



Community Solutions Grant Program Guidelines

Program Overview

The Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation seeks to strengthen quality of life in the East Metro and support a vibrant Minnesota by supporting organizations, programs and initiatives that are informed by, formed by and benefit residents.

Funding Priorities

Our Community Solutions Grant Program will focus on organizations, programs or initiatives serving the East Metro through:

Community & Economic Development

The Foundation seeks to invest and partner in solutions informed and formed by the people facing the highest barriers to wealth creation, economic security and family-sustaining career pathways. This includes BIPOC, women, veterans, young people, people with disabilities, formerly incarcerated people and LGBTQIA+ people.

Specific priorities for wealth creation include strengthening the entrepreneur ecosystem, increasing local ownership of businesses, and expanding access to culturally appropriate services. Regarding economic security, the Foundation recognizes the importance of anchor institutions embedded at the neighborhood level. For workforce development, we will prioritize employment pathways that meet the needs of individuals and employers alike.

Health & Human Services

The Foundation continues to prioritize health organizations that focus on health equity and increase access to affordable, culturally relevant health services. The Foundation hopes to align its health grants to be inclusive of programs and organizations that serve low-income families and provide free or affordable, culturally relevant services and holistic care.

Given the increase in severity, cost of and demand for mental health services, urgent care and/or crisis prevention, access to reproductive health care, trauma-informed health care, and free or reduced services for uninsured or underinsured communities, the Foundation will prioritize these programs and organizations to continue to serve our most vulnerable and marginalized communities.

In addition to supporting work that centers the voices of the people most impacted, special priority will be given to disability support services, child welfare support services, family and parent support services, food relief and assistance, older adult services, immigration and legal services, and re-entry supports for formerly incarcerated people.



Youth & Education

The Foundation recognizes how important it is for students and young people to feel cared for, protected, valued and seen. This is complex and urgent work, and the Foundation will prioritize organizations that blend academic, social and emotional supports for young people most impacted by educational inequity.

The Foundation will also support organizations working toward ensuring a robust early childhood system that gives children and families access to high-quality early care and education programs.

Eligibility

Grants can be made to 501(c)3 nonprofits, government entities, educational institutions or organizations with a fiscal sponsor.

While an organization may be eligible to apply, attention and preference will be given to organizations:

- Addressing disparities and/or creating more equitable outcomes for communities experiencing marginalization due to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, age, ability or geography
- Establishing a clear connection to the Informs, Forms, Benefits framework, which states that those experiencing barriers should not only benefit from the work we support, but inform, form, and lead it as well

Geography

Organizations should have a demonstrated impact or potential for impact in the East Metro (Dakota, Ramsey and Washington counties).

Types of Grants

General Operating

These grants provide flexible funding for nonprofits. To be eligible for general operating support, organizations must primarily serve the East Metro area with 50% or more of all services provided by the entire organization benefiting East Metro (Dakota, Ramsey and Washington counties) residents.

Program/Project

These grants provide funding for programs/projects serving 50% or more East Metro residents. Any organization is eligible for this type of grant, regardless of overall geographic focus.



Capital

To be eligible for capital support, organizations must demonstrate ongoing or potential significant benefit to East Metro (Dakota, Ramsey and Washington counties) residents. Capital grants will support an organization's long-term resiliency or infrastructure including:

- Efforts to ensure critical resources remain stable and present in the East Metro (e.g., "comprehensive campaigns" intended to grow or strengthen organizational capacity; program innovations or compliance updates needed to ensure responsiveness and relevancy, etc.)
- Physical or digital capital needs such as purchase, updates to or maintenance of buildings, facilities, technology and/or equipment

Grant Details

Grant amounts will be up to \$50,000 per year for a one-year grant period.

In 2026, up to \$2,350,000 is available for this grant program, and we anticipate awarding approximately 50 grants.

This program is intended to be responsive to ongoing and timely community opportunities through an open application process. We have three grant cycles a year. Applications submitted by February 20 will be reviewed for June awards. Applications submitted by May 29 will be reviewed for September awards. Applications submitted by August 14 will be reviewed for November awards.

Grant Requests Not Accepted

The Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation will not consider grant requests for support of:

- Sectarian religious programs or organizations
- Direct work of individuals
- Organizations that are not classified as 501(c)3 nonprofits, government entities, educational institutions or organizations with a fiscal sponsor
- Organizations exclusively serving the West Metro (Anoka, Carver, Hennepin or Scott counties)

If your organization does not fit the funding criteria for the Community Solutions Grant Program, we encourage you to explore other [Grant Opportunities](#), as well as [Resources Beyond the Grant](#) on our website.