Partnership Engagement Fund guidelines and application

This document contains an overview of the Partnership Engagement Fund, the application form and the processes for applying, application evaluation and contracting.

## Program overview and goals

This program is intended to support collaboration and partnerships between community-based organizations (CBOs) and neighborhood organizations to increase diverse public participation through project development and implementation, meaningfully and effectively engaging historically underrepresented residents on policies and programs that impact them, and involving them in decision-making with a focus on promoting equity.

## Eligibility

The Partnership Engagement Fund dollars are available to community-based organizations that are partnering with [official neighborhood organizations](http://apps.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cofm/Neighborhood-Organizations/) to further the City’s goals as stated in the Strategic Racial Equity Action Plan and Minneapolis 2040: “The people of Minneapolis will be socially connected, healthy and safe.”

Community-based organizations must operate for exclusively charitable or educational purposes.

## Funding in 2021

In order to expedite funding to organizations that reach historically underrepresented residents, 2021 funding will give smaller grants ($5,000-$15,000) to many organizations and have a fast grant review process. This program will be updated using lessons learned from this pilot year to improve in future years.

The application process will open April 19, 2021 with an optional deadline of May 16 for the initial interest form, and deadline of July 1, 2021 for the completed application. There are approximately $240,000 available in 2021. If there are remaining funds after contracts are awarded, applications will be accepted after July 1.

## Timeline

* April 19 – Groups can begin the application process to seek funding.
* May 16 – Optional, but strongly encouraged, [initial interest form](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/83042b403d8741e5abfc3d7f8fee561a), email, call or text due to indicate your intention to apply.
* May 24 – Optional online site visits and interviews begin.
* July 1 – Deadline to submit your fully completed application.

## Application review process

Proposals will follow a guided process before final approval decisions are made.

1. Groups interested in applying should reach out to NCR beginning April 19 to start the process.
2. NCR staff will work with organizations to complete the application, identify partnerships, participate in optional online site visits and prepare for the City contracting process.
3. Final and completed applications will be reviewed by community members and City staff, who will make funding recommendations.

The NCR director and City Council will make final funding decisions and NCR staff will reach out to grantees to begin the contracting process. [Details about the application review process](#_Application_review_process).

## Questions

Call Ariah Fine at 612-673-2243, email [partnershipfund@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:partnershipfund@minneapolismn.gov) or visit [minneapolismn.gov/partnership-fund](http://minneapolismn.gov/partnership-fund) if you have questions about the Partnership Engagement Fund.

# Application questions

Use the form below to submit your application by email to [partnershipfund@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:partnershipfund@minneapolismn.gov). Please submit the optional [initial interest form](https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/83042b403d8741e5abfc3d7f8fee561a) online, or email [partnershipfund@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:partnershipfund@minneapolismn.gov), or call or text (612) 454-0654 by May 16, 2021 to indicate your intention to apply, and submit the complete application by July 1.

## Applicant information

Organization name:

Address:

Email:

Project name:

Phone:

Tax ID number, if applicable (not required):

Neighborhood organization partner name (if known at time of submission):

## City goals

Identify which of the following City goals your partnership will further. NCR can help to identify which goal your project fits.

Minneapolis will see all communities fully thrive regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, country of origin, religion, or zip code having eliminated deep-rooted disparities in wealth, opportunity, housing, safety and health.

Minneapolis will have more residents and jobs, and all people will equitably benefit from that growth.

All Minneapolis residents will be able to afford and access quality housing throughout the city.

All Minneapolis residents will have the training and skills necessary to participate in the economy and will have access to a living-wage job.

The people of Minneapolis will be socially connected, healthy and safe.

Minneapolis will enjoy a high-quality and distinctive physical environment in all parts of the city.

The physical attributes of Minneapolis will reflect the city’s history and cultures.

Minneapolis will have the creative, cultural and natural amenities that make the city a great place to live.

All Minneapolis residents will have access to employment, retail services, healthy food, parks and other daily needs via walking, biking and public transit.

