greater rochester Health foundation

CALL FOR IDEAS

RESOURCE GUIDE

Centered in equity, the mission of the Greater Rochester Health Foundation is to pursue and invest in solutions that build a healthier region where all people can thrive.

WWW.THEGRHF.ORG
IDEAS@THEGRHF.ORG

Resource Guide
Purpose & Overview

The Greater Rochester Health Foundation created this resource guide in response to feedback received from our partners, to help you prepare an impact proposal! The guide will:

- Support you in developing your Call for Ideas proposal
- Clarify the information we are requesting
- Define important terms and concepts
- Provide resources on language access, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Belonging (DEIAB) practices, community engagement/co-creation, and communication around equity-explicit programming

Proposal Writing Tips:

- Review the Call for Ideas document in full and reach out to Health Foundation staff with any questions.
- Write your proposal as if you are having a conversation with Health Foundation staff– *tell your story*!
- Double-check your proposal to ensure all questions are answered and that page length requirements are met.
- Focus on answering the questions, not so much on the format or structure.
- Ask someone unfamiliar with your work to review it for clarity.

An Effective Proposal Will:

- Address a need in communities that have historically been impacted by health inequities and face multiple intersecting oppressions;
- Clearly outline the project plan and how it will contribute to equitable access and resources;
- Center community voice throughout the entire project, from identification of need to final reflection;
- Demonstrate a commitment to DEIAB;
- Reflect relevant experience with the project focus or community served, and;
- Leverage partnerships to advance the work.

Helpful Definitions

- ***Advocacy:*** efforts made by organizations or individuals to influence policies, raise awareness, and promote social change through public support for causes aligned with their mission. (Adapted from Schwartz & Barkin, *The Role of Advocacy in Philanthropy: A Guide for Nonprofit Organizations).*

- ***Community:*** a group of people who are connected by shared interests, values, needs, or geographic location. These individuals come together to address common issues, work toward social change, and improve the well-being of their members. (Adapted from Kania & Kramer, *Collective Impact).*

- ***Community engagement:*** an active and intentional process of involving individuals in decisions, actions, and efforts that impact their lives and communities. It involves building relationships, fostering collaboration, and empowering community members to participate in the development and implementation of programs, policies, and initiatives. The goal is to ensure that the voices of communities that have been historically impacted by health inequities are heard. (Adapted from Kahne & Westheimer, *The Role of Social Justice Education in Promoting Civic Engagement* and Reich, *Community Engagement in the Nonprofit Sector: Approaches, Challenges, and Opportunities).*

- ***Community organizing:*** the process of empowering individuals and groups within a community to collectively address issues, advocate for social change, and influence policies that affect their lives--this involves mobilizing resources, building relationships, and fostering collective action to challenge power structures and promote equity, justice, and systemic change. (Adapted from Minkler & Wallerstein, *Community-Based Participatory Research for Health: From Process to Outcomes).*

- ***DEIAB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Belonging)***: ensuring that the principles and practices aimed at ensuring that organizations, policies, and programs are fair, inclusive, and accessible to all individuals, particularly those from historically marginalized or underrepresented groups. This approach seeks to address systemic inequalities, promote diversity in leadership and decision-making, ensure equitable access to resources and opportunities, and foster an environment where everyone feels valued and respected. (Adapted from Hernandez & Blanchard: *Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion in Philanthropic Organizations: A Call to Action* and The Pew Research Center, *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Nonprofit Sector).*

- ***Equity:*** fairness and justice in the distribution of resources, opportunities, and treatment. Equity focuses on providing individuals and communities with the *specific* resources and support needed to achieve an equal outcome, recognizing that different people start from different places and face varying levels of disadvantage. This contrasts with **equality**, which offers people identical resources or opportunities, regardless of their individual circumstances or needs. (Adapted from Johnson, *Privilege, Power, and Difference).*

- ***General operating support:*** often called core support, operating support, infrastructure support, or general-purpose support, these terms refer to grants that help sustain an organization's mission and operations, rather than funding specific programs. This type of support provides flexibility for nonprofits to allocate funds as needed across various organizational needs. (Adapted from Froelich, *Diversification of Revenue Strategies: A Key to Nonprofit Financial Sustainability).*

- ***Health:*** a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (Adapted from the World Health Organization).

