted in a nonpartisan manner that is not biased in favor or against any particular candidate or political party. Foundation funds cannot be used to support activities that (a) would favor one candidate over another; (b) oppose a candidate in some manner; or (c) have the effect of favoring or providing a benefit to a candidate, group of candidates, or political party.

Budget:

Grants will be awarded for work carried out over the course of a year and will range in size from **\$5,000 to \$40,000**, dependent on the scope of work outlined in the project. **Few applications will be funded at the full \$40,000 level**, and the Foundation hopes to attract a variety of proposals at all levels of support.

IV. Impact and Reporting:

The Foundation is interested in understanding how nonprofit partners and community groups see the impact they are making in their communities. As you complete the Foundation's application you will be asked the outcomes you intend to accomplish throughout your grant. We will also ask you how you will know you are making progress toward those outcomes. Our preference is that groups and organizations use information they already collect or information they believe would be helpful for them to collect as evidence of progress and impact. As a part of the review process, we might work with you to clarify/confirm your intended outcomes and what information you can reasonably report that demonstrates your progress and impact.

In addition, if you receive a grant you, will be given the option to provide a written final report or to have a follow up conversation at the end of the grant period. If, as you are completing your application, you are not sure how to identify intended outcomes contact Community Impact Associate Tiana Starks at tstarks@hfpg.org including "Community Organizing: Outcome Help" in the subject line so they can assist you.

Some outcomes or indicators we have seen groups or organizations report in the past have included:

- Number of residents participating in advocacy efforts
- Description of resident involvement and input to shaping organizing narratives, language, and dialogue
- Description and timeline of campaigns waged

- Degree of change in resident awareness and/or perceived personal level of influence (self-report)
- Number of and/or description of relationships (e.g., government officials, community leaders), partnerships, collaborations, networks, strategic alliances established, expanded, or strengthened
- Examples of newly established or improved outreach, messaging, and public/social media campaigns
- Description of improvements or changes in policy and practices, at the municipal and/or state level due to organizing efforts
- Number and description of leadership trainings held.

V. Timeline:

In 2024, this opportunity will be available from April 30, 2024 – September 10, 2024.

The Foundation estimates applicants will know whether they got a grant approximately 4 to 7 weeks from the date they submit their application.

VI. Submission:

Click here to apply

For support with your account or password for our online system, contact Grants Administration at GrantsAdministration@hfpg.org.

To discuss a project's potential fit, eligibility, or the content of the application, including assistance with identifying outcomes, contact Tiana Starks, Community Impact Associate, at tstarks@hfpg.org.