Minneapolis will be resilient to the effects of climate change and diminishing natural resources and will be on track to achieve an 80% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

Minneapolis will have healthy air, clean water and a vibrant ecosystem.

Minneapolis will remain the economic center of the region with a healthy, sustainable and diverse economy.

Minneapolis City government will be proactive, accessible and fiscally sustainable.

## Communities served

What communities do you serve? Check all that apply.

American Indian/Alaska Native

Asian or Southeast Asian

Black/African American

African or East African

Hispanic or Latino origin

Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

White or Caucasian

Identify specific communities: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Seniors

Youth

People with disabilities

Tenants

Immigrants and refugees

Currently or formerly unsheltered

LGBTQAI

People who identify as: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

## Geographic area

What geographic areas of Minneapolis do you serve? You may indicate with a map.

## Language ability

Does the staff who manage this partnership program speak, read and write fluently in the language(s) of the targeted service community, if applicable? If so, what languages?

## Requested grant amount

How much funding would you like to request?

## Project budget

What is your total project budget? Attach your detailed project budget or use the template in the attachments.

## Organization budget

What is your organization's annual budget?

Under $100,000  $100,000 - $300,000  Over $300,000

## Narrative

The following questions can be submitted in your own language by video, audio or text (150-word maximum per question).

1. Tell us about your group/organization.
2. What work will you do with the funding you receive?
3. What changes are you trying to make, and what impact do you want to make in your community?
4. What are your specific goals and outcomes?
5. How are decisions made in your group/organization?
6. Who do you see as partners in your work? (Neighborhood organizations and other partners).
7. How can partners support your work?
8. What is the timeline for your work? (Maximum grant-period is 18 months).

## Supporting documents

Please submit the following documents. NCR staff will follow up with any questions or clarifications needed about your organization.

1. 501(c)3 documentation ([if applicable](#_Contracting_process), not required).
2. Certificate of insurance ([if applicable](#_Contracting_process), not required).
3. A letter of agreement or support with your partner (if you have a partner organization at time of submission).

## Project budget

This format is optional and may be used to submit your project budget. If you already have project budgets that contain this information, please feel free to submit them in their original formats. Feel free to attach a budget narrative explaining your numbers if necessary.

### Income

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Source** |  | **Amount** |
| *Support* |  |  |
| Grants |  | $ |
| Individual contributions |  | $ |
| Fundraising events |  | $ |
| In-kind support |  | $ |
|  |  | $ |
|  |  | $ |
|  |  |  |
| *Revenue* |  |  |
| Contracts |  | $ |
| Earned income |  | $ |
| Other (specify) |  | $ |
|  |  | $ |
|  |  |  |
| **Total income** |  | **$** |

### Expenses[[1]](#footnote-1)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** |  | **Amount** | **%FT/PT** |
| Salaries and wages (breakdown by individual position and indicate full- or part-time.) |  | $ |  |
|  |  | $ |  |
|  |  | $ |  |
| SUBTOTAL |  | $ |  |
| Insurance, benefits and other related taxes |  | $ |  |
| Consultants and professional fees |  | $ |  |
| Travel |  | $ |  |
| Equipment |  | $ |  |
| Supplies |  | $ |  |
| Printing and copying |  | $ |  |
| Telephone and fax |  | $ |  |
| Postage and delivery |  | $ |  |
| Rent and utilities |  | $ |  |
| In-kind expenses |  | $ |  |
| Indirect (up to 10%) |  | $ |  |
| Other (specify) |  | $ |  |
|  |  | $ |  |
| **Total expenses** |  | **$** |  |
| **Difference (income minus expenses)** |  | **$** |  |

# Applicant commitments

Applicants are given several application methods for flexibility. However, there are several tasks and time commitments that must be completed to qualify for funding. See the list below.

