

# GRANTMAKING GUIDELINES

# Eligibility Criteria



- Be a nonprofit with 501(c)3 status as determined by the IRS, or groups/projects/collectives that are fiscally sponsored by an organization that has 501(c)3 status as determined by the IRS.
- Located within Allegheny County and/or primarily serve Allegheny County residents (unless otherwise specified in the grant criteria).
- Align with one or more of the Foundation's grantmaking focus areas.

## \* Our Priorities

- Primarily serve high to extreme need communities (as defined by the Allegheny County Community Need Index).
  - Have a demonstrated commitment to advancing social justice as evidenced by its mission and core programs.
  - Have an established history in the communities in which it works.
- Are representative of the communities it serves, including but not limited to, leadership and staff who have lived experience in the community issues that it addresses.
  - Meaningfully integrate the experience and perspectives of the communities that it serves in the design, implementation, evaluation and/or decision-making process for its strategies and/or programs.

## \* Our Priorities - Continued

For 2026, we will also give preference to organizations that reflect the following:

- Have an annual operating budget under \$2 million.
- Have received a grant from the Foundation since 2023.
- Are directly impacted by changes and/or responding to federal policy and/or funding shifts.



# Guidelines

- **Types of Support:**

- **Project Support** - Funds are used to develop and/or implement a specific set of programmatic activities.
- **General Operating Support** - Funds can be used at the discretion of the organization to cover any costs necessary to carry out its mission.
- Average grant size is between \$50,000 and \$75,000.
- Multi-year support up to 2 years
  - Maximum \$200,000

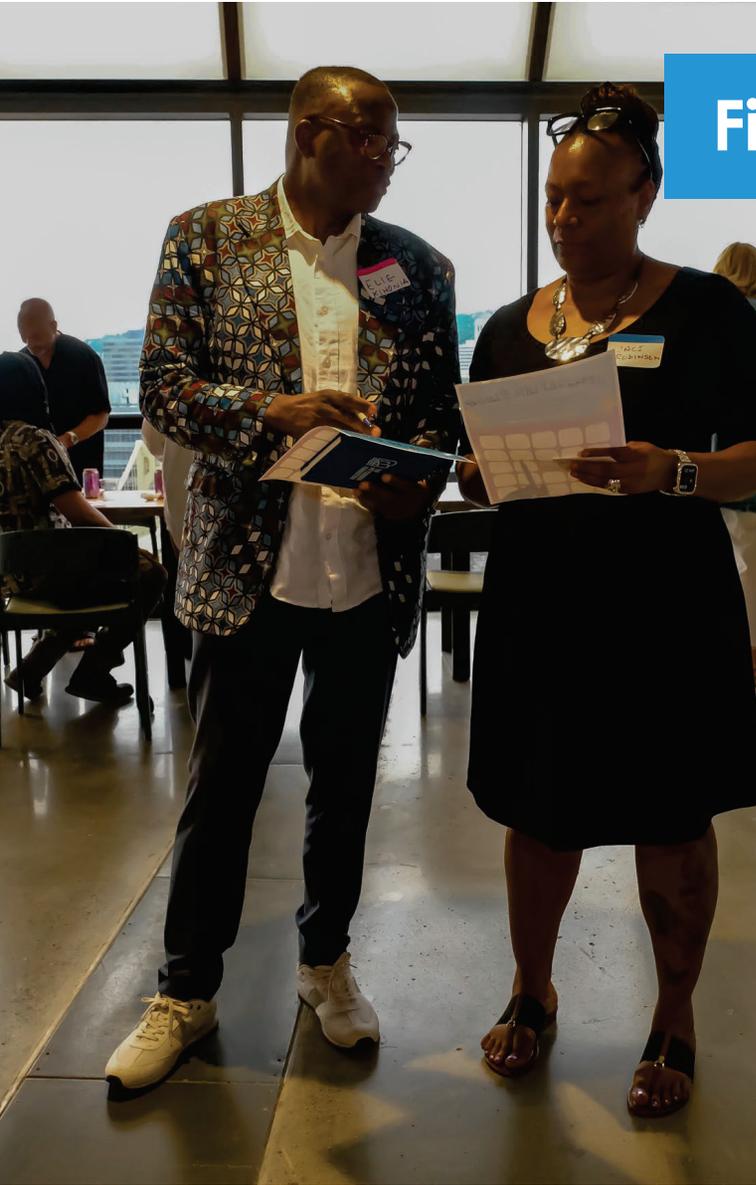
## Eligibility for Operating Support:

