



# OUR LGBTQ FUND

## 2024 GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

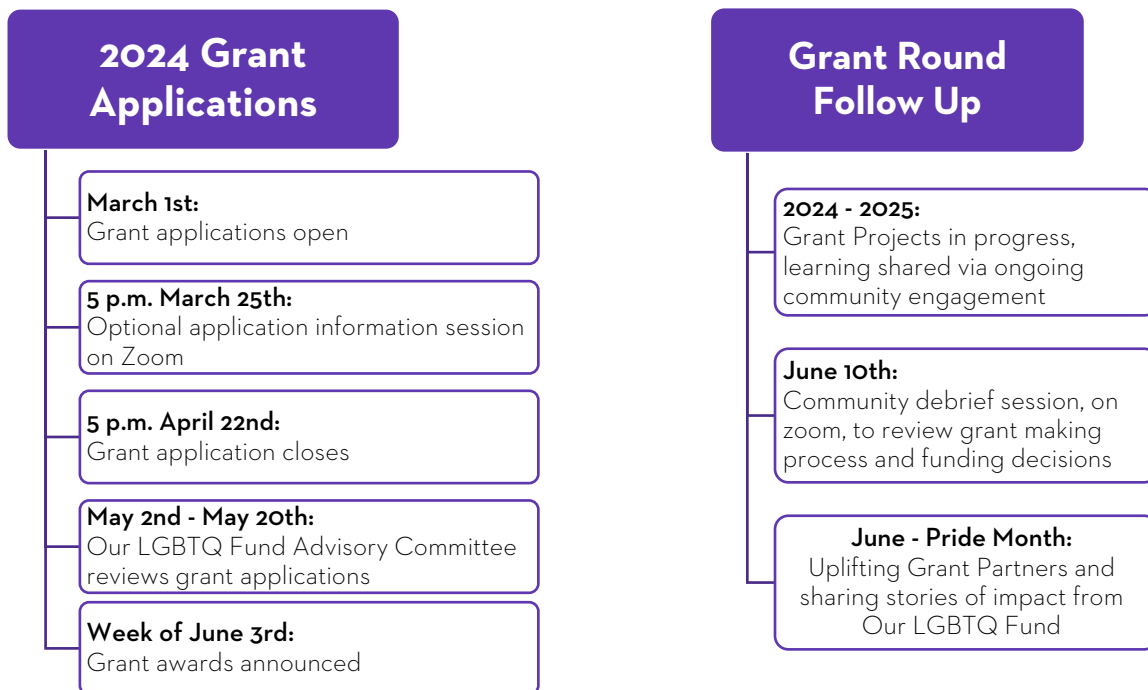
### REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

We invite you to consider applying for funding available through Our LGBTQ Fund at Grand Rapids Community Foundation, whose North Star is: For West Michigan to grow and prosper, we must make sure that **everyone** can apply their **talents and creativity** to fuel our future. It is only by **connecting across perspectives** and **overcoming inequities** that we can build and sustain an **inclusive economy and thriving community**. Our LGBTQ Fund was founded in 2014 and exists to provide a safe, welcoming, and healthy environment for LGBTQ+ communities in West Michigan by increasing wellness and prosperity levels, visibility, acceptance, support, and access to resources. Your grant application must be submitted online through [Grant Central](#) by **Monday, April 22nd 2024, by 5pm.**

Included in these guidelines, you will find:

- 2024 Grant Application Timeline
- Background and Context
- Focus Areas
- Eligibility
- Submission Process
- Application Questions
- Reporting Requirements
- Resources and Contact Information

### TIMELINE SNAPSHOT



A link to the 2022 community listening report and [registration](#) for the application information session is available at [GRFoundation.org/LGBTQFund](http://GRFoundation.org/LGBTQFund).



## BACKGROUND and CONTEXT

Our LGBTQ Fund knows that building deep relationships with communities most impacted by inequity must be at the core of our work and seeks their guidance in identifying and implementing relevant solutions to address critical issues. In the summer of 2022, we began what will be ongoing engagement with a variety of folks in local LGBTQ+ communities, which informed the current request for proposals and application process. These voices reaffirmed the need for us to center work led by LGBTQ+ folks, especially LGBTQ+ communities of color and LGBTQ+ youth, as well as to support community groups, projects, and movements that exist outside of traditional nonprofit structures and organizations.

In 2022, Our LGBTQ Fund received 21 applications totaling \$907,574 in requests. The fund had \$100,000 to award during that grant cycle. Of those 21 applications, 4 organizations were awarded – 2 of them at 100% of their requested amount, and the other 2 at partial funding. 2 of the 4 organizations funded were direct cash transfer/direct giving projects. You can learn more [here](#).

