

FUNDING SOURCES TOOLKIT

Community-Based Organizations and Nonprofit Organizations



Charles Hamilton
**HOUSTON
INSTITUTE**
For Race & Justice
Harvard Law School

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Purpose

At the **Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race & Justice**, our mission is to create pathways to membership and participation for those society has long excluded and find ways to identify and amplify their voices in crafting and implementing public policy.

To fight structural and systemic racism, we envision a society in which residents in communities of color in the United States are supported as they enact programs and propose policy changes to benefit the communities they call home. This is our vision of **community justice**. We believe that addressing upstream determinants of wellbeing—such as housing, economic stability, and education—is vital to mitigate the impact of disinvestment and criminalization which have been wrought in and waged against communities of color in the United States for decades.

The purpose of this document is to provide community-based advocates and organizations who are engaging in community justice with guidance and tools for **resourcing their projects**. All citations in this document are formatted as hyperlinked content.

“This fight for equality of educational opportunity [was] not an isolated struggle. All our struggles must tie in together and support one another. . . . We must remain on the alert and push the struggle farther with all our might.

– Charles Hamilton Houston

Within this document, you will find collected resources on **funding for community-based projects**. Out of the many ways to fund a community project, one of the most common is by applying for grants. Grants are available in both the public sector (federal, state, and local government) and the private sector through foundations, individuals, and institutions. The following is an incomplete list of potential funding sources in these two sectors and instructions on pursuing these funds. The Houston Institute does not endorse the organizations listed in this document.

Resources for Finding Grants

There are two primary avenues for finding grants: (1) searching on the internet to research a specific government department or grantmaking foundation and (2) reaching out to that organization for information on funding opportunities.

By searching on the internet, you can find a wide variety of grants which could be applicable to your project. This method can also act as a starting point to provide you with an understanding of the types of funding which are available. Once you find funding opportunities online, you can call or email the grantmaking organization to ask questions or place yourself on their email list to find out about future opportunities. These connections do not necessarily ensure that your project will be funded by that organization, but will at least notify the funding organization of your interest.

An excerpt from [How to Find State Grants](#) by Dr. Beverly A. Browning, CSPF:

When you receive an alert about a state grant-funding opportunity you're interested in applying for, look for the website link that connects you to the grant application summary and download. Download the complete grant application (including guidelines) and look for the following information:

- **Type of application:** For example, the application may be a hard-copy typed submission or an online electronic submission (e-grant).
- **Due date:** Make sure the due date is manageable and gives you enough time to collect topic-related information and write the application.
- **Who's eligible to apply:** Every grant competition has a section listing the types of grant applicants eligible to apply for funds. If your organization's forming structure (local education agency, nonprofit, and so forth) isn't listed, consider partnering with an eligible applicant. (You may also want to contact the funding agency to clarify any non-published eligible applicants because your organization may be eligible to apply after all.)
- **The number of grants to be awarded:** You may have to call the funding agency's contact person to find out the number of available grants; this information often isn't included in state grant application guidelines.



Because not all funding opportunities are posted on websites, you want to develop connections with agency representatives to find out the inside scoop. Also, ask questions of local elected officials and track down these publicly available grant funds. Be aggressive in asking questions about what funds are available, who can apply, and who the contact person is for the agency re-granting the monies.

Excerpt from "How to Find State Grants" by Dr. Beverly Browning, author of *Grant Writing For Dummies*. This excerpt was edited for typographic and spelling errors.

Online resources for finding and applying to grants:

Rural Health Information Hub

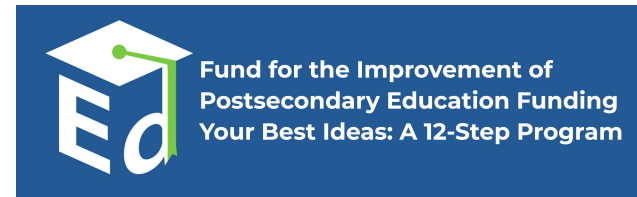
The Federal Office of Rural Health Policy sponsors this clearinghouse of resources regarding rural health. This site contains case studies, rural data visualizations, and an online library of funding sources. This resource is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

Network For Good

Network for Good's nonprofit donor-advised fund uses the Internet and mobile technology to securely and efficiently distribute thousands of donations from donors to their favorite charities each year. The resource provides a library of free tools, ranging from webinars to guides and templates.