## Required tasks and time commitments

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Task description[[2]](#footnote-2) | Estimated time commitment (hours) | Deadline |
| Complete application\* | 3 | 7/1/21 |
| Attend informational session (optional) | 2 | 4/23/21 |
| Respond to technical review | 1 | 5/20/21 |
| Create memorandum of understanding (MOU) with partners | 2 | 5/20/21 |
| Attend interview session (optional)\* | 0.5 | 5/31/21 |
| Contracting process\* | 3 | 7/1/21 |
| Ongoing contract administration\* | 1 hour per month | 7/2/21 |
| Project evaluation\* | 4 | 12/1/23 |

## Vendor application

If your organization is a 501(c)3 and not using a neighborhood organization as a fiscal sponsor, you must be registered as a City supplier. [How to become a City supplier](https://www.minneapolismn.gov/business-services/doing-business-with-the-city/). [More about the contracting process](#_Contracting_process).

# Application review process

The Partnership Engagement Fund review committee will be made up of NCR staff and community members. The City of Minneapolis will use experts and well-positioned community partners to help evaluate the viability and appropriateness of the applications.

To ensure that the process is community-driven and that proposals reflect the needs of the community, reviewers will score the ideas through a guided process with City of Minneapolis staff.

Each application will be reviewed by a minimum of three advisory reviewers. Based on the advisory review committee's recommendations, an internal City team will prioritize and select programs that will receive funding. During the internal team's review, additional information from you may be requested.

The City Council must authorize the internal funding team's recommendations for contracts to be issued.

## Reviewer selection process

NCR staff will provide a simple application for interested reviewers to complete. Additionally, NCR staff will use their relationships in the community to recruit appropriate subject matter experts.

Using the application, the review committee lead staff will identify an appropriate mix of members according to:

1. Cultural community knowledge
2. Representation of historically underrepresented communities
3. Minneapolis geographic representation
4. Issue-based specialized knowledge (unsheltered populations, youth, seniors, immigrants and refugees, etc.)

## Reviewer expectations

Selected reviewers have an important role in the evaluation of applications. To ensure reviewers are equipped with the tools needed the following list shows tasks and estimated time commitments for reviewers.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Task description** | **Reviewer time (hours)** | **Deadline** |
| Attend a reviewer pre-meeting | 1 | 7/1/21 |
| Attend applicant interview sessions | 2 | 4/23/21 |
| Read and score applications | 5 | 5/20/21 |
| Attend a reviewer meeting | 1 | 5/20/21 |
| Compile and submit scores to NCR | 0.5 | 5/31/21 |

The number of applications assigned to each volunteer reviewer depends on the total number received, however, no more than 10 applications will be reviewed by any individual

Volunteer reviewers will be asked to:

1. Review the Conflict of Interest Statement immediately. If a conflict of interest exists, notify the review committee lead staff. If a conflict of interest exists, a reviewer maybe asked to recuse themselves from the review and discussion of a proposal to maintain an objective review process.
2. Attend a reviewer pre-meeting. The pre-meeting will include an overview of best practices, the process and expectations for grant reviewing.
3. Carefully review and score each assigned application using the [application score sheet](#_Application_score_sheet)*.* Scoring should be based solely on the contents of the application and an objective assessment of each application’s merits.
4. Meet to review and discuss the applications based on the established criteria. All review meetings will be held virtually via Microsoft Teams. All applications will be discussed and a ranking of applications be created based on their scores.
5. Make recommendations for funding to the NCR director who makes the final decision on which proposals to submit to City Council for approval.
6. Turn in all review materials, which will be kept on file as public record.

## Online interviews and site visits

The optional online interviews and site visits allow applicants another way to show their work. Reviewers can attend the online interviews or watch a recording afterwards.

Once applicants are selected to participate in an online site visit or interview, meetings are scheduled online via Microsoft Teams by day according to language.

* English: May 24, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. and 1 p.m.-4 p.m. Space for 15 visits.
* Spanish: May 25, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. and 1 p.m.-4 p.m. Space for 10 visits.
* Hmong: May 26, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. and 1 p.m.-4 p.m. Space for 10 visits.
* Somali: May 27, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. and 1 p.m.-4 p.m. Space for 10 visits.
* 2nd day as needed May 28, 10 a.m.-12 p.m. and 1 p.m.-4 p.m. Space for 15 visits.

