



Democracy Grant Program Guidelines

Program Overview

The Saint Paul & Minnesota Foundation's Democracy Grant Program seeks to strengthen organizing that builds power, narrative, leaders and infrastructure for lasting change.

Funding Priorities

Our Democracy Grant Program will consider proposals that address one or more of the following:

- Organizing across issues (e.g., economic justice, climate justice) that builds power and strengthens democratic participation and/or works to improve the material conditions of Minnesota communities
- Narrative infrastructure and storytelling that expands civic voice and dialogue towards an equitable democracy and a just Minnesota
- Infrastructure and institution building that expands our movement landscape, strengthens leaders and equips our changemaking ecosystem for lasting power-building

We understand this work of realizing and strengthening our democracy manifests across issues. We also understand that organizing leverages various strategies to shape political agendas and social conditions for long-term change, including strengthening narrative infrastructure, organizing resources, increasing democratic participation, and building new institutions.

Organizing that works to change the material conditions of communities will both fortify our civic infrastructure and strengthen the democratic participation of communities across the state. Efforts grounded in strong issue-based campaigns, the defense of democratic institutions, leadership development that brings new leaders into the fold, and an orientation of institution building all lay the groundwork for long-term change.

Funded work could include any of the following and more:

- Cross-issue organizing around topics of economic justice, public safety, environment/climate, LGBTQIA rights, racial justice, immigration, indigenous governance and sovereignty, civic engagement working to improve the material conditions of Minnesota communities
- Organizing strategies that expand base-building and grow new constituencies to build a bigger "we"
- Organizing that builds narrative infrastructure and power to shape storytelling and expand civic discourse for a just Minnesota



Eligibility

Grants can be made to 501(c)3, 501(c)4 and 501(c)6 nonprofits, government entities, educational institutions or organizations with a fiscal sponsor. Organizations should have a demonstrated impact or potential for impact in the geography served.

Geography

Through this grant program, we are proud to serve and fund the East Metro region (Dakota, Ramsey and Washington counties) and Greater Minnesota. We do not fund organizations primarily serving the West Metro (Anoka, Carver, Hennepin or Scott counties).

Types of Grants

All Democracy Grant Program recipients will be awarded general operating grants. These grants provide flexible funding to grantees.

Grant Details

Grant amounts will be \$100,000 per year for a five-year grant period, for total grant amounts of \$500,000 per grantee.

In 2026, up to \$2,000,000 is available for this grant program, and we anticipate awarding approximately 20 grants.

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, 501(c)4 and 501(c)6 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 Democracy Grant Program, we encourage you to explore other [Grant Opportunities](#), as well as [Resources Beyond the Grant](#) on our website.