- Have been in operation for at least two years.
- Have a mission and core programs consistent with one or more of our grantmaking focus areas.
- Be able to report on the results achieved by its programs.
- Has an executive director or staff person in an equivalent leadership role that has been in place for at least 12 months.
- Have an audit completed within the last two years (if applicable) and/or up-to-date financial records that demonstrate sound financial management

*Applicants using a fiscal sponsor are not eligible to apply for operating support.*

## \* What we do not fund:

- Organizational start-up support.
  - Statewide or national organizations, unless they have an established local office or chapter that meets the above eligibility criteria and priorities.
  - Organizations or projects that expressly advocate for or endorse a specific candidate for elected office.
  - Annual appeals or event sponsorships.
  - Episodic and/or one-time programs and events.
  - Operating expenses for schools/school districts, universities or hospitals.
- Capital expenses and/or campaigns.
  - Endowments
  - Direct funding for individuals (except individual artists).
  - Payments on organizational debt.
  - Costs and activities that are completed before the grant has received a decision from our board.
  - University overhead costs.
  - Single-disease support organizations.
  - Educational scholarships.
  - Academic Research.



# Fiscal Sponsorship Requirements

## Sponsored project/organization must:

- Have an established relationship with a fiscal sponsor.
- Include a copy of a fully executed fiscal sponsorship agreement with their submitted application.
- Specify any administrative fees assessed by the fiscal sponsor organization in the budget.
- **Sponsored project/organization(s) are not eligible for Operating Support.**

## Fiscal sponsor organization must:

- Have a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable status.
- Have an operating history of at least 5 years.
- Be current with all state and federal reporting requirements, such as filing of 990 forms.
- Have capacity to exercise expenditures responsibly, ensuring that the grant is used only for the purpose for which it was made.

## OUR FOCUS AREAS

BASIC NEEDS

ARTS &  
CULTURE

EQUITY &  
SOCIAL JUSTICE

ENVIRONMENT

ECONOMIC  
MOBILITY

## OUR FOCUS AREAS: BASIC NEEDS

**Our Goal:** We seek to improve the stability of low-income residents by supporting direct assistance to obtain food, housing, health care, mental health support, child care, education, and employment.

Across our basic needs grantmaking, we are committed to expanding knowledge of, improving access to, and improving coordination among local resources and human services.

