

The Equality Fund
The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving
Request for Proposals
April 7, 2025

The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving is pleased to announce a competitive grant opportunity through The Equality Fund to support the wellbeing of LGBTQIA+ residents in the Greater Hartford region. The Foundation welcomes requests of up to \$50,000 for grant activities implemented over one year and expects to award up to \$200,000 in total across all grantees.

Applicants are requested to complete the [online grant application](#) by **Wednesday, May 21, 2025, at 11:59pm**. Grants will be announced at the end of June 2025.

I. Background:

Established in 2018 by Foundation donor Joel Roskin, The Equality Fund supports organizations serving the Greater Hartford region that empower people of diverse sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions to thrive. The Hartford Foundation has contributed a portion of its unrestricted grantmaking dollars to bolster grantmaking through The Equality Fund.

Through The Equality Fund, the Foundation commissioned [a study](#) in partnership with [DataHaven](#) in late 2023 to illustrate the current state of the LGBTQIA+ community's quality of life in the Greater Hartford area. The study used a mixed methods approach which combined quantitative analysis of publicly available datasets and data collected through the DataHaven Community Wellbeing Survey as well as qualitative interviews with LGBTQIA+-led and/or serving nonprofit organizations that work with Greater Hartford residents. Findings provided in this report were designed to assist organizations and funders in understanding conditions that affect LGBTQIA+ residents' health and wellbeing to better direct resources and meet the needs and opportunities of this growing community. The study provided disaggregate data to explore LGBTQIA+ residents' lives at the intersection of other identities including age, disability, race, and ethnicity in relation to their experiences with housing stability, financial security, health outcomes, health access, and a sense of belonging and social connectedness. It also offered thematic findings from the nonprofit interviews as well as community insights gathered through a meaning making session that convened LGBTQIA+ nonprofits, leaders, and other community members to unpack the quantitative and interview data.

While Connecticut was identified as a national leader in LGBTQIA+ protections and resources in the study, the report also highlighted some recurring themes and recommendations about ways to further strengthen the LGBTQIA+ community and promote better quality of life: through increased support for queer youth, increased access to quality and affirming healthcare, and continued advocacy for LGBTQIA+ needs around disparate health and wellbeing outcomes.

II. Proposal Requirements:

Grants awarded through The Equality Fund will be considered for Greater Hartford organizations that have:

- missions that explicitly support the LGBTQIA+ community **OR**
- programs designed specifically to address the unique needs of the LGBTQIA+ community.

While the Hartford Foundation will consider all submitted proposals that provide direct assistance or tailored services to LGBTQIA+ Greater Hartford residents in the areas of basic human needs, education, healthcare services, or other programs that may tackle inequities or barriers in housing, employment, healthcare, etc., the Foundation will prioritize proposals that align with the recommendations set forth in the Foundation and DataHaven’s LGBTQIA+ Resident Wellbeing study:

- Social connectedness of queer youth
- Third or community safe spaces
- LGBTQIA+ advocacy (e.g., inclusive legislation that protects LGBTQIA+ individuals)
- Improved access to quality, culturally relevant, and inclusive medical and mental health services (e.g., reducing transportation or cost barriers, gender affirming care, training and support for affirming communication and care approaches)
- Community-based harm reduction practices
- Accessing safe, affordable housing and shelter (e.g., addressing discrimination and safety concerns including survivors of intimate partner violence, educating community on housing rights and resources, housing systems navigation)

Eligible Applicants:

Applicants **must** meet the Hartford Foundation’s basic grantee criteria found here:

- Be a registered nonprofit (non-501c3 *community-based groups* may apply using a fiscal sponsor).
- Serve the Greater Hartford region/[the Foundation’s 29-town catchment area](#)
- Have a governing board that engages in effective governance practices

Organizations will need to demonstrate mission alignment or prior programmatic experience engaging with the LGBTQIA+ community as well as how its programming acknowledges and addresses intersectional identities, such as racial and ethnic identities, in its work.

Organizations currently receiving a core support grant during the 2025 Equality Fund RFP’s one-year grant period will be ineligible to apply. Please contact Hartford Foundation staff if you currently have multi-year Foundation funding before you apply.

The Foundation has [outlined criteria](#) to assess and prioritize requests for The Equality Fund.

Eligible Type of Proposals:

Organizations can apply for project funding, capital support, capacity building, or operating support. Please note that only organizations with explicit missions to serve the LGBTQIA+ community will be considered for operating support and should upload their current strategic plan (or a work plan in lieu of a strategic plan) within the application.¹

Proposals can seek funding for grant activities for up to one year.

Expected Grant Reporting:

Funded projects will have identified proposed grant outcomes and accompanying outcome measurements within the application and will be required to complete a one-year final report to share progress on those communicated outcomes. Please feel free to refer to [this resource on developing outcomes and measurements](#) as needed to support completing this portion of the application. Foundation staff are available to support the development of outcomes and measurements that are feasible within the grant period.

Eligibility and other program related questions can be directed to Kate Piotrowski, Senior Community Impact Officer, at kpiotrowski@hfpg.org. Any technical questions regarding completing the online application should be directed to Grants Administration at grantsadministration@hfpg.org.

Applicants should complete all required questions of the online application by the deadline in order to be deemed eligible for funding consideration. Each organization is invited to submit one proposal. The deadline for proposals is 11:59pm on **Wednesday, May 21, 2025**. Please plan ahead before the deadline to avoid any technical interruptions or unforeseen obstacles to submit your application.

III. Key Dates:

Equality Fund RFP release: Monday, April 7, 2025

Application deadline: Wednesday, May 21, 2025, at 11:59pm

Review period: Thursday, May 22 – Wednesday, June 18, 2025

Award announcement: end of June 2025

¹ Hartford Foundation staff may follow up with organizations seeking general operating support/core support during the application review period and request additional documentation highlighting the organization's financial standing.