

2021 GRANT GUIDELINES

ANNUAL GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT



WWW.HCFDN.ORG

19 RIVERSIDE ROAD RIVERSIDE, ILLINOIS 60546

WHO WE ARE

OUR COMMITMENT

“

To love a place is not enough. We must find ways to heal it.

– Robin Wall Kimmerer, Braiding Sweetgrass

”

The Healthy Communities Foundation has had a clear sense of purpose since we embarked on a journey focused on health equity for our region in 2017. This past year of urgency, loss, and devastation that resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic—with its accompanying waves of growing income inequities, food, and housing insecurity, and exacerbated mental health needs—has crystalized our community-centered grantmaking approach. Alongside the collective reckoning with racism and white supremacy, we have turned inward to reflect on our racial equity and racial justice efforts. Our conversations and deep relationships with community partners have been key for us to adapt to the times, draw on lessons from the past, and invest in an equitable and just future for all our communities.

It is more than just what we fund; it is about how and why we deeply invest in our communities' well-being in the ways we do.

The COVID-19 pandemic has taught us about the necessity of embodying new ways of being. We recognize the inequities and structural barriers that communities in our region have long faced and have deeply experienced this past year are no accident. Instead, they result from how our systems have worked in tandem to prevent individuals and communities from experiencing a complete sense of health and well-being.

If we want our communities to thrive, we need to reimagine our systems, policies, and how we engage community in solutions to address the root causes of our inequities.

We know much has been done in this moment to uplift and expedite critical resources to communities that need them most. Still, we know there is much more to do. Achieving health equity and justice in our region requires us to lean in and acknowledge the history of how we got here. It also requires us to affirm a shared vision of how we move forward to build and yield power to the communities who best understand the issues—leading us to transform and reimagine our health systems to work for all.

As a foundation, we have had the unique opportunity to embed equity and wellness in all aspects of our work and culture. Our staff, board, and key stakeholders have been rooted in or connected to our service region for decades. For us, community has always been at the heart of what we do and how we do it. We know how high the stakes are for us to make an impact. We center our neighbors, our families, our communities in this work.

WHO WE ARE

BEING IN RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH PARTNERS AND OUR REGION

As stewards of community resources within a specific geographic area, we honor our role by grounding ourselves to be in right relationship to this land. This is key for us to be in right relationship to the peoples and communities that reside here, past, present, and future. We seek to understand how individual and community health is rooted in place by recognizing how indigenous peoples and those who experience migration and displacement can have a profound sense of loss of land, language, relationships, food, and culture foundational to health and wellness.

We acknowledge ourselves as settlers – uninvited guests – on the unceded lands of the people of the Council of Three Fires – the Odawa, Ojibwe, and Potawatomi – as well as other Native tribes who made their home here. Our office sits steps away from the Des Plaines River, which was a hub of travel, trade, gathering, and healing.

We often refer to our partners and communities as our local health ecosystem because we recognize our work is interdependent and interconnected with the health of all individuals, organizations, systems and institutions. What impacts one part affects another. To borrow from the indigenous wisdom of reciprocity and mutuality, each piece is as critical as the whole.

Our region is experiencing a lot of change, representing some of the communities most deeply impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic: from four of the top five zip codes in Illinois experiencing the highest infection and mortality rates; to Black, Latinx immigrant and/or undocumented communities overrepresented in the essential workforce and gig economy; to families confronted by the digital divide, limiting access to remote learning, virtual work and telehealth.

Yet, our region is also incredibly resilient. Collectively, we seek to rebuild towards our “next normal” – one that allows all residents to thrive. We are honored to be a trusted partner in our communities towards reimagining a just and equitable future for all.



Desplaines River in Riverside, Illinois
Photo Credit: Tina Ramirez Moon

ABOUT HEALTHY COMMUNITIES FOUNDATION

MISSION

We are a community-informed grantmaking foundation that seeks to measurably improve the health and well-being of individuals, families and communities in our service region by promoting health equity, quality and access.

VISION

We envision that all residents of our communities lead full, health and happy lives and enjoy equal life expectancy.

