

REQUEST FOR STATEMENTS OF INTEREST - JULY 2025

ABOUT THE FOUNDATION

The Sozosei Foundation was launched as a philanthropic arm of Otsuka in 2019 to be a catalyst for ideas that nurture creative solutions for healthier communities. The name Sozosei means “creativity” in Japanese. Our Japanese heritage is manifest in the Foundation’s fundamental values and day-to-day operations. We are guided by a spirit of “Jissho,” or “proof through execution,” as we employ our unique assets and skills to contribute to the well-being of people and communities.

Pursuant to the Foundation’s mission and values, the Foundation’s strategy is to have a meaningful, long-term impact by increasing access to mental health care in order to eliminate the inappropriate use of jail and prison for the diagnosis and treatment of mental illness.

To learn more about the Foundation, please visit www.SozoseiFoundation.org.

INTRODUCTION

Widely documented as in need of fundamental transformation, the mental health care system in the United States is consistently failing to meet the basic mental health care needs of its people, particularly those with chronic or “serious” mental illness. Therefore, many people struggle to find mental health care in their communities. The criminalization of mental illness exists as the status quo, resulting in poor health outcomes and higher costs for taxpayers and communities.

Too many individuals receive their first diagnosis of mental illness in jail or prison — a result of stigma, discrimination, systemic racism, as well as the persistent and systematic failure of the U.S. health care system to provide affordable, accessible, community-based mental health care. Despite this complex web of factors, the Foundation believes an opportunity exists to make measurable progress to decriminalize mental illness by increasing access to mental health care in communities. We value creativity, experimentation, collaboration, and a dedicated practice of using data and evidence to continuously course correct in order to eliminate the inappropriate use of jails and prisons for diagnosis and treatment.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

The Sozosei Foundation is excited to announce a new opportunity for funding to support evidence-based programs and innovative (untested) approaches that will disrupt the current

practice of criminalizing mental illness and accelerate access to community-based mental health care. The Foundation values programs that are grounded in evidence along with those that have the potential to grow the evidence base of what works by enabling data collection, data sharing, and evaluation of evidence-ready interventions. “Evidence-ready” is a spectrum; it indicates an organization’s commitment to curiosity and a strong desire to use scientific rigor to help determine whether a program is effective and can be expanded to help more people over time. Our goal is to scale what works and/or support efforts that will truly move the needle.

The Foundation will give priority to proposals in the following areas that will or have the potential to increase access to mental health care for those with chronic/serious mental illness:

- 1) **Advocacy, organizing, and/or litigation that has a national impact or the potential for national impact.** Examples include but are not limited to: building a national framework for a new response model for mental health emergencies; increasing the use of Psychiatric Advance Directives; enforcing Mental Health Parity & Addiction Act of 2008; Medicaid advocacy and implementation to ensure health care coverage prior to release from jail or prison; litigation strategies to decriminalize mental illness; etc.
- 2) **Arts and Communications:** Creative practice and journalism to advance thinking and support movement toward decriminalizing and destigmatizing mental illness. The Foundation believes in the power of art, creativity, and communication to advance the decriminalization of mental illness. This may include journalistic and storytelling endeavors (e.g., podcasts, theatrical works, short- and long-form documentaries). Proposals may also focus on the creation and installation/production of works that fall across one or more media, including but not limited to visual, musical, theatrical, or comedic art forms. The work may be national in scope or place-based. Please note that the Foundation is focused on reforming the health care system (rather than the criminal legal system) and will prioritize arts and communications that move the needle toward the goal of increasing access to mental health care in communities. We are also eager to explore the impact of arts and communications, and priority will be given to applicants who are eager to test the impact of their creative works.
- 3) **Scaling What Works:** Promising local and/or statewide practices to build evidence, disseminate learnings, and lay the groundwork for replication. The Foundation is interested in scaling programs and practices that are effective in accelerating access to community-based mental health care. Diversion from the criminal legal system alone is not sufficient. The Foundation will consider proposals only if they demonstrate a clear pathway to care outside of the criminal legal system and offer a robust health-based alternative. Applicants seeking funds under this strategy should have a clear plan for how they will collect and analyze data to contribute to and help expand the current evidence-base of what works, for whom, and why. Priority will be given to programs in Central Appalachia and the Southeast

Region of the US.

The Foundation will also consider proposals outside of these categories that are creative and have potentially catalytic approaches to decriminalizing mental illness. This includes both tested and untested ideas.

ELIGIBILITY

Interested applicants should be one of the following:

- 501(c)3 non-profit
- Organizations with a 501(c)3 fiscal sponsor
- Coalitions with a lead 501(c)3 organization

The Foundation will not provide grants for political campaigns or lobbying activities.

SUBMISSION PROCESS

Eligible organizations can submit a short Statement of Interest through the Foundation's grants portal. The statement should include a brief description of your organization or coalition, its experience (or interest in) working in this area, a description of how you determine or would determine if your efforts are having their intended impact, and how the work aligns with the priorities set forth above.

The following supporting documents should also be submitted through the Foundation's grants portal.

- IRS determination letter confirming your organization's (or fiscal sponsor's) 501(c)(3) tax status
- Organization's most recent annual budget
- Audited Financial Statements (if required by your state)
- If not requesting general operating support, a project budget for the program/project for which you are requesting funds.

PROJECTED GRANT TERM(S)

November 1, 2025 – October 31, 2026 (one-year)

FUNDING AMOUNT & PROCESS

The number of proposals supported, and total amount of support, will depend on the nature and quality of the proposals received. After reviewing the Statements of Interest, the Foundation will invite a small number of full proposals for general operating or project-based grants ranging between \$25,000 - \$100,000 per applicant per year.

Not all who are invited to submit a full proposal will receive funding. An application may be declined, partially awarded, fully awarded, or placed on hold for more information.

TIMELINE

- July 14, 2025: Requests for statements of interest released.
- September 5, 2025: Statements of interest due by 11:59 PM EDT.
- September 15, 2025: Invitations sent to submit a full proposal.
- September 29, 2025: Full proposals due by 11:59 PM EDT.
- By end of October 2025: Sozosei Foundation notifies applicants.

QUESTIONS

Please address all questions regarding this Request for Statements of Interest to:
SozoseiGrantSupport@arabellaadvisors.com.