



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Strategic planning consultant

Summary of Request

The Disabilities Fund, an affinity fund at The Chicago Community Trust, is seeking a consultant to assist with a strategic planning process to support the Fund's volunteer leadership in developing a strategic roadmap for the next 3 to 5 years of the Fund.

The consultant would work closely with Disabilities Fund leadership, Trust staff, and other key stakeholders to gather feedback, evaluate the Fund's past and potential impact, and refine the Fund's priorities around grantmaking, community engagement, and fundraising

Background

The Disabilities Fund at The Chicago Community Trust is an affinity fund focused on advancing the principles and goals of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), especially for more marginalized sectors of the disability community in the metropolitan Chicago area. The Fund provides charitable support to groups and organizations advancing disability inclusion, rights, and justice. The Fund prioritizes identifying and funding groups and organizations which have historically had less access to resources.

Consistent with the slogan, "nothing about us without us" - and in furtherance of the principles and goals of the ADA, as well as the 10 principles of disability justice - the Fund's strategic and operational direction and grantmaking are led by activists representing diverse segments of the disability community in the metropolitan Chicago area. The new advisory board, which began its term in August of 2024, is the result of a year-long transformation and renewal process aimed at centering the perspectives of those with lived experience with disability in the redistribution of resources. The Fund engaged in its first pilot round of grantmaking in 2025, awarding 17 grants totaling \$355,000.

For more information:

<https://www.cct.org/stories/announcing-the-new-advisory-board-of-the-disabilities-fund/>

<https://www.cct.org/stories/disabilities-fund-awards-over-355000-in-community-based-grants/>

Timeline

December 2025 - October 2026 (11 months)

Deliverables

- Create a 3 - 5 year strategic roadmap for the Fund, including priorities for grantmaking, community engagement, and fundraising
- Plan and execute a convening of 2025 pilot grant partners
- Develop an iterative process for identifying funding priority areas for future years
- Proposed Advisory Board subcommittee structure and subcommittee charters
- On-boarding/off-boarding process for new and departing Advisory Board members
- Develop a fundraising case for support for the Fund

Project Budget

\$50,000

Criteria for Evaluation

- Personal or professional knowledge of and/or experience working with disability communities
- Understanding of disability justice frameworks and movements
- Understanding of the principles of ADA and reasonable accommodations processes
- Strategic planning and facilitation experience, including working with volunteers
- Commitment to a participatory process in developing deliverables
- Experience with trust-based and participatory grantmaking values and principles
- Some fundraising experience preferred, including an understanding of the philanthropic landscape of the Chicago region
- Approachability to and willingness to work collaboratively with The Chicago Community Trust
- We expect organizations or individuals we work with to comply with all anti-discrimination laws.

To Apply

Please submit a cover letter sharing your interest in this position, resume, and proposed work plan in response to the RFP via email to disabilitiesfund@cct.org by **Sunday, November 9**.

Selected proposals may receive a follow-up interview with Disabilities Fund leadership, to be scheduled in **late November/early December**.

About The Chicago Community Trust

The Chicago Community Trust is a community foundation that is dedicated to ensuring opportunity and prosperity are within reach for everyone in our region. As a charitable community, we know that many of our communities have been historically under-resourced, including by philanthropy. The Disabilities Fund is a group of donors who seek opportunities to address those historic gaps, which will help strengthen the entire Chicago region. When our neighbors do better, we all do better.