Food Access

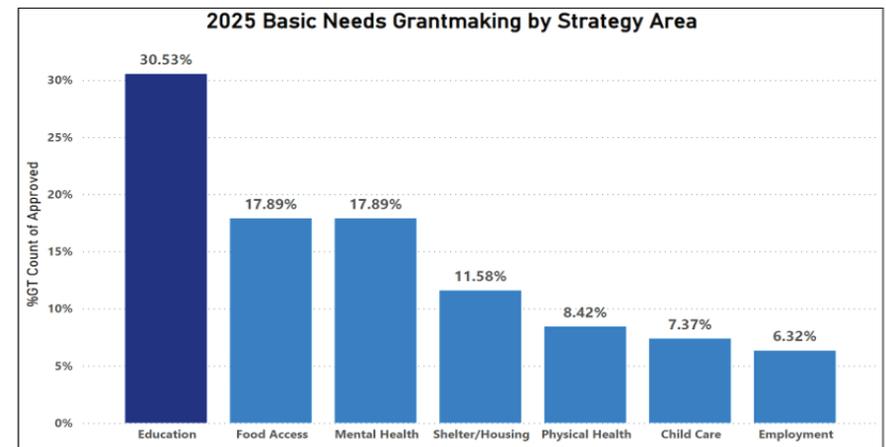
Child Care

Housing

Employment

Education

Physical &  
Mental Health



# OUR FOCUS AREAS: ARTS AND CULTURE

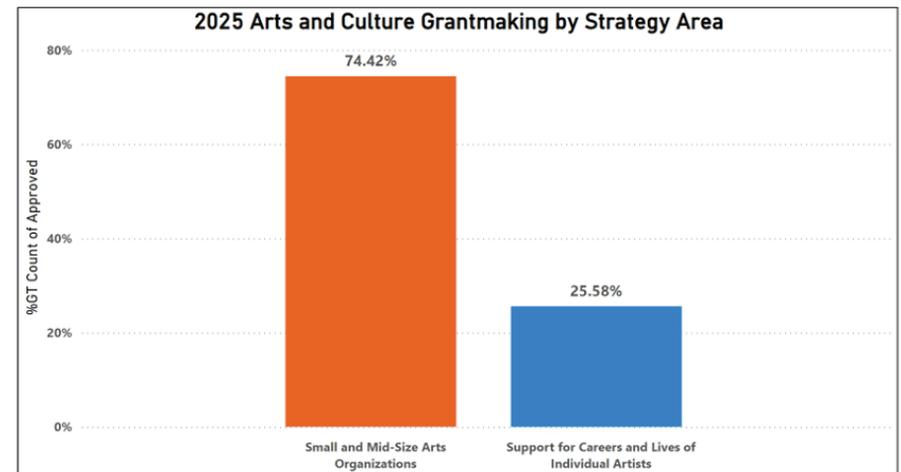
**Our Goal: To strengthen small to mid-sized arts organizations and support individual artists by fostering a diverse, healthy and just arts ecosystem.**

We seek to support organizations producing and presenting art in any discipline, such as, but not limited to:

- **Concert/Performance/Theatrical Presentation.**
- **Creation of New Work/Commissioning.**
- **Curation/Exhibition.**
- **Residencies.**
- **Arts Education Programs.**
- **Cultural Activities.**

Support for Small  
to Mid-sized Arts  
Organizations

Supporting the  
Careers and Lives  
of Individual  
Artists



# OUR FOCUS AREAS: EQUITY & SOCIAL JUSTICE

**Our Goal:** We seek to support civic participation and community organizing to achieve policy changes.

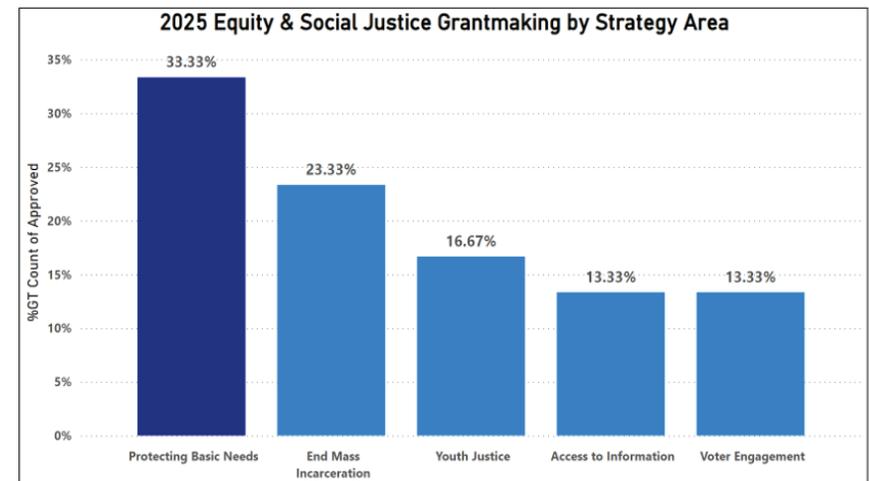
Our equity and social justice grantmaking places strong emphasis on leadership by individuals who have been directly impacted by systemic injustice, as we believe that they are best positioned to propose solutions that remove barriers that impeded their ability to thrive.