- ***Health equity:*** a public health concept that refers to disparities in access to health resources and opportunities. They occur when individuals are unable to achieve their highest level of health due to factors beyond their control. Working toward health equity aims to correct these disparities by addressing the social, economic, and environmental factors that contribute to unequal health outcomes. (Adapted from the World Health Organization and Centers for Disease Control).

- ***Health inequities:*** health inequities are disparities in health status between socially advantaged and disadvantaged or marginalized groups, resulting from systemic, unfair differences in access to and availability of resources and opportunities. These inequities reflect structural inequalities that prevent equitable health outcomes. (Adapted from the World Health Organization).

- ***Indirect costs:*** general expenses that support a project but are not tied to a specific activity. They may include expenses such as rent, utilities, office administration, shared supplies, shared staff time, etc. Unlike direct costs, which are specifically linked to project activities, indirect costs help cover the overall operations that make the project possible. (Adapted from the National Council of Nonprofits).

- ***Intersectionality:*** the recognition that inequality can arise from interconnected social categorizations—such as race, class, disability, sexual orientation, and gender—which create overlapping systems of oppression. These systems compound one another and must be addressed to rectify the resulting inequities. The term intersectionality, first coined by Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw in 1989, underscores how multiple forms of disadvantage intersect to create obstacles that are often overlooked by traditional solutions to discrimination and social justice. (Adapted from Oxford Dictionary and Misty McPhetridge, BSSW).

- ***Social Drivers of Health (previously known as Social Determinants of Health)***: the nonmedical factors that significantly influence health outcomes. These include the conditions in which individuals are born, grow, live, work, play, and age, as well as the broader social, economic, and environmental systems that shape a person's daily life. These factors—such as access to education, economic stability, social support, and living conditions—play a critical role in determining overall health and well-being.

  Note: The term "determinants" suggests that health outcomes are fixed and beyond an individual's or community's control. By shifting to "social drivers of health," the focus is reframed to emphasize that social factors are not fate but rather factors that can be influenced and changed. This change highlights that people and communities have the power to address and improve the conditions that impact their health, rather than being passive recipients of their circumstances. (Adapted from Elevance Health and the Centers for Disease Control).

What We Will Fund

At the Greater Rochester Health Foundation, we are committed to funding efforts that promote health equity through diverse and innovative approaches. We recognize that health is shaped by many factors beyond traditional care, including changing political and social landscapes. We are committed to understanding and supporting initiatives that address these evolving and complex needs.
Below are examples of the funding categories we support:

- ***General operating support:*** Grants that help organizations sustain their core mission, enabling long-term impact, rather than focusing on specific programs or services.

- ***Single programs, projects, or services:*** Funding that targets specific health equity programs or initiatives aimed at making a direct impact on community health and well-being.

- ***Compensation:*** Support for staff salaries and other compensation needs.

- ***Community expertise:*** Stipends for community members who provide lived experience and knowledge to programs, ensuring that efforts are community-driven, and community members are compensated for their efforts.

- ***Advocacy****:* Support for community organizing, community outreach, policy education, and other advocacy efforts that amplify the voices of underserved populations.

  Note: *Advocacy* is distinct from *lobbying.* While we can fund efforts to educate communities on advocacy and support policy change, we *cannot* fund lobbying activities aimed at influencing specific legislation.

- ***Transition funding****:* For organizations and programs undergoing change, such as the closing of a program/project, we will consider proposals requesting support to manage the transition. This may include operational costs, staff severance, and other necessary resources.

- ***Merging support****:* Assistance for organizations that are merging, ensuring the integration of services, resources, and staff for maximum impact.

- ***Safety & security measures****:* The Health Foundation recognizes the increasing importance of security and safety and will provide funds for developing and maintaining safety protocols to protect staff and community members. Examples of this would include security cameras, security personnel, or emergency response systems.

- ***Community engagement****:* Funds can be used to support the engagement of community to ensure their voices are at the center of decision-making processes.

- ***Legal support****:* We understand that navigating legal barriers is a critical part of health equity. We may provide support for legal services, whether it's for establishing partnerships or ensuring federal guideline compliance. If you have questions around a specific request, please feel free to contact us.

