

Access Camps

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS



ABOUT

Grand Rapids Community Foundation requests funding proposals from programs aligned with our goal to ensure youth in Kent County have equitable access to summer camp experiences. Day and overnight camp programs that provide academic, social, and/or recreational opportunities are invited to **apply by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, June 26, 2026.**

Funding can be used to support scholarships, reduce program fees, cover transportation expenses for participants, and for program enhancements that ensure an inclusive and welcoming experience with a special focus on youth of color, youth who identify as LGBTQ+, and youth with disabilities. Consideration will also be given for expenses related to targeted outreach efforts to attract specific populations of focus.

Applicants are encouraged to apply for up to three years of summer programming (2027, 2028, and 2029), as additional opportunities to apply for Access Camps funding are not expected to be offered over the next three years. Grants for overnight camps are expected to range from \$15,000 to \$40,000 annually (\$45,000 - \$120,000 total), while day camps are expected to range from \$2,500 to \$20,000 annually (\$7,500 - \$60,000 total). Organizations providing both overnight camp and day camp experiences may combine their requests into one application.

A total of \$450,000 is expected to be awarded for overnight camps and \$175,000 for day camps.

Summer camps meeting the following criteria are eligible to apply:

- Serve youth from Kent County who are in or entering 4th - 12th grades
- Meet minimum program duration
 - Overnight camps: minimum of two overnight stays
 - Day camps: minimum of three consecutive days
- Serve youth whose families live at or below 200% of the poverty level in Kent County
- Are inclusive and welcoming to youth who identify as LGBTQ+
- Are inclusive and welcoming to all religious and spiritual beliefs
- Are accessible for youth with disabilities
- Are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit or willing to obtain a fiscal sponsor.

We anticipate receiving more requests than the \$450,000 available for overnight camps and \$175,000 for day camps. **Past recipients are not guaranteed to receive funding.** Access Camps is highly competitive and will prioritize summer camp partnerships that:

- Are intentional about serving Kent County youth of color, youth who identify as LGBTQ+, and/or youth with disabilities
- Create welcoming and safe spaces for all
- Are responsive to the needs of families with limited financial resources or have other barriers to participation in summer experiences (e.g., transportation)
- Have staff/volunteers that reflect the population they serve
- Are accredited camps or those working toward accreditation (only applies to overnight camps).

APPLICATION PROCESS

Grant applications must be submitted electronically using the [online portal](#) by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, June 26th. New applicants must create a new organization account. All applicants must review their Organization Profile, which requires a listing of board members, organization description, primary contact, as well as current and last year's annual budget amounts. Applications require a brief project description, project start and end dates, a project budget, demographic information for participants, staff, board, and volunteers, and responses to the questions below. Applications also require uploaded financial documentation. Examples of what you can provide include internal financial statements (balance sheet, cash flow statement, etc.), Form 990, or audited financial statements.

Decisions will be announced by the end of September. Partnerships may range from one to three years in length. The initial payment will be processed upon acceptance of the grant agreement. For two and/or three-year partnerships, payments in 2028 and 2029 will be made following the submission and review of a grant report. The report will ask you to share your successes and lessons learned from the previous summer, budget updates, and participant demographics.

NEED HELP?

We want to ensure that you feel supported in applying for grant funding at Grand Rapids Community Foundation. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us! For the best possible assistance, please consider connecting with us well in advance of the application deadline.

- 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 email CPasag@GRFoundation.org.
- For technical assistance with the online application, contact Keri Jaynes, grants manager, at 616.284.4911 or email KJaynes@GRFoundation.org.
- For more information about Grand Rapids Community Foundation, please visit GRFoundation.org.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Grand Rapids Community Foundation is committed to creating a community that is working to eliminate inequities and is anti-racist. We seek partners that share this commitment and demonstrate practices that disrupt the conditions that hold inequities in place. Please help us learn how you intentionally create equitable camp experiences by providing the following information.

The application includes three equity and inclusion questions requiring long-form responses, which can be answered in written or video format. We know word limits can add extra work, and that some guidance helps both applicants and our volunteer reviewers. Word counts are suggestions only; we simply encourage you to explain your work as clearly and concisely as possible. Applicants who choose to respond to the long-form questions in a single video response must state each question before providing a response, not exceed 10 minutes in length, and submit a shareable link with transcription through Google Drive or YouTube.

General Information

- Identify the program as an overnight camp or day camp. If applying as an overnight camp, please indicate if the camp is accredited.
- Does your overnight camp experience provide a minimum of two overnight stays or day camp provide a minimum of three consecutive days? (Yes or No)
- Share your website, social media, and/or upload camp brochure, if available.

Equity and Inclusion

- Does your organization have an equity statement communicating your pursuit of anti-racist practices and aspirations toward equity? (Yes or No)
- **Respond to the following long-form questions in written or video format:**
 - Detail the specific efforts made in Kent County to recruit, enroll, and ensure attendance and a sense of belonging for youth of color, youth who identify as LGBTQ+, and/or youth with disabilities (approximately 300 words).
 - Explain how the program identifies and is accessible to participants who might require accommodation for a disability (approximately 300 words).
 - Explain how the program ensures it is inclusive to youth who identify as LGBTQ+ (approximately 300 words).
- Does the program or organization align with any particular religious or spiritual belief system? (Yes or No)
 - If yes, describe the practices employed to ensure youth who do not share this religious or spiritual belief system experience a sense of belonging (approximately 300 words).

Demographics

- Provide data from 2025:
 - Racial demographic information for summer camp participants, staff, board, and volunteers.
 - Total number of summer camp participants
 - Number of participants from Kent County
 - Number of Kent County participants receiving financial assistance
 - Number of Kent County participants receiving accommodation due to disability

Budget

- Explain how Access Camps funds will be used, including details on how financial assistance and transportation support will be determined and administered, if applicable.
- Applicants must complete the budget template provided. If available, applicants may also upload a supplemental budget document to provide additional detail for review.