

The Black Fund

Request for Proposals

Contact Information

- / Applicant contact information
- / Organization contact information

Introduction

The Black Fund at the Austin Community Foundation exists to harness the power of Black-led organizations and uplift solutions to benefit the Black community in Central Texas. Driven by data and community voices, we strive for an equitable, just society that nurtures the growth, economic security, and wellness of Black people.

This grants cycle, The Black Fund will invest in organizations and initiatives that improve:

- / **Education Access & Outcomes** – support successful educational outcomes for Black people.
- / **Health & Wellness** – advance the mental, physical, and spiritual health and wellness of Black Central Texans.
- / **Wealth Building** – close the racial wealth gap for Black Central Texans by providing an ecosystem of support resulting in increased individual and shared growth and prosperity.
- / **Power Building, Organizing, & Advocacy** – support urgent, emergent, and ongoing efforts that harness the collective power of Black people as a means of challenging, redesigning, or uprooting systems to continually move us towards an equitable society.

In each strategy area, grants will be distributed as follows:

- / Winning Finalist: \$40,000 total; a multi-year grant over 2 years, \$20,000 per year in 2023 and 2024
- / 2 Semifinalists: \$20,000, one-time grant in 2023
- / 1 Runner Up: \$5,000, one-time grant in 2023

We highly encourage you to review the [scoring rubric](#) to get a better of understanding of the criteria that will be applied to your proposal and to guide you in submitting a successful application.

In total, \$340,000 in unrestricted, general operating support will be awarded to 16 different nonprofit organizations aligning with The Black Fund strategies.

Who is eligible?

- / Applications must be submitted by organizations or initiatives that are Black-led. For the purposes of this grant application, Black-led is defined as:
 - / Black-identified Executive Director, CEO, or Project Lead and
 - / At least 50% of Board Black-identified or
 - / At least 50% of staff Black-identified
- / Nonprofit organizations working in the 6 county Central Texas region, which includes: Travis, Burnet, Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays, and Williamson counties
- / Organizations must be tax-exempt under Sections 501(c)3 or 170(b)(1)(a)(vi) of the Internal Revenue Code, operate with a fiscal sponsorship, and/or be a unit of government
 - / A fiscal sponsor is a nonprofit organization that provides fiduciary oversight, financial management, and other administrative services to help build the capacity of charitable projects. For the purposes of this grant application, the following organization has been identified as a recommended fiscal sponsor:
 - / [Six Square: Austin's Black Cultural District](#)
 - / Applicants interested in applying through a fiscal sponsor should reach out directly to Six Square at: info@sixsquare.org.

- / Proposals will be considered from organizations that engage in non-lobbying advocacy work. Organizations doing systems change level work such as educating the public about issues, community organizing, policy research and other non-lobbying advocacy activities may apply.
- / Proposals will be considered from religious organizations that engage in non-religious programming. Religious organizations will need to demonstrate that their work aligning with Black Fund strategies is secular in nature and does not discriminate against any employees or clients based on religion.

The Black Fund does not grant funds for:

- / Endowment funds
- / Scholarships
- / Religious organizations for religious purposes
- / Fundraising activities or events
- / Individuals
- / Organizations with discriminatory hiring and service practices based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, etc.

Timeline

- / Application opens: Monday, October 17
- / Informational webinar: Tuesday, October 25
- / Office hours for 1-1 consultations: November 7 – 11
- / Applications due: Friday, November 18
- / Learning sessions with semifinalists: January 9 – 20, 2023
- / Award decisions announced: February 3, 2023
- / Award decisions celebrated: February 2023

Eligibility

1. Based on the eligibility criteria outlined above, does your organization fit the Black Fund’s eligibility requirements?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Unsure

Is your organization a recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit organization? If not, do you have a Fiscal Sponsor?

- / Yes
- / No

Applicant Information (create a fiscal sponsor page in the application for organizations using a sponsor)

1. Organization name
2. Incorporation date
3. Mission statement
4. Annual budget

Equity Data

No character or word limits

1. Is your organization led by an individual who identifies as Black?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
2. % of Board that identifies as Black
3. % of Staff that identifies as Black
4. % of Clients/Patrons that identify as Black

Proposed Work & Impact

No character or word limits

1. Please check The Black Fund’s strategy area that aligns with your organization’s mission and activities.
 - a. Improving Education Access & Outcomes
 - b. Healthcare & Wellness
 - c. Wealth Building
 - d. Power Building, Organizing & Advocacy
2. Please describe the work that will be done using a grant from The Black Fund. How will services be provided? Please articulate the motivation for the effort and how the solution was designed.
3. Please describe how the project you propose aligns with The Black Fund strategy selected above and the impact your project or initiative will have in the Black community and/or for Black people.
4. History in the Black Community – Please share your history working in the Black community. Include how your organization establishes partnerships and connects with the community it serves. Please also share how your organization is accessible, responsive, and convenient for clients and/or community served.
5. Community Partners – What other organizations in the community do you work with? Please describe your collaborations.
6. Goals, Outcome & Evaluation – Please share your vision and plan for measuring success. Please include a timeline, if applicable.
7. We understand that there is intersectionality between the strategic areas. If that is the case for your project, please describe how it addresses more than one of those strategic areas, or include strategic areas not included on the list.

Assurances Checklist

The purpose of the Assurances Checklist is to affirm that the applicant’s organization is operating in good standing and in accordance with best practices for nonprofit governance. Many grant applications required applicants to attach documents proving that the statements below are true. The Austin Community Foundation believes in trust-based philanthropy and, instead, asks applicants to certify that the organization submitting this proposal meets the following criteria or have provided reasonable alternative methods to meet the standards described below.

1. The size of the board is sufficient to carry out current and long-range plans.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
2. The board meets regularly, has an active committee structure, terms, and recruits new members periodically.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
3. The board is active in generating revenue (fundraising and earned) for the organization.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
4. The board regularly monitors the organization’s performance and participates in evaluating programs and any active strategic plans.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
5. The board is representative of the community served.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
6. Staff and general volunteers are representative of the communities served.

- a. Yes
 - b. No
7. The organization has written personnel, operating, and financial management policies.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
8. Organization has sufficient capital to maintain operations over the course of the grant term.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
9. Organization has internal controls in place to manage expenditure of these grant funds and maintain appropriate financial records.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
10. Organization has a system for measuring outputs, outcomes, and client demographics of those served with Black Fund funding.
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
11. If you selected no for any of the statements above, please provide comments and alternative methods to meeting the criteria in the space below.

Attachments

1. Organization's operating budget (no template, can be organization's own working document)
2. Project budget (no template)
3. Project Plan Timeline
4. Letter of support – not required