- ***Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Accessibility and Belonging (DEIAB)****:* Support for training, facilitation, and consulting services that help organizations strengthen their commitment to DEIAB.

- ***Staff support and wellness:*** Funding for staff development and wellness, including trainings, efforts to reduce vicarious trauma/burnout, to foster a culture of care and build career satisfaction within organizations.

Writing Your Proposal

The Greater Rochester Health Foundation is committed to understanding and navigating the changing political and social landscape and the dynamic needs of our local communities. We encourage organizations to align your approach and language to follow your funding sources. The Health Foundation will not disadvantage a proposal that might use alternative language to express their racial and health equity efforts. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to us.

This guide offers additional considerations and alternative approaches to help you showcase the full scope of your work. These prompts are designed to help you expand on key elements of your proposal and share your story in a compelling way.

Reminders:

- Format: Up to three (3) pages single-spaced, or six (6) pages double-spaced
- Grant length & size: Requests can range up to 18-months and up to $75k
- Organization and contact information will be requested through **Submittable**, our grant portal

Writing Your Proposal: General Operating Support

General operating support requests are distinct from programmatic requests: programmatic funding supports a specific program or project, while general operating support is intended to support the entire organization, enabling you to meet your broad operational needs.

Key Guidelines for General Operating Support Requests:

- **Fiscal Sponsors:** Fiscal sponsors may *not* be used for general operating support requests. Your organization must have a current 501(c)(3) status to apply for this type of funding.

- **Indirect Costs:** Indirect costs will *not* be added to general operating support requests.

Please note: these prompts do not replace the proposal questions and are not intended to be answered in full; rather, they are additional ways to consider highlighting your work.

Proposals include two sections: Organization Overview and Annual Budget.

Organization Overview

In this part of the proposal, we ask you to describe your organization. This includes:

1. Share how your organization's work supports improvement to health outcomes
2. Explain how unrestricted grant funds would impact your organization
3. Outline your community engagement and co-design efforts
4. List key collaborative partners and describe how your organization works with them

Organization Overview: Health Outcomes & Organization Impact

When answering proposal questions, prompts to consider:

- What specific health outcomes does your organization aim to improve, and how do your programs or services directly impact these outcomes?
  - Examples: improvements in access to care, reduced health disparities, increased health education
- What is the connection between the work of your organization and the health improvements you're striving for?
- How would having access to flexible funding help your organization meet its goals?
  - Examples: advance your mission, stabilize operations, enable growth (include specific ways), improve staff retention via wages/professional development
- How would this funding directly address the needs of your organization and further your impact?

Organization Overview: Community Engagement & Co-Design

When answering proposal questions, prompts to consider:

- How does your organization intentionally involve community members in shaping decisions?
  - Examples: hiring staff/leaders with lived experience, surveys, advisory committees, community-led meetings
- How often do you engage with community to gather feedback?
  - How do you engage the community at different stages of your projects or initiatives?
- How does your organization build trust and relationships with community?
  - Examples: hosting community events or open houses, attending local gatherings, providing consistent follow-up communication, offering additional resources and support through partnerships with local organizations.
- In what ways does your organization empower community members to take part in the development and design of programs, policies, and initiatives?
- How do you ensure that the voices of those who have been historically impacted by health inequities influence the direction of your initiatives?
  - Examples: prioritizing representation of marginalized groups on the board or at leadership levels, ensuring community members from underserved populations are involved in project planning, conducting targeted outreach to ensure inclusion.
- Can you provide examples of how community input led to changes in program design, service delivery, or policy adjustments?

Organization Overview: Collaborative Partners

When answering proposal questions, prompts to consider:

- Which organizations, agencies, or individuals do you collaborate with to achieve your goals?
- What is the nature of the collaboration?
  - Examples: joint programming, resource sharing, advocacy
- How do these partnerships enhance your organization's impact and help address community health needs?

Annual Budget

The **annual budget** is a financial document that outlines your organization's expected income and expenses for the year, providing a clear overview of your financial plans.

Writing Your Proposal: Project/Program Support

Please note: these prompts do not replace the proposal questions and are not intended to be answered in full; rather, they are additional ways to consider highlighting your work.