Funding Your Best Idea: A 12-Step Program:

While this document was written by the department of education, it provides helpful tips for people filling out any type of grant application.



Nonprofit Hub: Hubcast

Nonprofit Hub is an online community which shares information on nonprofit management. They provide webinars, podcasts, and newsletters related to nonprofit funding.

Public Funding Sources

Local Level

Each local government is structured differently, with a unique distribution of funding and power. The following list contains departments that may exist in your borough, village, town, city, or county. Some jurisdictions have a more robust intermediate-level county formation that may include departments like the Sheriff's Department; the County Commissioner or Board of Freeholders; a County Water Authority or Board, etc. Others manage those functions through municipal or state government.

By reaching out to these departments, you may be able to find information about similar projects occurring in your area, sources of funding available via that department, or information on other funding sources in the area. Some of these structures may exist at the state level in your jurisdiction, not the city or county level.

County Commissioners
Mayor's Office
Office of Community Economic Development
Department of Public Health
Department of Public Works
Department of Civil Rights/ Equal Opportunity
Department of Sustainability
Board of Education

City Council
Public Defender's Office
Department of Commerce
Department of Parks and Recreation
Department of Transportation
Department of Housing
Department of Planning
City Manager

Many of these departments are organized by focus area and it is likely that your project could relate to multiple departments. For example, if you are hoping to start a program to address childhood asthma, you may want to reach out to:

- the department of public health to see other asthma-related projects
- the department of housing because you want to reduce asthma triggers like household mold or pests through a housing quality project
- the department of transportation to advocate for reducing CO₂ emissions, which have been linked to the rising rate of childhood asthma, for public transportation vehicles

This is just one example, but it represents how many of the problems we seek to solve are multi-faceted. To solve these problems will require engagement and investment from different sectors.

Remember, the best ways to find information about funding opportunities in your local government are by looking at their website or contacting their office directly.

State Level

At the state level, a similar variety of departments exists. Many state-level agencies serve to administer federal funds as well as provide state-based programming and grant opportunities.

Governor's Office

State Education Agency/ Department of Education

Department of Commerce

Department of Emergency and Military Affairs

Department of Gaming

Department of Substance Control

Department of Agriculture

Department of Forestry and Fire Management

Commission on the Arts

Department of Corrections

Department of Health and Human Services

Department of Financial Institutions

Department of Land

Department of Insurance

Department of Water Resources

Department of Housing

Similar to the local level, departments of state government are separated into topic-specific departments but your project may be relevant to multiple departments. For example, if your focus is improving the schools in your area, there are several possible funding sources. In Arizona, departments like the Commission on the Arts provide education-related grants for school/community partnerships to improve arts education in schools.

“Most state grants usually award less money and require just as much paperwork as federal grants. But the odds of winning a grant are better at the state level than at the federal level. It’s a no-brainer: The main reason you face better odds is that fewer grant applicants are competing for the state-level monies.”

- Beverly A. Browning, CSPF

Federal Level

The best way to learn about grants available through the federal government is [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). This website is the centralized location where individuals and organizations can apply for funding from the following federal departments:

U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)
U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
U.S. Department of Defense (DOD)
U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)
U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI)
U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)
U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT)
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)
National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)
National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH)
Small Business Administration (SBA)

Social Security Administration (SSA)
U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC)
U.S. Department of Education (ED)
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ)
U.S. Department of State (DOS)
U.S. Department of the Treasury (TREAS)
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)
National Endowment for the Arts (NEA)
National Science Foundation (NSF)
Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS)

[Here are step-by-step instructions for applying for funding through grants.gov](#)

The amount of funding available from each department varies widely. More information about specific grants can be found at the individual department websites.

Private Funding Sources

The landscape of private funding opportunities is constantly in flux. In this section you will find a list of foundations which provide funding through grants to community-based organizations. *This list is organized alphabetically by foundation name or by state, as applicable.*

Large Private Foundations

Ford Foundation

Provides funding nationally and internationally in seven key topic areas: civic engagement and government, creativity and free expression, gender/racial/ethnic justice, internet freedom, natural resources and climate change, just cities and regions, and the future of work.

[Grants Awarded through Ford](#)

Kresge Foundation

Provide grants locally and nationally, to projects specific to Arts & Culture, Education, Environment, Health, and Human Services. Annually Kresge distributes between \$120 million and \$150 million in grant funding.