WHERE WE FUND

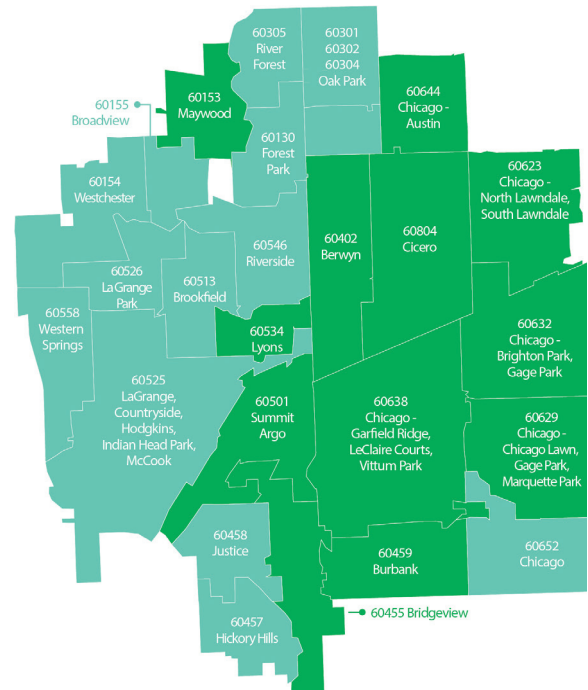
As a health conversion foundation, we fund a geographic region defined by the service area of MacNeal Hospital, from which we received our endowment in 2000. This service region covers a five-mile radius around the hospital and is comprised of 27 zip codes in Chicago and western Cook County suburbs.

LEGACY

We make grants in the primary MacNeal Hospital service area, or what we call our “Legacy” area.

EQUITY

To achieve health equity, we allocate the majority of funding to zip codes that rank lowest in our social determinants of health study, or what we call our “Equity” area (in green).



OUR COMMITMENT TO RACIAL & ETHNIC EQUITY

All residents of our service region, particularly those who live with the greatest health inequities, should have access to resources and opportunities that improve their well-being and create a sustainable quality of life.

Systemic conditions, such as implicit bias and institutional/structural racism, impede those goals and disproportionately affect BILPOC (Black, Indigenous, Latinx, People of Color) communities. We commit to addressing these barriers by being a community-informed and embedded foundation.

WHY WE USE THE TERM “BILPOC”

We use the term “BILPOC” (pronounced “bill-pock”) as a tool to center how Black, Indigenous, and Latinx people have experienced structural racism, cultural erasure, and discrimination in our region. For us, it is a more inclusive term than “people of color”. Yet, it is not without its flaws. We recognize the limitations of using this and other “umbrella” terms as they fall short in referencing the diverse racial and ethnic communities of our region. We also acknowledge how gender, racial, ethnic, and political identities are fluid, complex, and personal.

As identities and social contexts evolve, we remain committed to being in right relationship with our region’s communities. Because the use of “BILPOC” is not appropriate in all instances, we explicitly name communities when we refer to individuals or issues that affect specific groups of people. We look to current demographic and population data to learn more about residents and refine our use of language to be as representative and inclusive as possible.

WHAT WE LOOK FOR IN PARTNERS

We believe in transparency and recognize the time and resources it takes to apply for a grant. Therefore, it is important for us to be clear about what alignment to our grantmaking framework looks like.

COVID-19 has deeply impacted communities in our region, and they will continue to feel the pandemic's impact for a long time. For the next three years, we will focus our grantmaking on an equitable recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

We seek grantee partners that successfully utilize all of the organizational strategies below:

INTERSECTIONAL APPROACHES TO ACHIEVING HEALTH EQUITY

We recognize that health equity issues are complex. Therefore, we look for partners that approach their work with the understanding of how individuals and communities with intersecting identities across race, class, gender, age, and/or ability may experience the compounding impact of structural inequities in various ways.

Partners must demonstrate their work toward ensuring that all residents in our region can have equitable and inclusive access to leading full, happy, and healthy lives. We seek partners that also tailor their programs, services, outreach, and relationship-building in ways that reflect residents' expertise and experience in comprehensive ways.

COMMUNITY-LED

We recognize that community leadership and expertise are necessary to address health and racial inequities, as they are closest to the inequities they aim to address. We seek partnerships with organizations that have existing or emerging pathways where community constituents actively influence decision-making, strategies and/or policies.

EFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL STEWARDSHIP

We seek partners who use data and internal systems to foster learning and encourage accountability in pursuit of racially equitable outcomes and continuous quality improvement. Partner organizations must also demonstrate that their policies and practices reflect organizational and fiscal health.

SYSTEMS CHANGE

We recognize that systems change takes time, and no single organization or strategy can entirely erase the impact of existing inequities. This work requires a deep understanding of the symptoms and the root cause of larger issues. We seek partners with a strong understanding of how existing systems create and maintain those inequities and an ability to articulate how their work contributes to broader efforts in our local health ecosystem.



GRANTMAKING

OUR GRANTMAKING PRIORITIES

All partner organizations must demonstrate that their proposed work aligns with **at least one of the categories below** and has a meaningful footprint in our region or with a core population in our region.

Current and potential partners working in this space must be able to demonstrate:

ACCESS to quality health services

High quality, comprehensive health care services are often out of reach for residents in our region due to systemic racism, high medical costs and/or lack of culturally affirming care.

