

Forever Austin Fund Grant Guidelines

Overview

Austin Community Foundation is proud to mobilize ideas and resources to strengthen Central Texas. For nearly 50 years, we've been building endowment funds together with generous donors to create a permanent community resource—the Forever Austin Fund—that enables us to invest in Austin's most pressing needs and greatest opportunities, now and for generations to come.

Annually, we make Forever Austin grants to nonprofit organizations and community groups that are working to make our region a better place. This year, grants will be awarded in the following areas: (*full details on the funding categories can be found [here on our website](#)*)

- / Economic Mobility
- / Health and Humanities
- / Nurturing Our Region

Please carefully review these Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).

Frequently Asked Questions

Application Process & Timeline

What happens after I complete the Eligibility Quiz?

- / After you complete the Eligibility Quiz, you will be returned to the Apply page. If you are eligible, the next steps in the application process (the LOI) will become available to you immediately.

I submitted my LOI. What's next?

- / Letter of Inquiry (LOI) decisions will be shared on Monday, February 9. If your LOI is approved to move forward to the full application stage, you will be notified by email on February 9, gain access to the full application within ACF's online grant portal, be able to view all full application resources, and have until **March 6** to submit your application. Applicants whose LOIs are not selected to move forward will also be notified on February 9.

How will I know if my LOI is declined? Can I receive feedback?

- / Declination emails will go out February 9. If you do not move forward, it is likely because of strategic alignment. We will share a post-cycle webinar in the summer for all applicants.

My organization was approved to submit a full application. What should I expect?

- / The full application consists of the questions listed below. These are the exact questions applicants will be asked to complete in ACF's online grant portal, including character limits where applicable.
- / **Application Questions:**
 - **Demographic Profile**
 - People served – income, location, race & ethnicity*
 - Board & staff – race & ethnicity*
 - **Narrative Questions (6500 Character Limit)**
 - **Community Need & Population Served (2500 character limit)*:** Please describe the community need your organization is addressing within the funding category you selected, and who is most impacted.
 - **Implementation & Capacity:** How is your organization well-positioned to address this need in your chosen funding category? Highlight relevant partnerships, staff expertise, or organizational strengths that help you respond effectively.
 - **Cultural Responsiveness & Relationship with Priority Population:** How is your work in this funding category shaped by the voices, needs, and lived experiences of the people you serve? Please describe your history working with this population, key partnerships that support your work, and the ways your organization ensures accessibility, responsiveness, and trust.
 - **Goals & Evaluation:** What specific outcomes is your organization aiming to achieve within your selected funding category, and how will you track progress or learn from your work? Describe processes, feedback loops, or indicators you use to understand what is working, what could improve, and how you adapt over time.
 - **Summary Blurb**
 - May be shared with additional Austin Community Foundation constituents (500 character limit)*
- / **Note:** *These responses are not scored by reviewers. The Core Programming question (submitted at the LOI stage) and the Community Need & Population Served questions will be shared with reviewers to provide important context, but they will not be evaluated or scored. Reviewers will formally assess only the Implementation & Capacity, Goals & Evaluation, and Cultural Responsiveness & Relationship with Priority Population questions.

Who will read and score my application?

- / Grant proposals will be reviewed by a diverse pool of community reviewers. Your application will be read and scored by a combination of the following categories of reviewers, in partnership with ACF staff:
- / Central Texas community members recruited to infuse community voice in the decision-making process.

- / Philanthropists connected through ACF's network of donor-advised funds
- / ACF board and committee members

How will I know if my application is declined? Can I receive any helpful feedback?

- / Declination emails will go out no later than mid-July. At that time, we will make 1x1 sessions available to discuss your scores and any specific feedback if available.

Partnership Applications

I'm applying for funding for a Partnership with another organization. What do I need to know?

- / Partnership applications follow the same application process and funding decision timeline as all other Forever Austin Fund grants. There is a separate LOI specifically for partnership applications, which will become available once an organization completes and passes the Eligibility Quiz.
- / One organization must serve as the Partnership Representative. This organization is responsible for receiving and managing the grant funds if awarded and is the only organization that should complete and submit the Eligibility Check, Letter of Inquiry (LOI), and full application (if invited to apply) using its organization profile.

Funding Amounts and Categories

How much should I ask for?

- / It depends. We recommend asking for what your proposal needs. Grants may be approved for full or partial funding of the requested amount and will be between \$5,000 - \$50,000. The requested amount cannot exceed 30% of the organization's budget.

Can I apply in more than one category? And what funding category should I choose to apply in?

- / Organizations can only submit one application. Select the category that most closely aligns with the work proposed in your submission.

What if I don't fit into any of these funding categories?

- / The categories represented in this request for proposals represent the interests of legacy donors and ACF's strategic plan. If your work does not fit into one of the categories listed, it is unlikely that the Forever Austin grant is a good opportunity for your organization.

Eligibility & Compliance

My organization has received a grant from the Hispanic Impact Fund and/or Women's Fund, am I still eligible to apply?

- / Yes! Organizations that have received grants from ACF's Program Funds are eligible for this grant cycle *if* they are up to date with all required reporting.

What does it mean to be in compliance with any current or past ACF grants?

- / Compliance means that your organization is up to date with all reporting requirements from other ACF grant programs. This means your organization has no outstanding reporting that is overdue.

What if my organization is fiscally sponsored? Can I still apply?

- / Yes, projects with an established IRS 501(c)(3) fiscal sponsor are also eligible to apply.

My organization used to apply for Community Grants. Can we still do that?

- / The Community Grant program has ended. There will be two grant cycles a year: Forever Austin and our signature programs, the Hispanic Impact Fund and Women's Fund.