Proposals include two sections: Project Overview and Budget.

Project Overview

In this part of the proposal, we ask you to describe your project. This includes:

1. Project title
2. Project summary
3. Describe the goal/purpose of this project and list the primary activities that will be carried out to achieve this goal.
4. Who are the key partners involved or expected to be involved and what roles will they take on?

Project Overview: Project Summary

The **project summary** is a big-picture overview of your project—summarized concisely and comprehensively while providing the following:

- **What** you want to do **AND** how has community helped co-design your approach/solution;
- **Why** you want to do it **AND** how has community identified this need;
- **How** will you do it **AND** how will community be involved throughout this project.

Centering and sharing power with community to address health inequities is the core of this Call for Ideas opportunity. Community inclusion at all stages of a project is necessary for success (from the identification of the opportunity (health inequity), the proposed solution(s), to any iterations, revisions, and reflections on the project's intended goal).

When answering proposal questions, prompts to consider:

***What** do you want to do and how has community helped co-design your approach/solution?*

- How was community been involved in shaping your idea?
  - Were they members of the project design team?
  - Was there an opportunity for them to review and give feedback on your approach?

***Why** do you want to do it and how has community identified this need?*

- How did you gather information in a way the affected people/community identified their needs and priorities?
  - Examples: hiring folks with lived experience and sharing decision-making power with them, continued conversations with clients/residents/community, survey, listening sessions, waitlist, etc.

***How** will you do it and how will community be involved throughout the project?*

- What activities are built in throughout the project duration that enable community to give feedback?
  - Examples: community listening sessions, conversations with community members, surveys, community members sitting on boards, steering committees, focus and planning groups.

- What community members are included and are they representative of the community as a whole? How can you create space for other community members to contribute?
    - How are community members compensated for their time and expertise?
        - Examples: stipends, gift cards, hourly/salary compensation.
    - How are barriers to participate reduced or eliminated?
        - Examples: language access, food provided at meetings, childcare, transportation or bus passes, accessibility, meetings at convenient times as expressed by community.

Project Overview: Describe the Goal/Purpose & List the Primary Activities

When answering proposal questions, prompts to consider:

- **When** and **where** will the proposed activities take place?
- **Who** will lead and participate in the activities?
- **What** is your outreach plan for community buy-in?
    - Examples: form an advisory committee of residents, hire staff from the community, recruit and develop a focus group led by community.

Project Overview: List of the Partners Involved & Their Roles

When answering proposal questions, prompts to consider:

- What organizations or groups (if any) are doing similar work?
    - Examples: working with the same community or population, focused on a similar health equity opportunity etc.
    - How is your project different, supplemental, or additive to these similar projects?

- Do you already have a relationship with the partner(s)?
    - Do partners not only have experience with, but have a trusted and respectful relationship with the people/communities you serve?
    - If no current relationship exists, what is your plan to develop one?

- How will the partnership support/contribute to the goals of the work?

Sample Budget

Indirect costs: Do not include indirect costs in your funding request. If awarded, indirect will be added separately.