## Civic Participation

- Voter Engagement
- Access to Information

## Community-Driven Solutions

- Protecting Basic Needs
- End Mass Incarceration
- Youth Justice



# OUR FOCUS AREAS: ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

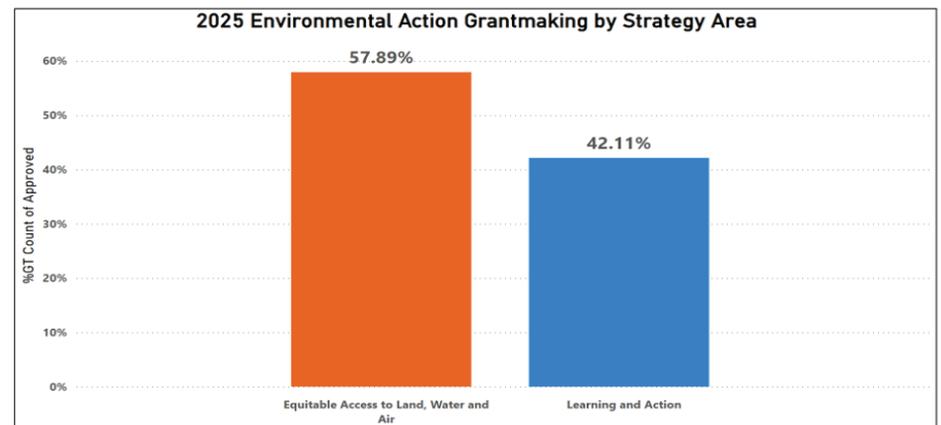
**Our Goal:** We seek to help communities at risk of environmental harm and prevent exposure.

Our environmental action grantmaking prioritizes support for projects, initiatives and collaborations that center communities in environmental decision-making and amplify the intersectional nature of working to protect the health of our communities and the preservation of our environment. We seek to strengthen community resilience and adaptation in response to a changing climate.

**Note:** For 2026 Environmental Action grantmaking will be by invitation only.

Equitable  
Access to Land,  
Air, Water

Learning to  
Action



# OUR FOCUS AREAS: ECONOMIC MOBILITY

**Our Goal: We seek to reduce the wealth gap in Allegheny County.**

We understand that both programmatic- and policy-level interventions are needed for low-income families and communities to build financial security and increase economic mobility.

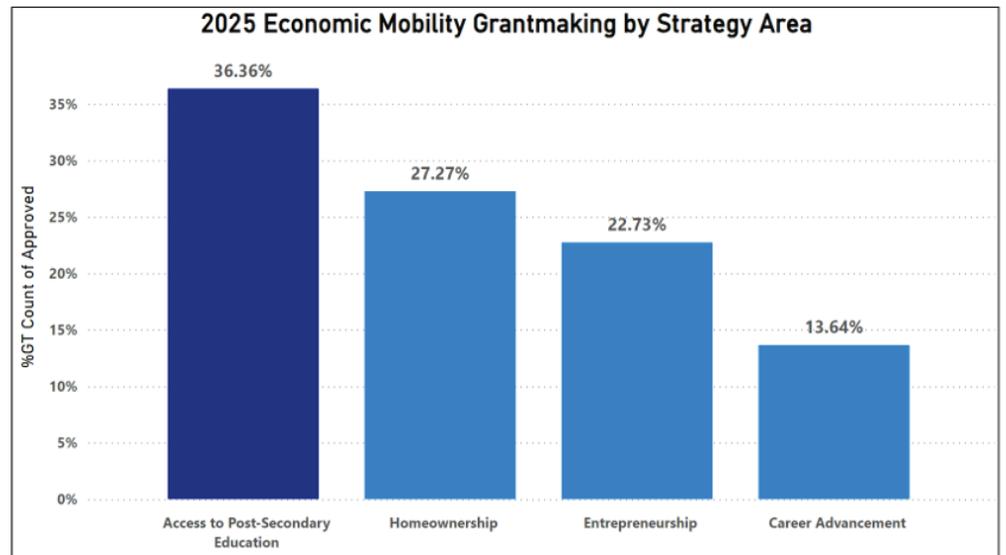
*Note: For 2026 Economic Mobility grantmaking except Access to Post-Secondary Education will be by invitation only.*

Access to Post-Secondary Education

Career Advancement

Homeownership

Entrepreneurship



# Other Grant Opportunities



## CURRENT OPPORTUNITIES

- **Raymond C. & Martha S. Suckling Fund.**
  - To support the lives of low-income residents in Sewickley and surrounding communities.
  - Demonstrate service to residents in Sewickley, Aliquippa, Ambridge, Haysville, Leetsdale, McKees Rocks, and Coraopolis communities.
- **Serving Seniors in Allegheny County**
  - To support organizations that help older adults to live as independently as possible with safety and dignity.