Innovation to remove physical, financial, and/or cultural barriers to care while also highlighting and engaging on upstream solutions.

ADDRESS social determinants of health

The unfair and avoidable difference in health status means that where people are born, work, live, and age are stronger drivers of health outcomes than individual lifestyle choices and clinical care.

An ability to create more equitable, inclusive, and just communities while meaningfully improving community health by addressing social determinants of health.

ADVOCATE for health policies & systems change

Policy change can address the root causes of health inequities and impact existing structures that perpetuate racism.

An ability to center and cultivate the leadership, expertise and solutions of communities, and individuals that are most impacted by the inequities they seek to address.

AUGMENT knowledge through capacity building

Supporting strategies that facilitate access to relevant and usable local health data for communities and partners can enhance their capacity to make informed health-related decisions and advocate for better policies.

How they have developed intentional partnerships to ensure that public health data can live and belong in communities, and how those relationships have led to community-led inquiry, improved data collection and outcomes reporting.



GRANTMAKING

GRANT ELIGIBILITY

WHO WE FUND

- 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations. Organizations that are not tax exempt may apply with a fiscal sponsor.
- At least 20% of total individuals served by the applying organization must live in our service region. Organizations whose work extends beyond our service area are considered if they demonstrate strong alignment with our grantmaking strategy and implement their work in close partnership with local communities.
- For organizations with operating budgets greater than \$20 million—including but not limited to hospitals and university systems—we will only award Project Support grants for initiatives that demonstrate strategic partnership and strong commitment to local communities in our region.

Please refer to the [FAQs on our website](#) under section “General Operating Support vs. Project Support: Requests From Larger Institutions” for more information.

WHAT WE DO NOT FUND

- Businesses
- Capital campaigns*
- Government Entities
- Individuals
- National organizations not focused on our service region
- Partisan political activities
- Religious activities
- Scholarships
- School Districts & Individual Schools (including parent teacher associations)
- Operating foundations not directly connected to community-based efforts

Generally, we do not fund more than 10% of an operating budget.

*Only capital expenses for materials will be considered for funding (i.e., medical equipment, dental chairs).

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL

We know it takes time and resources to apply for a grant, and we have a small team that reviews applications. The COVID-19 pandemic affirmed the need for us to streamline our application processes further so we can all focus on what matters most—improving our region’s health and well-being.

For this year’s grant cycle, we have a two-stage process to help us more deeply understand your organization and strategies to achieve health equity.

IMPORTANT DATES

STAGE ONE

May 14, 2021
Grant Portal Opens

June 18, 2021
Applications Due

STAGE TWO

June 30, 2021
Notification of Site Visit

July-August 2021
Virtual Site Visits Conducted

Grant decisions and notifications will be released in September 2021.

ONLINE GRANT PORTAL

Please submit your application via our [online grants portal](#).

QUICK TIPS

If you received funding from Healthy Communities Foundation in 2019, your organization has an existing account in our grants management system and will see the funding opportunity on the portal homepage.

New applicants must create an organizational profile before applying.

Applicants should maintain only one account per organization. We understand that staff transitions happen. However, we ask you do not create duplicate accounts.

Please click “Forgot My Password” on the portal homepage if you need a new password.

If the email associated with the account in our system is no longer active, or you are having issues retrieving the password, please contact Claudia Perez, Grants Manager, at cperez@hcfdn.org.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

To help you in your planning, here are the application questions you will find in the grants portal once you are ready to submit the application. You can use this page as a guide to help prepare and draft your responses.

ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

- **Name of Organization**
- **Total Amount Requested**
- **Current FY Budget**
- **Did you receive a grant from Healthy Communities Foundation in 2020? (Y/N)**
- **Issue Focus - We have four funding strategies, but understanding that many approaches are intersectional, please select the strategy or strategies that best reflect your work.**

We recognize that preparing a proposal is no small feat and word limits can be difficult to navigate. In honor of the feedback we have heard from past applicants, we suggest 350 words to 500 words maximum per response.

1. Please describe your core organizational programs and services.

Note: We seek to understand your organization's work as a whole as well as your specific focus in our region. Please focus on highlights that provide a general overview of your work; it is more valuable to be clear and concise rather than to fulfill the word limit. We welcome 'recycled language' from other proposals so long as the response adequately aligns with the question at hand.

2. We recognize that COVID-19 has impacted many organizations' day-to-day programs and operations. If you would like to share additional details about your organization's specific context, including whether any shifts are temporary or long-term, please elaborate here.

3. Please describe your organization's approach(es) to advance health equity in the region.

Note: We want to understand how your programs, policies and strategies aim to address health equity issues for communities in our region. For more information about how we define health equity and how we determine alignment, please refer to our 2021 grant guidelines.