Organization: A Very Good Organization **Project Title:** Community Wellness Initiative **Project Length:** 12 Months	*INSTRUCTIONS: For each category, enter the total amount you are requesting. Next to the total, provide a high-level breakdown of what is included in that amount. You do not need to submit a detailed, line-by-line budget, just a summary of key costs.* *All totals and subtotals will auto calculate.*	
CATEGORY OF EXPENSE	AMOUNT	DETAIL
1.Personnel Services		
a) Salary + Fringe The total cost of paying staff who will work on the project. Include title of staff and total amount of each staff in "detail"	$15,000	Covers partial salary and benefits for a Program Coordinator to oversee the activities of this program and manage community outreach.
(1a.) Subtotal	$15,000	
2.Non-Personnel Services		
a) Contractional Costs Payments to individuals or organizations outside of your staff for specific services, like consultants or trainers	$7,500	Payment for a graphic designer to develop outreach materials ($4,000) Payment for a "to be hired" consultant to facilitate training sessions ($3,500)
b) Equipment + Supplies Items needed to run the project, such as technology, office supplies or materials	$5,000	Includes a laptop for staff use, program related materials for both programming and outreach, and office supplies needed for the implementation of the program
c) Travel Costs for transportation, lodging, and meals with traveling for the project	$3,000	Covers transportation and lodging for 3 staff to attend regional conference directly related to this project's development
d) Other Direct Costs Any other necessary project expenses that don't fit into the categories above, like event space rental or printing	$2,500	Includes venue rental for a community workshop, printing costs for all participant materials, and food for all participants
e) Indirect General expenses that support your project but aren't directly tied to project activities. This includes rent, utilities, administrative support, and more		Do not include indirect costs in your refunding request, if awarded, indirect will be added separately.
(2a. – 2e.) Subtotal	$18,000	
TOTAL GRHF FUNDING REQUEST	$33,000	
3.Other Funding		
f) Other Project Funding Any additional money your project is receiving from other sources, such as grants, donations, or sponsorships. This helps us understand the full financial picture of your project and does not affect your changes at being funded. Please include both source and amount.		$10,000 – Bloom Foundation $5,000 – Cooperate Sponsorship $ 3,000 – Contributions from community members/ donation
g) Leveraged Funding Potential funding that your project may receive, but only if this grant is awarded. This could include matching funds, pending grants or commitments from other funders that depends on our support. Please include only the source of funding.		Big Bank Incorporated Power Foundation

Resources

Like many in the philanthropic and nonprofit sectors, Greater Rochester Health Foundation is closely monitoring the various policies and actions being implemented at the federal level.

We are actively gathering information to better understand the potential impacts on our communities, while also remaining responsive to new and emerging needs across our region. We'll be sharing information directly with partners upon request, using discretion and sensitivity given the complexity of the challenges many communities are facing.

From language guidance to tracking executive orders, below are a few resources that may be helpful:

- We have posted a variety of resources to support nonprofits including grant writing support, financial management and capacity building on our website: Greater Rochester Health Foundation

- The National Council of Nonprofits provides useful information and guidance during these changing times, including a chart to track executive orders and how they may affect nonprofits: National Council of Nonprofits Executive Orders Chart

- Rochester Area Community Foundation has compiled a list of resources for those serving immigrant communities: Resources & Support for Immigrants

- For organizations seeking guidance on language access plans, the Limited English Proficiency website is a valuable resource that provides specific instructions on creating plans as well as lists the states that have established Language Access laws: LEP.gov

- Harvard Business Review has released articles/guidance on the shifts in DEI and use of language:
  - How to Assess the New Legal Risks of Your DEI Policies
  - The Legal Landscape Around DEI is Shifting. Your Messaging Should, Too

Please note: The Health Foundation encourages organizations to align your approach and language to follow your funding sources. The Health Foundation will not disadvantage a proposal that might use alternative language to express their racial and health equity efforts. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to us.

Additional Tips for Community Engagement

With limited time, capacity, and funds, it can be difficult to include community engagement opportunities in project design and implementation. Here are some tips to help you leverage existing resources to engage with your identified community.

- Align engagement opportunities with scheduled events.
- Provide regular updates to community, remaining transparent about project progress, especially when experiencing setbacks. This builds trust and confidence in the continuation of the project, even when things aren't going exactly as planned.
- Ensure that the services provided are accessible. Reduce or eliminate any barriers to community engagement, such as transportation needs, language barriers, accessibility needs, and childcare.
- Compensate community members for their time and expertise.
- Create an environment that is emotionally safe and culturally aware.

Community engagement is a process. Keep in mind that numerous efforts are needed to center community voice and create space for shared power.

Have Questions or Feedback?

We are available to answer any questions regarding the Call for Ideas funding opportunity or this resource guide. We can also provide guidance on your specific idea and its potential alignment with our funding goals before you submit your proposal. We encourage you to reach out via email to ideas@thegrhf.org or contact a member of the Responsive Grants team:

- Hannah Castelli, Program Officer, (585) 258-1703
- Rachel Betts, Program Officer, (585) 258-1730
- Monica Brown, Senior Program Officer, (585) 258-1710

We hope you found this resource guide helpful! We greatly appreciate your feedback about our Call for Ideas funding opportunity; we are listening, and continuously incorporating your suggestions to improve our processes.