[Grants Awarded through Kresge](#)

Kellogg Foundation

Provides grants nationally and internationally pertaining to various topics, making consistently generous contributions to Native American Communities and Education-based projects.

[Grants Awarded through WKCF](#)

[Online Application for WKCF Funding](#)

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Provides grants nationally to projects specific to building a nation of health. Three current areas RWJF is funding pertain to Discover and Explore; Spread Model Interventions; and Research and Evaluation.

[Grants Awarded through RWJF](#)

Walmart Foundation

Provides national and international funding for projects relating to opportunity, sustainability, and community.

[Grants Awarded through Walmart](#)

Foundations Dedicated to Social Justice

Edited version of list originally compiled by [Resource Generation](#)

Liberty Hill Foundation (Los Angeles, CA)

Must submit a letter of inquiry to apply for a local grant.

Groundswell Fund (Oakland, CA)

For two specific grants, the Catalyst Fund and the Birth Justice Fund, proposals are accepted by invitation only. Other grants are intended for local and national organizational work.

Urgent Action Fund (Oakland, CA)

Provide grants to organizations located in Central Asia, the Middle East, Eastern or Western Europe, the South Caucasus, Canada, Russia, Turkey, and the United States.

Common Counsel Foundation (Oakland, CA)

Provide grants locally and nationally.

Still We Rise Fund (Oakland, CA)

Provide local funding to organizations working in “hard to fund” areas, including the southern US, the “rust belt” and Rocky Mountain States.

Thousand Currents (Oakland, CA)

Provide grants internationally.

Foundation for Change (San Diego-Tijuana region, CA)

Provide grants locally.

Fund for Santa Barbara (Santa Barbara, CA)

Provide grants locally.

Chinook Fund (Denver, CO)

Provide local grants.

Global Green Grants (Boulder, CO)

Provide grants nationally and internationally.

Security & Rights Collaborative (Washington, D.C.)

Provide grants nationally.

Pillars Fund (Chicago, IL)

Must submit letter of inquiry to apply for local and national grants.

Crossroads Fund (Chicago, IL)

Provide local grants to organizations located in the Chicago metropolitan area, including Northwestern Indiana.

Solidaire’s aligned giving to the Movement for Black Lives

Provide grants locally and nationally.

[Fund for Southern Communities](#) (Decatur, GA)

Only grants funds to organizations located in Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina.

[Hawaii People's Fund](#) (Honolulu, HI)

Provide grants locally.

[Fund for Idaho](#) (Idaho)

Provide grants locally.

[Haymarket People's Fund](#) (Boston, MA)

Provide grants locally to organizations in the New England area.

[Grassroots International](#) (Boston, MA)

Provide grants internationally.

[Headwaters Foundation for Justice](#) (Minneapolis, MN)

Provide grants locally.

[Criminal Justice Initiative](#) (Brooklyn, NY)

Provide grants locally and nationally.

[Borealis Philanthropy](#)

Most of the funds are invitation-only, however are provided locally and nationally.

[Ms. Foundation for Women](#) (Brooklyn, NY)

Provide grants locally and nationally.

[Third Wave Fund](#) (Brooklyn, New York)

Provide grants locally and nationally

[Astraea Lesbian Foundation for Justice](#) (New York City, NY)

Provide grants nationally and internationally.

[Trans Justice Funding Project](#) (Brooklyn, NY)

Provide grants locally and nationally, including Puerto Rico.

[NorthStarFund](#) (New York City, NY)

Provide grants locally, in the five boroughs of New York City or the Hudson Valley.

[McKenzie River Gathering Foundation](#) (Oregon)

Provide grants locally.

[Three Rivers Community Fund](#) (Southwest, PA)

Provide grants locally.

Bread and Roses Community Fund (Philadelphia, PA)

Provide local grants to organizations located in Philadelphia, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Camden counties.

Appalachian Community Fund (Knoxville, TN)

Provide local grants to organizations located in Central Appalachia - East Tennessee, Eastern Kentucky, Southwest Virginia and West Virginia.

Wisconsin Community Fund of Forward Community Investments (Madison, WI)

Provide grants locally.

Social Justice Fund NW (Seattle, WA)

Provide grants locally, to organizations in Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming.

Rapid Response Grants

The organizations listed below provide small grants to address urgent social justice issues in their areas.