## SPECIAL INITIATIVES

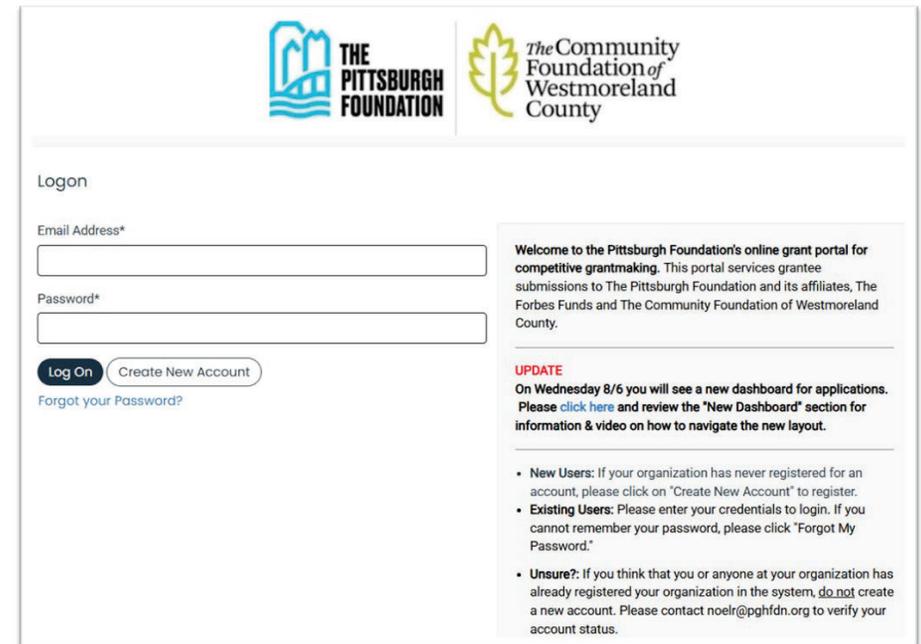
- **Basic Needs:**
  - Small and Mighty – Invitation-only to 2024 grantees only on a two-year cycle.
- **Arts and Culture:**
  - Advancing Black Arts in Pittsburgh – **Modified Timeline.**
- **Philanthropic Resources Intake form – On hiatus until February 2026.**

# HOW TO APPLY

# Online Grant Portal

To access the online grant portal click on Apply For a Grant on The Pittsburgh Foundation's website - [www.pittsburghfoundation.org](http://www.pittsburghfoundation.org)

- ✓ **New User?** - Click Create New Account to create a new organizational account if your organization does not already have one.
- ✓ **Not Sure?** - Do not create a new account. To verify if your organization has an account contact Rob Noel at [noelr@pghfdn.org](mailto:noelr@pghfdn.org).
- ✓ **Forgot your password?** - [Click Forgot your Password?](#) to receive an email with a link and instructions for resetting your password. *(Please note that the reset password link is time sensitive and does expire after 15 minutes.)*
- ✓ **Existing User?** - Enter your Email Address and Password to logon to the online grant portal.