Our LGBTQ Fund operates from a belief that LGBTQ+ communities are not a monolith. In the United States, people are impacted by oppressive systems based on gender, gender identity, and sexual orientation that intersect with those based on race and ethnicity, disability, class, age, and other forms of discrimination in ways as unique as each individual (learn more about intersectionality [here](#)). Put another way, the experiences and challenges of a white, cis-gender gay man might be very different than those of a Black transgender woman, even though both might identify as part of an LGBTQ+ community. There are many groups and organizations already serving LGBTQ+ communities, and we seek to partner with those that align with the goals and values of both Our LGBTQ Fund and Grand Rapids Community Foundation as a whole. We recognize that our resources are limited, and we believe that meaningful community change, defined by those most impacted by inequity, can only be achieved through strong collaboration with organizations, community groups, and individuals representing a variety of intersecting identities.

Our work is also informed by volunteer advisory committee members who lead decision-making for Our LGBTQ Fund, including recommendations for grant awards. This committee is made up of LGBTQ+ community members and allies representing a range of ages, races and ethnicities, and life and professional experience. You can view the list of committee members on [our website](#), and connect with us if you are interested in serving in the future.

We expect that our grantmaking approach will evolve as we continue to learn and grow, and we know there will be moments when we fall short of our goals. We commit to actively and regularly seeking feedback on ways to improve our practice and better serve our community. Opportunities for engagement with Our LGBTQ Fund throughout this grant cycle are outlined in the timeline above.



## FOCUS AREAS

Up to \$100,000 will be awarded for programming that addresses [social determinants of health](#) for LGBTQ+ communities. SDOH are the environmental conditions in which people live, work, and play that impact health and quality-of-life outcomes. Proposals addressing SDOH may include (but are not limited to):

- Increasing access to housing for LGBTQ+ communities, especially LGBTQ+ communities of color and LGBTQ+ youth
- Navigating and accessing physical and mental health services, especially for transgender and nonbinary communities, including identity and gender-affirming care
- Opportunities for wealth building, including the creation of mutual aid spaces and direct giving, entrepreneurship, and leadership development by and for LGBTQ+ communities, especially LGBTQ+ leaders of color
- Social, cultural, or recreational activities that strengthen support networks and a sense of belonging and/or amplify the voices and experiences of LGBTQ+ communities, especially LGBTQ+ communities of color and LGBTQ+ youth
- Research and data collection around key issues impacting LGBTQ+ communities, especially communities of color and LGBTQ+ youth
- Community organizing and/or advocacy efforts for access to any of the areas listed above
- Additional examples [here](#)

While consideration will be given to all applications, in alignment with the Community Foundation's values and North Star, priority will be given to proposals that:

- Come from organizations or community groups led by people of color (defined as a majority in three or more of the following categories: founder, executive director, internal leadership team, staff, volunteers, and board of directors)
- Center LGBTQ+ communities, especially LGBTQ+ communities of color and LGBTQ+ youth, in the co-creation and co-implementation of proposed programming or services
- Demonstrate specific efforts to serve LGBTQ+ communities of color and/or LGBTQ+ youth (communities that are [disproportionately impacted](#) by housing instability, unemployment, exposure to violence, and accessing physical and mental healthcare and social services)
- Include collaborative partnerships among multiple organizations or community groups

## ELIGIBILITY

Community organizations and groups, whether they are 501c3s or are willing to obtain a fiscal sponsor (also called a fiduciary, which is an organization with the legal structure to accept grant funds on your behalf), and government entities (including schools) may apply for grants for programs that benefit LGBTQ+ communities in Kent, Ottawa, and Allegan counties. If you need a fiscal sponsor and do not currently have one, reach out to us for support as soon as possible. This does not disqualify you from submitting a grant application. Eligible organizations do not discriminate in hiring staff or providing services based on race, gender, religion, marital



status, sexual orientation, age, national origin, or disability. Applications from religious organizations for non-religious purposes will be considered.

Proposed projects or programs should begin on or after June 1, 2024. Applications for projects up to two years in length (through May 31, 2026) are welcome. Applications will be accepted for up to \$100,000, including for collaborative projects.

## **SUBMISSION PROCESS**

Your grant application must be completed online through [Grant Central](#). If you (or your fiscal sponsor) have not used Grant Central before, please [contact us](#) as soon as possible so we can ensure you can access the portal when you are ready to apply. Complete applications require the submission of a project budget (reach out to us if you need help developing this) and a brief description of how the requested funds will be used, racial and gender demographic information for clients, staff, board, and volunteers of the applying organization (or of the community group doing the work, not the fiscal sponsor), and responses to the questions below. Please note that additional information may be requested after committee application review.

