



Request for Proposals
Community Organizing Grants
April 2026

The Greater Hartford Gives Foundation seeks proposals from nonprofits or community groups conducting community organizing efforts led by people of color and/or people representing communities traditionally marginalized as they engage and activate residents locally for the purpose of more inclusive civic participation often with the potential for policy change.

Successful proposals could support 1) community organizing efforts, broadly or around specific issue campaigns, 2) increasing community organizing group or organizational capacity, and/or 3) community organizing infrastructure to benefit the field in Greater Hartford.

The Foundation acknowledges that while residents frequently assemble to achieve shared community goals, community organizing as a practice has the additional goal of increasing the collective power and individual capacity of people of color and traditionally marginalized and/or underrepresented populations. This RFP will support organizations or community groups with a mission to increase power sharing between underserved communities and the institutions meant to serve them, for example, state or municipal governments.

Requests can address issues such as housing, education, health care, the concerns of returning citizens, and issues affecting LGBTQIA+ persons, or other issues identified by community members with **preference given for efforts related to the advancement of racial justice**. Scope of work considered could take place over the span of **one year**. Grant awards will range from **\$5,000 - \$40,000**.

Timing: This opportunity is available from **April 14, 2026 – September 23, 2026**. The Foundation estimates applicants will know whether they got a grant approximately 9 to 13 weeks from the date they submit their application.

I. **Background:**

The Greater Hartford Gives Foundation seeks to create lasting solutions that result in vibrant, resilient, and inclusive communities for all residents in Greater Hartford. The Foundation's broad strategic goals seek to advance equitable economic and social mobility and contribute to dismantling of structural racism. For more information about the Foundation's [current strategic priorities](#), please visit our website.

II. **Project Description:**

The Foundation is seeking proposals from nonprofit organizations or community groups with a fiscal sponsor for community organizing efforts, increasing community organizing group or organizational capacity, and/or community organizing infrastructure to benefit the field in the [Greater Hartford region](#).

Community organizing is defined as the process of building collective power among people—often those excluded from decision-making—to advocate for social, economic, or policy changes that address shared problems (Urban Institute).

Successful Community Organizing can lead to:

- Advocates representing underrepresented/marginalized populations who are communicating needs and ideas to those in positions of power
- Persistent community coalitions built to address identified local issues
- Policy changes reflective of broader community voice
- Legal action to address or current actions against negatively affected communities

Community organizing efforts might include conducting one on ones, information gathering and research meetings, hosting community meetings or forums, and leadership training. It could also include supporting community members as they identify common problems, develop strategies to address them, and support for community members as they participate in civic activities including advocacy.

Funded requests could include but are not limited to efforts that increase racial/social justice issue awareness, increase civic education/issue awareness, increase community organizing organizational capacity (e.g. software, working with a consultant), increase resident leadership on racial/social justice issues, and/or increase community organizing network infrastructure to maximize effectiveness among multiple organizations. Examples of shared field infrastructure could include shared technology, meeting space or training providers/materials across groups in the Greater Hartford region.

Requests can address issues such as housing, education, health care, the concerns of returning citizens, and issues affecting LGBTQIA+ persons or other issues as identified by community members. **Preference will be given for efforts related to the advancement of racial justice.**

Applications will be assessed against a rubric which is available [here](#).

III. **Eligibility:**

Applicant:

- Applications must be submitted by 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Community groups can use a 501(c)(3) organization as a fiscal sponsor.
- Organization must be formed one year or more prior to applying.
- Applicant must be prepared to describe relationships and collaborations that support organizing or advocacy efforts in application.
- Board of directors and staff must be reflective of the racial/ethnic diversity of the community members engaged. If the applicant 501(c)(3) is serving as a fiscal sponsor,

community group leadership must be reflective of the racial/ethnic diversity of the population served.

- Nonprofits may serve as a fiscal agent for multiple projects.
- Applications can be submitted for projects that support more than one group or nonprofit.
- The Foundation does not consider the typical activities of professional networking groups and associations to be community organizing (e.g. professional networking, business-related skill building).
- Organizations and groups whose applications were previously denied should contact Foundation staff before reapplying to discuss the reason for denial.