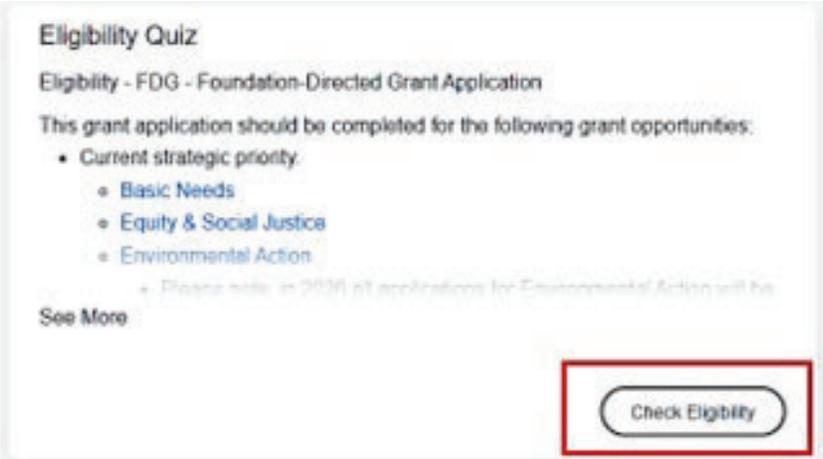
The screenshot shows the login interface for the online grant portal. At the top, there are two logos: 'THE PITTSBURGH FOUNDATION' and 'The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County'. Below the logos, the word 'Logon' is displayed. There are two input fields: 'Email Address\*' and 'Password\*'. Below these fields are two buttons: 'Log On' and 'Create New Account'. A link 'Forgot your Password?' is located below the 'Log On' button. On the right side, there is a welcome message: 'Welcome to the Pittsburgh Foundation's online grant portal for competitive grantmaking. This portal services grantee submissions to The Pittsburgh Foundation and its affiliates, The Forbes Funds and The Community Foundation of Westmoreland County.' Below this is an 'UPDATE' section: 'On Wednesday 8/6 you will see a new dashboard for applications. Please click here and review the "New Dashboard" section for information & video on how to navigate the new layout.' At the bottom, there are three bullet points: 'New Users: If your organization has never registered for an account, please click on "Create New Account" to register.', 'Existing Users: Please enter your credentials to login. If you cannot remember your password, please click "Forgot My Password."', and 'Unsure?: If you think that you or anyone at your organization has already registered your organization in the system, do not create a new account. Please contact noelr@pghfdn.org to verify your account status.'

# Application Features

- **No Letter of Inquiry.**
- **Option to upload application submitted to other funders.**
- **We'll do the homework – Using GuideStar/Candid, websites to learn about organizations.**
- **Built-in budget template.**
- **Simplified final report.**

# Getting Started

- For best results, we recommend you use Google Chrome 14 or higher, Firefox 9 or higher, or Safari 4.
- Once logged in, click the  **Apply** icon at the top of the page.
- Proceed to the Eligibility Quiz - FDG - Foundation-Directed Grant Application section and click on Check Eligibility.



**Eligibility Quiz**  
Eligibility - FDG - Foundation-Directed Grant Application

This grant application should be completed for the following grant opportunities:

- Current strategic priority:
  - Basic Needs
  - Equity & Social Justice
  - Environmental Action

• Please note: in 2016 all applications for Environmental Action will be

[See More](#)

**Check Eligibility**

# Eligibility Quiz

- You will be prompted to answer two eligibility questions:

▼ Eligibility Questions

**Are you located in and/or primarily serve the people of Allegheny County?\***  
*Please Note: For those applicants who are applying for a special grant opportunity that includes geography outside of Allegheny County, please still select yes.*

Yes  
 No

**Are you one of the following:\***

- A 501(c)3 non-profit
- A Church, Mosque, or Ministry
- An entity with a 501(c)3 fiscal sponsor

Yes  
 No

Save Eligibility

Submit Eligibility

- Once you submit and pass the eligibility quiz, you will be able access the 2026 FDG - Foundation-Directed Grant Application by clicking the Apply button.

2026 FDG - Foundation-Directed Grant Application

This grant application should be completed for the following grant opportunities:

- Current strategic priority:
  - Basic Needs
  - Equity & Social Justice
  - Environmental Action
    - Please note: in 2026 all applications for Environmental Action will be

See More

 Closes  
02/03/2026

[Preview](#) [Apply](#)

# Application Preview

## The grant application includes sections on:

- Organizational Background
- Proposal Narrative *or* Upload of an Application Submitted to Another Foundation
- Financial Information and Budgets
- Optional Attachments Upload
- Upload and Link to Work Samples (*For Arts-Related Requests Only*)
- Demographic Information

To preview/print a list of the questions in the application, click on the Question List button in the application to open a PDF of all of the application questions.

> Previous Grants
> Grant Opportunity Selection
> Grant Request Purpose and Amount Requested
> Organizational Background
> Organizational Information
> Grant Type
> Proposal Narrative
> Evaluating and Measuring Progress
> Financial Information
> Financial Statements
> Other Attachments
> Demographic Information
> Length of Application

## Required Fiscal Sponsor Information

- **Fiscal Sponsor** - If using a fiscal sponsor, you will need to provide the following information in your application regarding your fiscal sponsor:
  - Organization Name
  - Federal ID Number
  - Contact Name
  - Contact Email
  - Audited Financial Statement
  - Operating Budget
  - Fiscal Sponsor Agreement Letter
    - Letter must not be more than 2 years old.
    - Applications will not be considered without a fiscal sponsor letter that has been signed and dated by both authorized parties.

