

# DuPage Community Transformation Partnership



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **General Questions**

#### **How many grants do you expect to distribute for each grant opportunity?**

We do not yet know the response we will get for each grant opportunity so we will be flexible in an effort to best meet the needs. We have approximately \$4 million to distribute this year for both Transformational and Immediate Intervention grants.

#### **Is previous experience with government or County grants useful, especially for the reporting?**

Previous experience with government grants is not required. However, having received multiple governmental grants is one indicator that an organization likely has the capability to provide the required reporting.

#### **Is there a minimum or maximum amount for which organizations may apply?**

For the Transformational grants, there is no minimum or maximum amount. For the Immediate Intervention grants, the minimum is \$20,000 and there is no maximum. For both opportunities, the appropriate amount to apply for is related to the size of your organization, scope of the need, outcomes you will be measuring, the long-term impact you intend to have and the number of residents that will be affected. There is not a hard and fast line with regard to a maximum amount but we expect that applicants will be realistic about their capacity to manage the size of the grant for which they apply. For example, the requested amount should not expand your annual operating budget by 50%.

#### **Our organization does not fit into the categories allowed. Is there any chance future additional funding would be made available to other categories?**

No, this is the final year that DCTP grants will be offered.

#### **Can organizations submit multiple requests?**

Yes, within reason. We won't be able to fund every request and will be looking for programs that have the greatest chance of success. If multiple requests are submitted, it's likely that the evaluation team will prioritize one or two requests from that organization.

#### **If awarded, will the grant be paid upfront or be through a reimbursement as other federal grants are?**

If awarded a grant, the organization will be asked to sign a grant agreement. Upon receipt of the signed grant agreement, grant funds will be distributed for Immediate Intervention grants.

For most Transformational grants, the first year of funding will be distributed after the grant agreement is signed. The second year of funding will be distributed pending a satisfactory report submitted after one year showing that expected progress has been made. However, in some cases, there may be specific conditions that must be met prior to funds being distributed. Grant recipients will be required to provide details about the use of the funds in a final report.

**Will the program cover costs incurred before or shortly after the announcement of a grant, prior to the actual receipt of funds?**

Grants will cover costs incurred during the actual grant period which begins when the grant agreement is signed and concludes at the end of the grant period which is approximately 12 months later.

**Can you apply for these grants as well as other DuPage Foundation grants?**

Applying for and receiving grants through the DCTP does not preclude an organization from applying for the Foundation's Community Impact grant

**Organization Eligibility Questions**

**Is a for-profit entity eligible to apply? Is a 501(c)(4) eligible to apply?**

No, only organizations with a 501(c)(3) public charity designation are eligible.

**Would a 501(c)(3) within a college or university be eligible to apply?**

Yes, a 501(c)(3) organization within a larger agency would be eligible. However, the 501(c)(3) organization would need to be large enough to have its own audited financial statements.

**Will grant applications from faith-based organizations be considered?**

Faith-based organizations with 501(c)(3) status may apply as long as the program addresses one of the four issue areas and there is no proselytizing to clients as a condition for receiving services.

**Are the target beneficiaries only residents of DuPage County or could it include others served through a DuPage office?**

The intention of these grants is to serve the residents of DuPage County and, while we understand that some clients served at DuPage locations are from outside the county, we will prioritize funding to organizations in which a greater proportion of residents is served.

**Can an organization apply for services delivered in a location outside DuPage even if they are serving DuPage residents?**

If the organization as a whole primarily services DuPage County residents (more than 50%), that organization would be eligible to apply.

**Can an application cover multiple issue areas?**

Organizations may apply for a grant that addresses issues in more than one category but would then be required to report the metrics for each category.

**Will grants initiated by collaborations between multiple organizations be considered?**

Yes, as long as there is one organization that takes on all responsibility for meeting and reporting on the grant deliverables. Organizations invited to submit a full application for a Transformational grant will be required to include formal MOUs or agreements with collaborative partners in their proposal.

**Can a fiscal agent apply on behalf of an organization?**

Yes, organizations can use a fiscal agent that has 501(c)(3) status. However, the fiscal agent will be responsible for meeting and reporting on all grant deliverables so it is expected that the fiscal agent submitting the application is an active member participating in the project/program.

**If a 501(c)(3) organization wants to act as the fiscal sponsor for a partner organization that can't provide the financial documents, would that disadvantage their consideration for other projects?**

Organizations that do not have the necessary financial documents are not eligible to apply and we would not consider funding a project for that agency if another 501(c)(3) organization is submitting an application only as a fiscal sponsor. If an organization is serving as the fiscal sponsor for a collaborative effort in which multiple organizations (including the fiscal sponsor) are working together on a project, it would not necessarily be a disadvantage in their consideration for another project.

**Are grants limited to organizations serving low/moderate income people?**

The goal of the American Rescue Plan Act is to promote equitable outcomes for historically underserved or adversely affected groups and the intention of this grant program is to respond to the broader health impacts of COVID-19, to reduce economic harm to households and to provide services to those disproportionately impacted by the pandemic. In some cases, those disproportionately impacted are not necessarily people who have low/moderate incomes.

