

Housing Stability Grants

Guidelines, Process & Scoring

Too many people in the Twin Cities region do not have access to **safe, healthy, affordable, and reliable housing**. In particular, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and people of color) communities, people with disabilities, and low-wealth communities face barriers to this critical resources. Market conditions have shown that the housing market does not work for most low-income people, so solutions may require **questioning long held assumptions, creating innovative solutions, and attempting new ideas** to address housing stability.

To address these challenges and identify solutions, the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) and the Alliance for Metropolitan Stability (the Alliance) will issue **Housing Stability Grants to support BIPOC communities, people with disabilities, and low-wealth communities working to build power and advance systems and policy changes at the local level**. These grants are intended to support organizations that have demonstrated capacity for systems/policy change and community engagement or organizing efforts in their communities. Grants will **enhance the capacity** among community-based organizations to partner with key decision-makers and institutions, while identifying strategic opportunities to **leverage their power** for better community outcomes.

Eligible Organizations

To be eligible, applications **must include** a resident-driven organization or initiative serving a geographic or cultural community. (Partnerships that include at least one such organization are permissible.) In addition, the lead applicant must be a registered 501(c)3 nonprofit or have a fiscal agent.

Eligible organizations include

- nonprofit organizations
- neighborhood-based organizations
- cultural organizations
- small business associations, district councils, and
- other community-based entities, whether formal or informal, that are representative of and/or led by low-income communities, BIPOC, new immigrant communities, people with disabilities or other historically marginalized communities

We define housing stability as the condition in which people can obtain housing that:

- is reasonable within their budget
- offers enough space for their families
- is in good condition
- is available for the duration that they need it
- is located in a community that uplifts them
- exists in the context of a balanced relationship between them and their landlords or financial institutions

Eligible organizations should be committed to engaging their communities in **eligible policy and systems change activities**:

- renters' rights
- anti-displacement or
- equitable public and private investments

We encourage strategies that **build bridges and create cross-sector relationships** between stakeholders, such as residents, nonprofits, businesses, philanthropic, and/or government entities.

This grant opportunity is intended to help **ensure that housing policy initiatives reflect organizing and advocacy on the ground**.

Eligible Strategies

Organizations that apply for funding must demonstrate that funding is connected to implementing one or more of the following eligible policy and systems change initiatives. In addition, projects must **involve people from underrepresented constituencies in decision-making and leadership**.

Projects that advance **Renters' Rights** and support tenant organizing and leadership development and including but not limited to addressing predatory renter practices, preventing evictions, expanding voucher acceptance, and/or implementing renter protections.

Projects that support **Anti-Displacement** work, including but not limited to implementing alternative homeownership models or first right of refusal policies for tenants.

Projects that support **Equitable Public and Private Investments**, including but not limited to expanding voucher availability or rental assistance, modifying qualified allocation plans, implementing the Equitable Development Principles & Scorecard or other tools that increase community's ability to shape local development projects, and/or modifying small area plans.

There are **many possible strategies** to achieve housing stability. We encourage project submissions that reflect **new thinking as well as those that use established best practices** to advance policy changes to achieve housing stability. We are interested in investing in both proven strategies and new ideas.

Housing Stability is one of the pillars in the 2018 Governor's Task Force on Housing Report and Recommendations which can be seen [here](#).

Initiative Requirements

Applications must demonstrate that the project will organize constituencies around one or more of the above policy and systems change strategies **and**:

- Lead to the engagement of underrepresented communities in advancing housing stability policies and practices.
- Either stimulate new and innovative organizing and engagement practices, or build on proven strategies with demonstrated results
- Support long-term involvement of underrepresented constituencies in decision-making structures
- If a partnership, clearly define the collaboration and the respective roles of the partners
- Have a clear set of strategies and defined objectives

Available funding

There is \$250,000 available in this round, with a maximum grant amount of \$25,000 per organization. Collaborative proposals of no more than three partner organizations can request up to \$25,000 for each partner. A maximum of two collaborations will be funded during this grant round. The funding for these grants comes from the McKnight Foundation and resides at CURA, which will administer this pool with support from the Alliance.

Eligible expenses

A successful application must include **project-specific expenditures**, including personnel costs if applicable. **Please include a project budget** that outlines your plan.

Please note that certain expenses are **ineligible** for this opportunity including: capital purchases, support for electoral campaigns, general operating support and projects that do not directly connect to the strategies outlined in the grant guidelines.

Application Process

All applications will be reviewed by a proposal review committee **drawn from community based organizations that are familiar with the eligible policy initiatives**. All committee members are required to abide by a conflict of interest policy and a confidentiality agreement.

This committee will **make grant award decisions**, in consultation with CURA and the Alliance. The scoring sheet that will be used by the review committee to evaluate each application is included on page 4.

2020 Timeline

- **February 7:** Applications open
- **Third week of February:** Q&A Session
- **March 8:** Full Proposals due
- **Week of March 30:** Review committee meetings
- **Week of April 13:** Grant notifications
- **60 Days after Completion of Project:** Final report due

Grant Obligations

- Recipients of grants are required to provide a **final report**.
- Grantees must agree to spend **funds consistent** with the grant application.
- Grantees are also expected to be part of a **cohort, or learning community**, so that best practices can be shared across the region.

Project Support

CURA and the Alliance are committed to providing **ongoing technical assistance and support** to the efforts of grantees. When requested, CURA and the Alliance will work with funded organizations to bring together grantees with governmental policy making entities to **help build stronger working relationships between community organizations and government systems**.

Proposals due on or before Friday, March 8th

If you have questions, please contact hsgrants@umn.edu



SCORING SHEET to be used by Review Committee

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA	Pass	Fail	Notes
Lead applicant must demonstrate a history of relationship with and accountability to a historically marginalized community as defined in grant guidelines			
Proposal must focus on engaging constituencies around eligible policy and systems change initiatives as defined in grant guidelines			

RANKING CRITERIA	Points (0-5)	Notes
Engagement: Engages under-represented communities		
Specificity: Clearly outlines how the outreach, organizing or engagement activities will lead to desired outcomes		
Strategic: Presents proven or innovative strategy likely to achieve important objectives		
Sustainability: Supports long-term involvement of underrepresented communities in decision-making structures		
Leveraging: Accesses other resources such as money, people, and learning opportunities		
Project Design: Community members from underrepresented communities are involved in project design and implementation		
Effectiveness: Project is logically connected to desired outcomes		
Leadership: Decision-making within the proposed project is driven by underrepresented community members.		
Collaboration: Project creates bridges across stakeholders and/or communities		
Evaluation: Clear explanation of what change is expected as a result of this project		

Scoring Points:

- 0 = Application did not address criteria, or section was skipped.
- 1 = Application addressed the criteria, but was unclear about how the project would achieve criteria.
- 2 = Application addressed the criteria, but provided minimum information.
- 3 = Application addressed the criteria with adequate information about their approach.
- 4 = Application addressed the criteria and provided good examples of future strategies.
- 5 = Application addressed the criteria and effectively explained how the project has already taken steps to address the criteria.