# Application Overview

Organizational Background

**Organizational Mission Statement\***  
What is your organization's mission statement?

2,500 characters left of 2,500

**Previous Accomplishments\***  
Please provide a brief summary of organizational and/or programmatic success that has been achieved in the past five years.

2,500 characters left of 2,500

**Organizational Information\***  
Is there publicly available, up-to-date information about your organization's mission, history, programs and impact that we can access to learn more about your work (i.e., on a website or nonprofit search platform that does not require a paid subscription)?

Yes  
 No

Organizational Background Detail

**Where can this information be found?\***

GuideStar/Candid  
 Your website  
 Other

If you selected other, please list.

## Organizational Background

- Application feature allows applicants the *option* to direct our Staff to already publicly available organizational information.
- We encourage applicants to complete and update their GuideStar/Candid profile regularly to provide the most accurate and current information.

# Application Overview

## Proposal Narrative

- Applicants have the *option* to upload an application that has been previously submitted to another foundation for the same project in the last six months.

∨ Proposal Narrative

**Proposal\***  
Organizations are now permitted to upload an application that has been submitted to another foundation for the same purpose in place of completing the support request section. The application must be no more than six months old. LOIs or Inquiry forms will not be accepted. Your uploaded application should be no more than 25 pages.  
If your organization has submitted a grant application and/or request to another foundation for the same purpose in the past six months, would you like to use it for this application?

Yes ←  
 No

∨ Completed Application

**Completed Application\***  
Please upload your completed application here.  
\* Please submit full applications. Letters of inquiry will not be accepted as a full proposal.  
\* Do not upload applications that are more than 25 pages.

[5 MIB allowed]

**Recent Changes\***  
If applicable, please describe any relevant changes that have occurred since this application was written. If there are no changes, please enter N/A.

5,000 characters left of 5,000

# Strategic Plan Area Strategy and Focus Area

▼ Grant Opportunity Selection

**Please select the grant opportunity to which you are applying. You may only select one.\***  
Please [click here](#) to review our current strategic priority areas and other initiatives below.  
*Please note: In 2026 requests in the Economic Mobility (except post-secondary access) and Environmental Action focus areas will be by invitation only. If you have not received a formal invitation from a program officer to apply in these focus areas your application will not be reviewed.*

Current strategic priority.  
 Raymond C. and Martha S. Suckling Fund  
 Serving Seniors in Allegheny County

**Primary Strategic Plan Area Strategy\***  
Please select the primary strategic plan focus area/strategy that applies to your request

**Secondary Strategic Plan Area/Strategy\***  
Please select the secondary strategic plan focus area/strategy that applies to your request (or Not Applicable if none applies)

▼ Grant Opportunity Selection

**Please select the grant opportunity to which you are applying. You may only select one.\***  
Please [click here](#) to review our current strategic priority areas and other initiatives below.  
*Please note: In 2026 requests in the Economic Mobility (except post-secondary access) and Environmental Action focus areas will be by invitation only. If you have not received a formal invitation from a program officer to apply in these focus areas your application will not be reviewed.*

Current strategic priority.  
 Raymond C. and Martha S. Suckling Fund  
 Serving Seniors in Allegheny County

**Primary Strategic Plan Area Strategy\***  
Please select the primary strategic plan focus area/strategy that applies to your request

Basic Needs - Education

**Secondary Strategic Plan Area/Strategy\***  
Please select the secondary strategic plan focus area/strategy that applies to your request (or Not Applicable if none applies)

Not applicable

\*If no secondary strategic plan focus strategy or focus area exists for your request, select "not applicable."

# Use of Funds – General Operating Support & Project Support

## General Operating Support

Use of Funds - General Operating Support

**Use of Funds**  
While operating support funds may be used for any mission-related purpose during the grant period, we are interested in how you believe the funds may be allocated based on what you know about your organizational needs today. Please describe how you will use The Pittsburgh Foundation (TPF) funds requested in this proposal. Please utilize the "other" section to provide any costs associated with your project not listed under "expenses."