4. Please describe how your proposed efforts emerged from, were informed by, and/or are tailored to the community you serve. How do your programs, policies and strategies develop and/or support community leadership?

Note: We seek to understand the ways your organization has formal and informal structures to seek community insights and/or engage community residents in shaping the solutions aimed to address health equity in our region.

5. Please describe how your organization is representative of the Healthy Communities Foundation region and/or the community served.

Note: We seek to understand if and/or how your organization centers the leadership of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and/or other people of color among your staff and board. Please refer to our 2021 grant guidelines for additional guidance on this question.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS (cont.)

6. How does your organization use new information and lessons learned to inform your approach and definitions of success?
7. (Optional) Please describe a collaborative effort that has been particularly significant, useful and/or energizing to your work. Examples could include policy advocacy, community-wide multi-sector initiatives, and/or issue-specific efforts. Please include the role your organization plays. If this is not applicable, please write N/A.

8. Given our commitment to advancing racial equity and racial justice in our region, we are interested in knowing where your organization is in your racial equity journey. Please indicate which statement below best describes your organization:

Please note we ask for your candid self-assessment; we presume organizations may fall within any of the statements below. The "best" response is the one that accurately reflects the current state of your work in this area.

- We have not yet taken this on and do not feel ready to address these issues in a systemic way.
- We have identified racial equity as a priority, but have not yet conducted a formal racial equity assessment or set specific implementation goals. But we are ready to address these issues.
- We have conducted a formal assessment and are aware of the areas that need attention but have not yet begun to implement change.
- We have clear and targeted goals regarding our racial equity and/or racial justice work and have begun to work towards these goals.

(Optional) If applicable, please elaborate on any of your racial equity/racial justice goals.

9. Based on what you know now, if awarded, how do you anticipate utilizing funds from this general operating grant?

Note: We recognize that, by definition, general operating support is unrestricted funds for the specified term it is received. By asking this question, we seek to understand how your organization plans to utilize these funds based on what you know now. We also know that budget priorities change for a variety of reasons. If you receive a grant award in this cycle, please know that you will not be required to adhere to the responses below.

- Program expansion
- Retaining or adding staff
- Professional development (staff/board trainings, workshops, etc.)
- Essentials for Operations (rent, utilities, office equipment, etc.)
- Development infrastructure (donor management, outreach, etc.)
- Project support
- Other (please describe)

10. For Project Support Grants Only (*Applicable for organizations whose annual operating budget exceeds \$20M*). Please provide a summary of this project, including but not limited to: the recognized need/opportunity for this work; history of collaboration among partner(s) as applicable; the duration and/or life cycle of the project (if applicable), and how the requested funds for this project will be utilized. Please note that if this application advances to the next stage, our staff may reach out to request additional information.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS (cont.)

REGIONAL REACH

- Please indicate your total (unduplicated) number of individuals served by your organization during the last year.
- Of that number, how many of those individuals are located in the Healthy Communities Foundation region?
- Please indicate below whether individuals served by your organization reside in any of the following zip codes/communities:

Austin	60644
Berwyn	60402
Bridgeview	60455
Broadview	60155
Brookfield	60513
Burbank	60459
Chicago - Ashburn	60652
Chicago - Brighton Park, Gage Park	60632
Chicago - Chicago Lawn, Gage Park, Marquette Park	60629
Chicago - Garfield Ridge, LeClaire Courts, Vittum Park	60638
Chicago - North Lawndale/South Lawndale/Little Village	60623
Cicero	60804
Forest Park	60130
Hickory Hills	60457
Justice	60458
LaGrange Park	60526
LaGrange, McCook	60525
Lyons	60534
Maywood	60153
Oak Park	60301
Oak Park	60302
Oak Park	60304
River Forest	60305
Riverside	60546
Summit, Argo	60501
Westchester	60154
Western Springs	60558

ATTACHMENTS

- Most recent audit or audited financial statement
- If not possible, you can provide the most recent budget
- Projected budget (for organizations with budget sizes over \$20M)

RESOURCES & OTHER INFORMATION

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Funded partners will be required to complete a final year-end report that will be submitted via the grants portal by October 1, 2022.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

We want to ensure you have what you need to complete your grant application. We encourage you to access the FAQs section on the [2021 Grant Cycle page on our website](#) to help answer any questions you may have.

CONTACT US

For questions related to alignment, [please submit your question here](#).

For technical questions related to the grants portal, please email us at administration@hcfdn.org or call us at (708) 443-5674. If you send an email, please allow 1-2 business days for a response.

GLOSSARY

You can access a list of key terms and definitions in the Glossary section of the [2021 Grant Cycle page on our website](#) that are relevant to our work and grantmaking strategy. Feel free to reach out to us on how to present your work in alignment with these definitions.