**Program Eligibility**

**Can these funds be applied to an endowment or reserves that are drawn down over the grant period?**

No, U.S. Treasury specifically prohibits the use of these funds for an endowment.

**Would support positions in administration areas such as fund development departments be considered as part of an entire project so that a more long-term sustainability path could be achieved?**

No, grants are not intended to support fundraising efforts.

**Can administrative and overhead costs be included in grant budgets? Would salary expenses be considered?**

Yes, they can be part of the grant budget. However, the applicant will need to make the case as to how the expenses will contribute to the impact of the proposed program. Ultimately, the organization will need to report on the measurable impact of the program as it relates to one or more of the stated issue areas.

**Would a program that addresses the underlying causes of poverty (overall) be eligible to apply?**

Yes, but only if the project is related to the impact of COVID, including the resulting inflation, and will demonstrate measurable outcomes in one or more of the stated issue areas.

**Can grants support programs that benefit undocumented individuals?**

Yes, there are no restrictions regarding support that benefits undocumented individuals.

**Can grants support salary for new positions or to expand hours for existing staff?**

Transformational grants may support salaries to hire new staff or to expand the hours of existing positions. However, if applying for funding to support the salary of a new staff member, it will be critical to provide a job description and a realistic plan that includes recruitment strategies and how the organization intends to sustain the position beyond the grant period. We will not support the salary of new positions for Immediate Intervention grants. The grant period for Immediate Intervention is 12 months and it is expected that funding will begin being used within 30 days after grant is awarded and experience has shown that, in our current climate, it takes many months to recruit and hire new staff. However, we will consider supporting additional hours for existing staff members.

**Will the cost of achieving equity and providing language access be considered as an element of funding?**

Yes, if language access is part of a project in which the measurable outcomes are related to one or more of the stated issue areas. Direct support for language access in general would not be eligible.

**Will the purchase of food, personal care items, and diapers from a food pantry be considered?**

The purchase of food for Immediate Intervention grants will not be funded. However, we will consider it for Transformational grants if the cost of food purchases is part of the overall Transformational project. Through a separate DuPage County allocation, funding has already been distributed to food pantries directly from the County for the purchase of these items. Personal care items and diapers will not be considered.

**Will you consider grants to support walk-in coolers and freezers?**

Yes, food pantries may apply for the purchase of equipment.

**Can funding be used to provide rent or mortgage assistance?**

Yes.

**Is funding for facility rent considered “bricks & mortar”? Is funding for office lease an eligible expense?**

We do not consider rent bricks & mortar. Rent is an operating expense which is eligible. However, you need to show the impact in one of the four issue areas. If it's just an operating expense to support your facility, it likely will not resonate with the evaluation team.

**Are capital requests eligible?**

It is not the intention of these funds to be used to support brick and mortar projects, including new construction, renovation or remodeling, but some capital expenses may be eligible.

**What is the definition of capital? Does that also include furniture and equipment and is this an eligible expense?**

Capital is considered the organization's unencumbered assets (e.g. cash, investments, inventories, receivables, equipment, real estate). Capital purchase expenses such as furniture or equipment are subject to the length of the grant period. For example, a capital asset with a five-year amortization schedule would only be eligible to receive funds that would be depreciated over the one or two years of the grant period. Also, they would only be eligible if the project is related to the impact of COVID and the measurable outcomes are related to one or more of the stated issue areas.

## **Documentation Questions**

### **Can an organization that doesn't have an audit qualify to apply if they submit a 990 or other financial documents?**

No, all applicants are required to submit audited financial statements, conducted by an independent audit firm, that reflect three years of recent financials. These grants originated from the federal government which requires additional layers of reporting and an audit provides an independent examination of financial information.

### **What are the required financials?**

- Current Fiscal Year Operating Budget
- 990 Form - Most recent
- Audited Financial Statements reflecting three most recent years
- Financial Indicators Form
- Project Budget for Transformational Grants

### **If a food pantry has its own 501(c)(3) but is under the umbrella agency of a local township, do the financials of the township need to be submitted?**

No, if the food pantry has its own 501(c)(3), it is expected that their financials are independent of the township so the financials related to the food pantry are the only ones that should be submitted. However, the food pantry would need to be large enough to have its own financial statements

## **Evaluation and Reporting**

### **What type of reporting statistics will be required?**

For the Immediate Intervention grants, organizations will be required to report on the demographic population and the numbers served.

### **Will this grant require monthly reporting similar to other ARPA grants?**

No, a final report for Immediate Intervention grants will be required at the conclusion of the grant period. Recipients of Transformational grants will meet with a DuPage Foundation representative six months after receiving a grant and will provide a written interim report after one year and a final report at the conclusion of the grant. It is expected, however, that grant recipients maintain records within their organization in order to provide accurate final reporting.

