Requests for Proposals: LGBT Community Fund Community Grants

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**Background:**

Community Grants are designed for a wide variety of projects that respond to identified community needs. Support may be provided for specific projects, general operating support, and for project seed money. Grants will range from $10,000 to $50,000, and the Fund will award up to $400,000 in grants. Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate collaboration as feasible: collaboration is encouraged but not required.

Proposals must demonstrate the following:
- How the project addresses an identified community need
- That there is a credible plan for goal measurement
- How the project will impact the issue it addresses
- How the project will reach traditionally underserved communities — see Community Needs Assessment pages: 52-58
- How a communications strategy around the funded project will be implemented

**Need/Opportunity Statement:**

Proposals must demonstrate the applicant’s commitment to the health and well-being of the LGBTQ community in Cook County. Specifically, the Fund seeks to support innovative initiatives that focus on one or more of the following priority areas:

1. Intersectionality and inequities. Proposals will bridge divides between different groups within the LGBTQ population with intersectionality-responsive services, community spaces, and programs (see definition of “intersectionality” and examples in 2019 Chicago LGBTQ Community Needs Assessment, pages 25 – 26). Priority will be given to historically marginalized and underserved groups in the LGBTQ community (including older adults, people living with disabilities, youth, trans and gender nonconforming people, people of color, and women).

2. Employment. Workforce development, employment, and job skill proposals will focus on historically underserved groups in the LGBTQ community (including older adults,
people living with disabilities, youth, trans and gender nonconforming people, people of color, and women).

3. Heath Care. Proposals will provide for culturally-relevant, accessible, and comprehensive healthcare for LGB, queer, and trans and gender nonconforming people. Priority will be given to proposals that include attention to the Social Determinants of Health.

4. Housing. Proposals will address homelessness and those perilously housed, including for members of the LGBTQ population who are youth, seniors, trans and gender nonconforming people, and those living with a serious and persistent mental illness.

Please refer to the 2019 LGBT Fund Community Needs Assessment

Goals and Outcomes:

A broad and diverse community where lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals are able to live in peace and harmony. Enjoy the same rights and quality of life as others. Have access to a rich offering of resources. Have the opportunities to make the region a better and safe place for all to live.

Grantmaking Criteria:

Community Grants are designed for a wide variety of projects that respond to identified community needs. Support may be provided for specific projects, general operating support, and for project seed money.

Grant Amounts Available and Grant Term:

Grants will range from $10,000 to $50,000, and the Fund will award up to $400,000 in one time grants. Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate collaboration as feasible: collaboration is encouraged but not required.

Eligible Applicants:

In order to be eligible for funding from the LGBT Community Fund the applicant organization(s) must demonstrate the following:

- That it is a 501(c)(3) public charity in good standing in the state of IL.
- That it serves the LGBTQ Community of Cook County. LGBTQ is broadly defined as including questioning individuals.
- Grants may not be used for capital campaigns or improvements, endowments, fundraising events, partisan political activities or to support individuals.
- That grant funds will be used in one year. Multi-year funding is not supported.
- Faith-based and religious organizations are eligible to apply for project-specific grants provided that the program supported does not promote or require religious doctrine and that the applicant otherwise complies with The Fund’s requirements and grantmaking focus.
- Sponsored organizations without 501(c)(3) status must identify their fiscal sponsor as soon as possible and ask them to complete an organization profile in The Chicago Community
Trust’s grants management system, GrantCentral, prior to the sponsored organization’s application submission. Fiscal sponsors must log in and complete and certify an organization profile in GrantCentral at [https://cct.smartsimple.com](https://cct.smartsimple.com) prior to application submission.

- That the organization(s) involved did not receive an Impact Grant from the Fund in 2019.

**Ineligible Uses:**
Grants may **not** be used for capital campaigns or improvements, endowments, fundraising events, partisan political activities or to support individuals.

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Policy:**

The Trust asks that grant seekers provide demographic data on board and staff as well as clients/beneficiaries of programs and services. The Trust believes that the board and staff composition of grantees should be inclusive and reflect the diversity of the demographics of the region and the individuals they serve. Diversity for the Trust encompasses but is not limited to ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation and identification, age, economic circumstance, class, disability, geography and philosophy. For this reason, the Trust does take into consideration the demographic make-up of the board, staff and clients of a grant applicant as an important proposal evaluation criterion.

**Evaluation and Learning:**

Sharing successes or challenges in achieving measures of progress is critical to our collective learning, decision-making and impact.

The Trust is committed to achieving our long-term goals and outcomes. We are developing outcome measures both internally and with our partners that inform progress towards our shared mission. Your project outcomes should be informed by why you think that the project or strategy will lead to the anticipated result or long-term change (i.e., your theory of change). After you identify those outcomes, we are asking grant applicants to develop specific, time-limited measures of progress. For shorter term grants (1-year), these outcomes may not be achieved during the duration of the project. Measures of Progress provide measurable and reportable evidence that a proposed project and/or organization has effectively achieved – or is on the path to achieving - its objectives. These are what can be measured during the term of the grant period and contribute to your longer-term outcomes and are aligned to the Trust’s strategic priorities. We also recognize that there could be challenges to the implementation of any grant, many of which are not under the control of grant recipients, which may prevent you from achieving your targets. Learning with you about the progress made towards your outcomes and measures is part of the Trust’s evaluation and learning efforts.

**Application Process:**

Applicants must complete their application via GrantCentral, The Chicago Community Trust’s online grants management system. To access an application, grant seekers must log into GrantCentral at [https://cct.smartsimple.com](https://cct.smartsimple.com).

Applicants must complete an Organization Profile, which is on the last tab within their GrantCentral account. If the Organization Profile was completed for a previous funding opportunity, it must be reviewed and, if needed, updated and certified prior to application submission.
Sponsored organizations without 501(c)(3) status must identify their fiscal sponsor as soon as possible and ask them to complete an organization profile in GrantCentral prior to the sponsored organization’s application submission. Fiscal sponsors must log in and complete and certify an organization profile in GrantCentral at https://cct.smartsimple.com prior to application submission.

Late or incomplete Full Applications will not be considered. Applicants may receive a site visit, telephone call or other communication from foundation staff as part of the application review process.