**EXPENSES**

	Use of TPF Funds Requested in this Proposal
Salaries (non-consultants)	\$ <input type="text"/>
Independent Contractors (not consultants)	\$ <input type="text"/>
Artist Fees	\$ <input type="text"/>
Consultants and Professional Fees	\$ <input type="text"/>
Payroll Taxes	\$ <input type="text"/>
Fringe Benefits	\$ <input type="text"/>
Travel/Transportation (Car mileage, bus fare for participants, etc.)	\$ <input type="text"/>
Rent and Utilities	\$ <input type="text"/>
Equipment	\$ <input type="text"/>
Supplies	\$ <input type="text"/>
Postage and Printing	\$ <input type="text"/>
Evaluation	\$ <input type="text"/>
Meeting/Workshop Expenses (food, space rental, etc.)	\$ <input type="text"/>
In-Kind Expenses	\$ <input type="text"/>
Other (Please specify in blank fields in the column to the right)	
	A <input type="text"/> \$ <input type="text"/>
	A <input type="text"/> \$ <input type="text"/>
	A <input type="text"/> \$ <input type="text"/>
	A <input type="text"/> \$ <input type="text"/>
	A <input type="text"/> \$ <input type="text"/>
	A <input type="text"/> \$ <input type="text"/>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	\$ <input type="text"/>

## Project Support

Use of Funds - Project Support

**Project Budget Upload\***  
Please upload a copy of your project budget. If you do not currently have this information in a format that can be uploaded, you may use our [budget template](#), which you can access [here](#).  
(Upload a file) (5 MB allowed)

**Use of Funds**  
Please describe how you will use The Pittsburgh Foundation (TPF) funds requested in this proposal. Please utilize the "other" section to provide any costs associated with your project not listed under "expenses." Total expenses should equal the amount of funds requested in this application.  
If you are requesting only one year of funding, please complete the "Year 1 - Use of TPF Funds Requested in This Proposal" column ONLY.  
If you are requesting multi-year funding, please complete both columns (for Year 1 and Year 2).

**EXPENSES**

	Year 1 - Use of TPF Funds Requested in this Proposal	Year 2 - Use of TPF Funds Requested in this Proposal
Salaries (non-consultants)	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Independent Contractors (not consultants)	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Artist Fees	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Consultants and Professional Fees	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Payroll Taxes	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Fringe Benefits	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Travel/Transportation (Car mileage, bus fare for participants, etc.)	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Rent and Utilities	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Equipment	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Supplies	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Postage and Printing	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Evaluation	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Meeting/Workshop Expenses (food, space rental, etc.)	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
In-Kind Expenses	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
Other (Please specify in blank fields in the column to the right)		
	A <input type="text"/> \$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
	A <input type="text"/> \$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
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	A <input type="text"/> \$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
	A <input type="text"/> \$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	\$ <input type="text"/>	\$ <input type="text"/>

## 2026 Deadlines

	<b>Application Deadline</b>	<b>For Funding decisions after*</b>
<b>Spring</b>	February 3, 2026 <i>(by 5 p.m.)</i>	May 13, 2026
<b>Fall</b>	July 15, 2026 <i>(by 5 p.m.)</i>	October 28, 2026

*\*Dates may be subject to change. The Foundation may adjust the timing of grants in consideration for funding.*



## Tips for Success

- **READ the Website! READ the Website! READ the Website!**
- Align application to Foundation priorities and grantmaking focus areas.
- Use data to strengthen your case for support.
- Tell us **HOW** you are going to execute the proposed scope of work.
- Demonstrate that you have the skills, experience, relationships, etc. to do what you have described.
- Upload all requested financial documents, i.e., 990, Profit & Loss Statement, Audit
- Tell us what will be **MEASURABLY** different as a result of the proposed work.
- FOR ARTS: Share best sample work related to the project. Tell the story of the proposed work and its impact.
- Ask for help if you need it, **EARLY!**
- Start your application as **EARLY** as possible and get the application in as **EARLY** as possible!

Lamar Davis – Vision 22 Photography