

**Catalyst Endowment Fund**  
**Hartford Foundation for Public Giving**  
Invitation to Submit Proposals  
July 2022

The Catalyst Endowment Fund is pleased to announce a competitive funding opportunity to support efforts that would address the mental health crisis facing children and youth in Greater Hartford. The fund welcomes requests of any amount up to \$73,000. Grant awards will be based on the size of the project, funding needed, and quality of plans responding to the forthcoming RFP. **Applicants are requested to complete the [online grant application](#) by September 2, 2022.**

The Hartford Foundation's Catalyst Endowment Fund is a giving circle of generous, civic-minded donors from the Greater Hartford area. Each year, members select a focal topic, with the goal of making one or more grants that will be *catalytic* in the 29-town region served by the Hartford Foundation. This year's topic is ***The ABCs of Mental Health: Managing the Effects of Dual Pandemics***. Grants will be awarded to selected applicants in October 2022. All qualifying projects are expected to be completed within a year.

**I. Topic:**

In 2022, Catalyst members decided to focus their efforts on learning about the mental health crisis children and youth are facing. <sup>1</sup>More than 1 in 3 high school students had experienced persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness in 2019, a 40 percent increase since 2009. In 2019, approximately 1 in 6 youth reported making a suicide plan in the past year, a 44% increase since 2009. Physical isolation, ongoing uncertainty, fear and grief are leading causes for this crisis, exacerbated by the dual pandemics of **COVID-19** and **racially-based systemic inequities**. Given the disparate impact of COVID-19 on communities of color and the more significant obstacles to mental health care for these same communities, Catalyst members are especially interested in support efforts that would make more equitable mental health services available.

**III. Proposal Guidelines:**

Grant funds will support programs that take place over a one-year period and propose to have a positive impact on the mental health of children and/ or teenagers in Greater Hartford. We invite proposals that might make use of one of the following promising practices though we will also rely on the expertise and experience of applicants to identify the most effective method to support positive mental health outcomes for children and youth.

- 1) Effective work with community residents and community-based organizations to create gateways to accessible resources (suicide prevention hotline, peer to peer groups, and clinicians from culturally diverse and BIPOC communities)
- 2) Training programs that will better enable individuals who work with youth to identify and refer youth in need to mental health care providers
- 3) Programs or approaches that seek to increase mental health resiliency, or the ability to successfully adapt to difficult or challenging life experiences

---

<sup>1</sup>CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Data Summary & Trends Report: 2009-2019, <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/pdf/YRBSDataSummaryTrendsReport2019-508.pdf>

#### **IV. Criteria for Consideration:**

##### **Eligibility:**

- Nonprofits with a 501c3 designation that are located in or provide significant services in the Greater Hartford region are eligible to apply. Community groups, or groups of residents, that do not have a 501c3 tax status, are encouraged to apply through a fiscal agent.
- Applicants need not be health care providers.
- Projects seeking support for school-based programs that might supplant public funding will not be considered. Support for out-of-school time programs or that partner with school districts, will be considered.

##### **Strong Applications will include any or all of the following:**

- Specific plans for ensuring that proposed work will be catalytic, transformative, and impactful
- Opportunities to bring awareness to the racial inequities in mental healthcare
- Plans to leverage additional funds and/or other resources to achieve the greatest impact and sustain your work beyond the funding period
- Projects based on an evidenced-based model that can be evaluated and replicated

---

Questions can be directed to Willona Amoakoh ([wamoakoh@hfpg.org](mailto:wamoakoh@hfpg.org)) or Betty Ann Grady ([bagrady@hfpg.org](mailto:bagrady@hfpg.org)).