We recognize that character and word limits create time-intensive labor for applicants required to reduce or feel pressured to stretch their responses to fit. We also recognize that there are those who appreciate some level of direction and want to be considerate of our volunteer committee members reviewing each proposal. As such, the word counts associated with each question are suggestions- we simply encourage you to explain your work as clearly and concisely as possible. You may complete a traditional written application or submit a video, which is encouraged; it is always nice to put a face to the organization/project. If you choose a video submission, please state the application question you are addressing before giving your response, and note that you will still need to respond to question 1 (a – d) on the Project Narrative tab, submit a budget, and provide demographic information. The application will require a response to questions 2 – 7 on the Project Narrative tab. If these questions were addressed in your video, please respond to each one with “see video.” We suggest that video applications be up to five-eight minutes in length.



## APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Please answer the questions to the best of your ability and as it applies. If you find that a question doesn't apply to your organization and/or project, briefly state why. Our goal is to learn about your organization, your project, project goals, and the impact it will have on our LGBTQ+ communities as it aligns with our focus areas. If you have questions about the application process, you can [register for the application information session](#), which is also available at [GRFoundation.org/LGBTQFund](http://GRFoundation.org/LGBTQFund).

- 1) Grand Rapids Community Foundation is committed to creating a community that is working to eliminate inequities and is anti-racist. We seek partners who share in this commitment and demonstrate practices that disrupt the conditions that hold racism in place.
  - a) Is anyone excluded from services, employment, or volunteer participation based on their age, ability, economic circumstance, education, race, criminal record, ethnicity, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, religion, spiritual beliefs, marital status, national origin, or veteran status? *(Yes or No)*
  - b) Does your organization have an equity statement that communicates your pursuit of anti-racist practices and aspirations toward equity? *(Yes or No)*
  - c) Identify the categories in which people of color are a majority at your organization: founder(s), executive director, leadership team, board of directors, volunteers, staff *(check boxes)*  
Is your organization led by people of color (defined as having people of color as a majority in three or more of the categories above)? *(Yes or No)*
  - d) While discrimination based on sexual orientation is illegal in the state of Michigan, there are still many folks who don't feel safe disclosing this information in the workplace. However, we value work led by those most impacted, and for this fund that includes LGBTQ+ communities. To the best of your ability, please identify the categories in which LGBTQ+ people are a majority: founder, executive director, leadership team, board of directors, volunteers, staff, and communities served. *(check boxes)*
- 2) Describe the proposed project or program, including which social determinate(s) of health it will address, specific LGBTQ+ communities served, and timeline. *(appx 300 words)*
- 3) How do you define success for this proposal, and what signals will confirm you have accomplished your goals? *(appx 200 words)*
- 4) How do you incorporate the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion into the operations of your organization or community group? For example, do you include the perspectives of the communities you serve in program design and delivery, or do you have specific equity policies or hiring practices that inform your work? Can you give examples of how your organization demonstrates these equitable practices internally? *(appx 300 words)*
- 5) How have LGBTQ+ community members (especially LGBTQ+ communities of color) been engaged in creating the proposed project or program, and what leadership role will they play throughout implementation and evaluation? *(appx 200 words)*



- 6) We believe that collaboration strengthens work through the diversity of thought, creativity, and relationship-building it facilitates. Please describe the roles of your organizational partners. If you do not currently collaborate with other groups or organizations, please share why this approach does not advance your mission. *(appx 150 words)*
  
- 7) How does this proposal disrupt the root causes or underlying conditions (policies, practices, institutions, culture, and power) that hold inequitable outcomes for LGBTQ+ communities in place? If it does not do so, in what other ways does your organization or community group address this? *(appx 200 words)*
  
- 8) Is there any other information or feedback you would like to share with us? *(appx 150 words)*

## **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

We seek to minimize extractive reporting burdens on our grant partners. You may complete a traditional written report or participate in a 30-minute meeting with a program officer and/or LGBTQ Fund committee members within two months of the end of your grant period. Both options require submission of a final budget through Grant Central. Written and meeting reports include sharing the successes and lessons learned throughout the grant period (recognizing that conditions may be different than when you applied and that your definition of success may have shifted) and feedback about the grant process as a whole. You will also be invited to share photos, videos, or other visual materials if they are available as a way for us to celebrate and amplify your critical community work. To build transparency and community accountability, summaries of your work will be made available throughout our ongoing engagement processes.

## **NEED HELP?**

We want to ensure that you feel supported in the process of applying for grant funding at Grand Rapids Community Foundation. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us!

- For questions related to the content of your proposal, eligibility requirements, or identifying a fiscal sponsor, contact Chantal Pasag, program officer, at 616.284.4924 or [CPasag@GRFoundation.org](mailto:CPasag@GRFoundation.org)
- For technical assistance with the online application, call Keri Jaynes, grants manager, at 616.284.4911 or email [KJaynes@GRFoundation.org](mailto:KJaynes@GRFoundation.org).
- For more information about Grand Rapids Community Foundation and Our LGBTQ Fund, please visit [GRFoundation.org/OurLGBTQFund](http://GRFoundation.org/OurLGBTQFund).