Urgent Action (Oakland, CA)

Provide grants to organizations located in Central Asia, the Middle East, Eastern or Western Europe, the South Caucasus, Canada, Russia, Turkey, and the United States.

The San Francisco Foundation (San Francisco, CA)

Provide grants locally to organizations found in the Bay Area region, including Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo counties.

Groundswell Fund (Oakland, CA)

For two specific grants, the Catalyst Fund and the Birth Justice Fund, proposals are accepted by invitation only. Other grants are intended for local and national organizational work.

Emergent Fund

Solidaire and Women Donors Network's new rapid response fund

Third Wave Fund Mobilize Power Fund**Resist** (Boston, MA)

Provide grants locally and nationally.

FundforTransGenerations

Provide grants locally and nationally.

North Star Fund (New York City, NY)

Provide grants locally to organizations located in the five boroughs of New York City, or in Westchester, Rockland, Putnam, Orange, Dutchess, Ulster, Sullivan, Columbia, Greene, Delaware, Rensselaer, Albany and Schoharie counties.

Open Technology Fund (Washington, D.C.)

Provide grants locally and nationally.

New York Immigrant Coalition (New York City, NY)

Provide grants locally to organizations located in New York.

Liberty Hill Foundation (Los Angeles, CA)

Provide grants locally to organizations in Los Angeles County and California generally.

Social Justice Fund NW (Seattle, WA)

Provide grants locally to organizations in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Wyoming.

Proteus Fund

Provides multiple opportunities for funding including the Piper Fund, the Security & Rights Collaborative (supporting Muslim, Arab & South Asian communities), and the Rights, Faith, and Democracy collaborative, among others.

Emergency Fund for Black Lives – Headwaters Foundation for Justice (Minneapolis, MN)

Provide grants locally to organizations in Minneapolis and Neighborhoods Organizing for Change (NOC).

Rapid Response Fund – Foundation for Louisiana (Baton Rouge, LA)

Provide grants locally to organizations in Louisiana.

Deaconess Foundation (St. Louis, MO)

Provide grants locally to organizations working in the metropolitan St. Louis area.

Bread and Roses (Philadelphia, PA)

Provide local grants to organizations located in Philadelphia, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Camden counties.

Social Justice Fund NW (Seattle, WA)

Provide grants locally, to organizations in Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming.

“StillWeRise” (Oakland, CA)

Provide grants locally to organizations located in “hard to fund” areas, including the southern US, the “rust belt” and Rocky Mountain States

Resources for Applying for Grants

GrantSpace by Candid (a project of GuideStar & Foundation Center)

GrantSpace, a branch of Candid, provides easy-to-use, self-service tools and resources to help organizations in the social sector become more competitive and more viable grant applicants. The objective of providing these resources is aiding organizations in obtaining sustainability. GrantSpace provides a free-access educational webinar to make resources more accessible to stakeholders.

Access the webinar on finding grants [here](#).

Foundation Directory Online

Foundation Directory online, a branch of Candid, is a program providing up-to-date knowledge on fundraising tactics. By paying between **\$88 - \$200** you are able to [access data](#) with search functionality, and informatic data visualizations, which include information on more than 140,000 grantmakers, ranging from private & independent foundations, to U.S. Federal Funders, to international foundations.

The Grantsmanship Center

The Grantsmanship Center provides training, publications, and technical assistance to nonprofits intended to capacity-build, as well as a detailed directory of state-by-state grants. The [Project Grantsmanship](#), a training developed by the center, focuses on philanthropic partnerships with the objective of strengthening small- to medium-size organizations dedicated to serving the Los Angeles County community. Qualifying organizations pay between \$200-300 per person depending on the size of the organization, becoming eligible for a [5-day grant proposal writing seminar](#). Included in the training are extensive grant writing strategies.

Council on Foundations

The Council provides tools intended for philanthropic organizations to expand, enhance, and establish sustainable systems to achieve objectives. Resources vary from methods of professional development, impact investment, to fostering more inclusivity among staff, stakeholders, and members. A useful free [tool](#) is the community foundation locator, which maps accredited community foundations across the United States. Additionally, the Council has a free advocacy [toolkit](#) that outlines effective strategies for lobbying and engaging lawmakers.

Acknowledgments

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It was compiled after consultations with five Community-Based Organizations whose direct experiences with accessing grant funding led the authors to conduct a Needs Assessment, tailoring this toolkit to organizational need.

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