

BLACK LEGACY FUND

2022 GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

We invite you to consider applying for funding available through the Black Legacy 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.” Black Legacy Fund, formerly known as African American Heritage Fund, builds on the legacy of giving in the Black community. The fund exists as a demonstration of self-determination for Black Grand Rapids to support programs, leaders, and organizations to increase opportunity and wealth; to provide a platform for large systemic inequities to be recognized and addressed; to deepen and grow relationships and social capital; and to support the actualization of and access for Black people in greater Grand Rapids. Your grant application must be submitted online through [Grant Central](#) by December 23, 2022.

Included in these guidelines, you will find:

- 2022 Grant Application Timeline
- Focus Areas
- Eligibility
- Submission Process
- Application Questions
- Reporting Requirements
- Resources and Contact Information
- Background and Context

TIMELINE SNAPSHOT



A more detailed timeline, including a link to the community listening report and [registration](#) for the application information session, is available at GRFoundation.org/BlackLegacyFund.



FOCUS AREAS

Up to \$300,000 will be awarded for proposals that uplift Black brilliance and improve Black quality of life through:

- Opportunities for Black wealth building, including the creation of mutual aid spaces, support for entrepreneurship, and/or career exploration or job training for youth
- Leadership development by and for Black communities, including Black youth
- Creating or supporting Black-led social or cultural institutions and enterprises that strengthen support networks, provide a sense of belonging, and/or celebrate Black communities
- Navigation and access to mental health services and supports, including opportunities for rest and wellness, and individual and community healing from generational trauma
- Community organizing and/or advocacy efforts for issues disproportionately impacting Black communities
- Do you have another idea that doesn't fall into one of the above categories? Connect with us to discuss!

While consideration will be given to all applications, priority will be given to proposals that:

- Come from Black-founded organizations or community groups
- Center Black communities, including Black youth, in the co-creation and co-implementation of proposed programming or services
- Include collaborative partnerships among multiple organizations

ELIGIBILITY

Black-led (defined as a majority in two or more of the following categories: founder, executive director/project lead, internal leadership team, staff) and Black-serving 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 Black communities in Kent County. If you would need a fiscal sponsor to be eligible and do not currently have one, reach out to us for support as soon as possible. This does not disqualify you from receiving a grant at this stage. Eligible organizations do not discriminate in hiring staff or providing services on the basis of 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 February 1, 2023. Applications for projects up to three years in length (through December 31, 2025) are welcome. Applications will be accepted for up to \$300,000, including for collaborative projects. They will be reviewed in two categories as determined by request size: (a) applications under \$25,000 and (b) applications of \$25,000-\$300,000.

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 have access to 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 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. You may choose to complete a traditional written application, or to submit a video.

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.

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 submit a budget, demographic information, and respond to Question 1 in Grant Central. Video submissions may be up to six minutes in length, regardless of application amount.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

- 1) 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 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) Is your organization Black-led (defined as having Black folks as a majority in at least two of the four categories below)? *(Yes or No)*

If Yes was selected above, identify the categories in which Black folks are a majority at your organization: founder, executive director, internal leadership team, staff *(check boxes)*
- 2) Describe the proposed project or program, including which focus area it will address, specific Black 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 are the people most affected by your project included in leadership, design, implementation, and evaluation of your project? *(appx 200 words)*
- 5) Is there any other information or feedback you would like to share with us? *(appx 150 words)*

Applications requesting \$25,000 - \$300,000 require responses to the following additional questions:



- 6) How does this project address the issues that prevent Black communities from flourishing and experiencing joy? (appx 200 words)
- 7) We know that often in this work, community and the relationships we build with one another are what helps us get through. We all hold a collective responsibility to take care of each other. What existing relationships or partnerships are important to your project? (appx 150 words)
- 8) Beyond the requested grant funds, are there other resources, information, skills, relationships, or partnerships that would help support your proposed project or program? (appx 150 words)
- 9) Our name, Black Legacy Fund, recognizes the importance of legacy and honoring those who came before us and our future generations. In an ideal world with unlimited access to resources, what would your work look like in 5-10 years? What legacy do you want to leave? (appx 150 words)

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

We seek to minimize extractive reporting burdens on our grant partners. Reporting requirements will be centered on how we can celebrate your work. Options may be a traditional written report, a meeting with our staff and committee members, a debrief meeting with all our grant partners, or something else within two months of the end of your grant period. We will also ask for a submission of a final budget through Grant Central. We aim that the reporting process can be a collaborative effort where you can share what success looks like for you and lessons learned, and also have the opportunity to share feedback with us about application, reporting, or the grant process in general. You would 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.

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 Erika VanDyke, program officer, at 616.454.1751 or EVanDyke@GRFoundation.org.
- For technical assistance with the online application, call Keri Jaynes, grants manager, at 616.284.4911 or email KJaynes@GRFoundation.org.
- For more information about Black Legacy Fund, contact Danah Montgomery, community giving officer, at 616.284.4907 or DMontgomery@GRFoundation.org.
- For more information about Grand Rapids Community Foundation, please visit GRFoundation.org.

BACKGROUND and CONTEXT

Black Legacy Fund knows that building deep relationships with Black communities 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 Black communities, which informed the current request for proposals and application process. These voices reaffirmed the need for us to center work led by Black communities, including Black youth, as well as to



support community groups, projects, and movements that exist outside of traditional nonprofit structures and organizations.

Black Legacy Fund knows that there is much richness and diversity within Black communities. We know that within the African diaspora there are folks impacted by oppressive systems based on race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, language ability, documentation status, disability, class, age, religion, and other forms of discrimination that intersect in ways as unique as each individual (learn more about intersectionality [here](#)). We seek to partner with community groups and organizations that align with the goals and values of both Black Legacy Fund and Grand Rapids Community Foundation as a whole. While we recognize that our resources are limited, we seek to work with groups and organizations most impacted by oppressive systems and honor the various lived experiences of Black communities in Kent County.

Our work is also informed by a volunteer advisory committee that leads decision making for Black Legacy Fund, including recommendations for grant awards. This committee is made up of a diverse group of Black community members. 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 that there will be moments where we fall short of our goals. We commit to actively and regularly seeking feedback on ways for us to improve our practice and better serve our community. Opportunities for engagement with Black Legacy Fund throughout this grant cycle are outlined in the timeline above.