## Application score sheet

| **Project name:** | Click or tap here to enter text. | **Area:** Click or tap here to enter text. | |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Reviewer name:** | Click or tap here to enter text. | **Date:** Click or tap to enter a date. | |  |
| **Priority** | **Basis of criteria** | **Guide** | **Score** | **Comments** |
| **Feasibility** | The proposal has clear, specific examples of how the idea will be implemented, and the applicant has demonstrated the ability to launch a new project. Project has a clear timeline. | 1-Very Weak 2-Weak 3-Adequate 4-Strong 5-Exceptional | \_\_/5 | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Community engagement** | The applicant successfully explains how their idea will authentically engage all members of the community with a clear understanding of cultural competency. Residents who will benefit from the project are involved in the implementation. | 1-Very Weak 2-Weak 3-Adequate 4-Strong 5-Exceptional | \_\_/5 | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Impact** | The project can have a direct impact on residents' lives and shift the trajectory of those living and working in the community. | 1-Very Weak 2-Weak 3-Adequate 4-Strong 5-Exceptional | \_\_/5 | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Partnership** | There are clear collaborations and demonstrate to have the ability to leverage resources to bring the proposal to fruition. The project has an innovative approach to a community need. | 1-Very Weak 2-Weak 3-Adequate 4-Strong 5-Exceptional | \_\_/5 | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Overall ranking** | The idea meets the selection criteria and demonstrates that the applicants have a solid plan for implementation. Overall, this idea should be considered ready to advance to the next round. | 1-4-Very Weak 5-8-Weak 9-12-Adequate 13-16-Strong 17-20-Exceptional | \_\_/20 |  |
|  | **Please select one of the following options and add additional comments in the column to the right as requested.**  I recommend prioritizing funding this project*. (If you select this option, please describe in the column to the right what makes you believe this organization should be prioritized.)*  I have no concerns about funding this project.  I have some questions or concerns about funding this project. (*If you select this option, please describe in the column to the right what your questions/concerns are and what additional information you would recommend seeking for clarity.)*  I recommend that this project **not** be funded. (*If you select this option, please describe in the column to the right why you actively recommend against funding this organization.)* | | | Click or tap here to enter text. |

# Contracting process

Because the Partnership Engagement Fund uses Tax Increment Financing funds, there is a complex set of processes that must be followed for contract management and administration. Neighborhood support specialists in the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department (NCR) have the expertise to manage these contracts.

Every Partnership Engagement Fund program should involve a community-based organization (CBO) in partnership with a neighborhood organization. There are two ways for contracts to be set up: the CBO can register as a vendor to the City or the neighborhood organization can act as a fiscal agent.

## Community-based organization (CBO) registers as a vendor

If a CBO is registered as a vendor to the City, the Development Finance Division (DFD) will complete a contract that allows for direct payments to the CBO. The NCR neighborhood support specialist assigned to the partner neighborhood will be assigned to manage the contract (in coordination with a cultural support specialist if applicable).

## Community-based organization (CBO) uses a fiscal agent

If a CBO is not a registered vendor to the City or is not a 501(c)3, the neighborhood organization partner will act as a fiscal agent for the project. The DFD will amend the neighborhood organization’s "Neighborhoods 2020" contract, and the neighborhood organization will then pay the CBO.

The neighborhood support specialist assigned to the partner neighborhood organization will be assigned to manage the contract (in coordination with a cultural support specialist, if applicable).

## Vendor registration

Any organizations that are not registered with the City as an approved vendor will be expected to complete the process of vendor registration during the first six months of the contract. A neighborhood support specialist will be assigned this task.

## Insurance requirements

The organization that holds the management contract must hold general liability insurance in compliance with the City of Minneapolis requirements ($2 million aggregate). Neighborhood organizations are required to carry this insurance already as part of their existing contracts. This information should be included in the memorandum of understanding between partners, and an insurance certificate that includes the City of Minneapolis as an additional insured must be submitted.

1. Food and stipends for participation are not eligible expenses for this grant. Some other expenses may not be eligible. NCR will review expense items for eligibility after you submit your application to help identify any potential problems. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. \*NCR staff will be available to assist. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)