### **One of the evaluation criteria is that the population served has been negatively impacted by the pandemic. Do organizations need to show proof from client files that each individual served has been negatively impacted by the pandemic or is this more of a generalized criteria for the overall program?**

Organizations do not need to show proof that each individual client has been negatively impacted by the pandemic but need to provide data to show that the general population served by the program has been negatively affected.

### **In addition to income level, is cultural and racial diversity of clientele looked at as a factor?**

Yes, many of these individuals were among the most severely impacted by the pandemic so the evaluation team will look favorably upon requests that support under-represented communities.

**From a residency standpoint, should unsheltered homeless clients being served in DuPage County be counted?**

Yes, unsheltered homeless individuals should be counted as being a DuPage resident.

**Transformational Grant FAQs**

**How do you define "evidence-based"?**

The proposed strategy has been performed elsewhere, measured objectively and there is evidence that this intervention will have the desired impact. Usually some sort of academic research or best practice write-ups will provide this.

**If we were awarded a Transformational grant in the first round, can we apply for continuing support or do we need to apply for a new project?**

You do not need to apply for a new project to be eligible for a grant. If you are still adding components or aspects to your current Transformational project, you may apply for that. If the project/program for which you received a grant is up and running and you are seeking funding to continue already established services, it's more appropriate to apply for an Immediate Intervention grant.

**How important is sustainability? For instance, if we want to hire more staff, would we have to show how we will continue the position(s) after the grant period is over?**

The purpose of the Transformational grant is to support a change or investment that will increase the effectiveness or efficiency of service delivery. If staff is hired for the project, it will be critical to know how the project will be sustained when funding through the Partnership is no longer available. How will the organization cover salaries and benefits beyond the grant period? If it is not expected that staff will be needed to keep the program going after it is up and running, an explanation as to why staff is not needed would be important. Ultimately, we will want to make sure that the project will continue on well beyond the grant period.

**Do we need to have a fully fleshed out plan? What room is there for flexibility and change over time?**

Through the LOI, we are looking for the project idea with some details. If invited to submit an application, a more fully fleshed out plan will be required. With regard to flexibility, we realize projects can evolve and change over time which is why there will be six-month reviews to discuss any modifications or changes that might need to be made. However, the main scope or purpose of the project should not change.

**Do you anticipate any preference for fully funding a program vs. seeing other funders/operating funds provide additional funds that contribute to the total program budget?**

While we are not requiring that there are other funding sources available to support the project at this time, the ability to sustain a program beyond the grant period is critical so having other funding streams will contribute to the confidence that the project will be sustained beyond the grant period.

**Are only direct services and expansion eligible or can the transformational grant fund infrastructure, such as moving to a new space?**

Direct service and expansion expenses are eligible as long as you can measure the project outcomes relative to one of the stated issue areas. We don't anticipate supporting acquisition or construction of a building.

**Would an economic development project focused on sustainability of a family in strengthening immunity and developing their capacity to maintain good health be eligible? Would developing a community garden in a park district property be eligible as it will promote mental health and food security? Would you consider employee retention goals a COVID impact? Would staff professional development be eligible? Would home repairs for needy families and older adults be eligible (vs. new building) as long as it doesn't affect the overall structure?**

American Rescue Plan Act funds are specifically intended to respond to COVID-related needs. Food insecurity, housing instability, mental health and substance use disorder issues have been significantly impacted by the pandemic in DuPage County which is why this grant program is focusing on those areas. With all programs, applicants must show how the need being addressed in one of these areas was created or enhanced by the pandemic. Also, the impact of the program must have measurable outcomes related to one of the four issues.

**Is collaboration a requirement? We are a multifaceted organization that provides a wide range of services. Other agencies would have to collaborate in order to be able to provide these.**

No, collaboration is not a requirement. Often transformational projects are multifaceted and collaboration can foster greater efficiencies and success which is why we are interested in collaborative projects even though it's not required.

**Are organizations applying together required to have a DuPage county advisory board?**

The organization submitting the application and serving as the fiscal sponsor needs to be located in DuPage. With a collaborative project, we are looking for multiple DuPage entities to work together. However, if there is an organization that is not DuPage-based and doesn't have a local advisory board but provides a very specialized service that supports the collaborative effort, it may not be necessary to have a DuPage advisory board.

**What kind of documentation is necessary for a collaboration?**

In the LOI, applicants will need to list the collaborative organizations and the applicable representatives from each. If invited to submit a full application, documentation will need to show a formal agreement, such as a Memorandum of Understanding, showing that organizations are working side-by-side to serve the same clients. The MOU should include the roles each organization is playing and must be signed by the Executive Director/President from each partner agency.

**Do all organizations collaborating have to have 501(c)3 status? What about a 501(c)(3) collaborating with local government entities such as police departments?**

With collaborative efforts, our main interest is that the project represents collaboration among multiple 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organizations working side-by-side to achieve impact. However, it's understandable that there may be a governmental agency (school, library, police department, etc.) that is part of the collaborative effort.