Current Grant Recipients:

Current recipients of core or multi-year project support from the Foundation are not eligible to apply through this opportunity, excluding those serving as fiscal agents. Organizations awarded a grant through the 2026 Community Organizing or Resident Engagement process are similarly ineligible.

Exception: The Foundation recognizes that community organizing is dynamic and responsive. Organizations that can demonstrate a compelling, time-sensitive opportunity for impact are encouraged to contact Foundation staff, as exceptions may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Open Grants:

If your organization has an open grant through any of the following funding opportunities, please contact your Community Impact Officer before applying:

- 2024 or 2025 Community Organizing
- 2024 or 2025 Resident Engagement

Use of Funds:

Line items requested from the Foundation may include but are not limited to: materials, software or equipment, stipends for residents, payment for professional services, organizational staffing and overhead. The Foundation will not support the hiring of new, permanent staff with this funding opportunity.

Please note public charities (all 501c3 nonprofits) can engage in mobilization activities provided that these activities are conducted in a nonpartisan manner that is not biased in favor or against any particular candidate or political party. Foundation funds cannot be used to support activities that (a) would favor one candidate over another; (b) oppose a candidate in some manner; or (c) have the effect of favoring or providing a benefit to a candidate, group of candidates, or political party.

Budget:

Grants will be awarded for work carried out over the course of a year and will range in size from **\$5,000 to \$40,000**, dependent on the scope of work outlined in the project. **Few applications will be funded at the full \$40,000 level**, and the Foundation hopes to attract a variety of proposals at all levels of support.

IV. **Impact and Reporting:**

The Foundation is interested in understanding how nonprofit partners and community groups see the impact they are making in their communities. As you complete the Foundation's application you will be asked the outcomes you intend to accomplish throughout your grant. We will also ask you how you will know you are making progress toward those outcomes. Our preference is that groups and organizations use information they already collect or information they believe would be helpful for them to collect as evidence of progress and impact. As a part of the review process, we might work with you to clarify/confirm your intended outcomes and what information you can reasonably report that demonstrates your progress and impact.

In addition, if you receive a grant you will be given the option to provide a written final report or to have a follow-up conversation at the end of the grant period. If, as you are completing your application, you are not sure how to identify intended outcomes contact Senior Community Impact Associate Tiana Starks at tstarks@greaterhartfordgives.org including "Community Organizing: Outcome Help" in the subject line so they can assist you.

Some outcomes or indicators we have seen groups or organizations report in the past have included:

- Number of residents participating in advocacy efforts
- Description of resident involvement and input to shaping organizing narratives, language, and dialogue
- Description and timeline of campaigns waged
- Degree of change in resident awareness and/or perceived personal level of influence (self-report)
- Number of and/or description of relationships (e.g., government officials, community leaders), partnerships, collaborations, networks, strategic alliances established, expanded, or strengthened
- Examples of newly established or improved outreach, messaging, and public/social media campaigns
- Description of improvements or changes in policy and practices, at the municipal and/or state level due to organizing efforts
- Number and description of leadership trainings held.

V. **Timeline:**

In 2026, this opportunity will be available from **April 14, 2026 – September 23, 2026**. The Foundation estimates applicants will be notified of grant decisions approximately 9 to 13 weeks from the date they submit their application.

VI. **Submission:**

Previous 'Community Organizing' grant recipients may contact Johana Rendon Ledesma, Community Impact Officer, JRendonLedesma@greaterhartfordgives.org to apply. New applicants must schedule an eligibility interview to discuss proposal criteria, [click here to schedule](#). For questions on criteria contact Senior Community Impact Associate, Tiana Starks, tstarks@greaterhartfordgives.org. An access code to apply will be provided after completed eligibility interview.

For support with your account or password for our online system, contact Grants Administration at GrantsAdministration@greaterhartfordgives.org.