

evanston!communityfoundation

2023 E-Town Innovation Grant Overview for... Community Institutions

This document provides information for **community institutions interested in applying for an E-Town Innovation grant**. This includes 501c3 organizations, 501c6 organizations, local schools, local government, or organizations with a fiscal sponsor relationship.

If you are with another type of group or organization, download the E-Town Innovation grant guidelines for your type of organization at [evanstonforever.org](https://www.evanstonforever.org). Questions and required paperwork may differ.

funding priorities

We want Evanston to thrive as a vibrant, just, and inclusive community. We fund projects that:

- Create real opportunities for Black people, Indigenous people, and People of Color (BIPOC)¹ to make Evanston more equitable
- Meaningfully engage BIPOC community members to identify problems and develop solutions - from program start to finish
- Encourage collaboration between organizations or groups

We fund projects that develop new ideas as well as expand or improve on existing work. Whether a project is new or ongoing, we look to support work that disrupts “how it’s always been done” and centers racial equity at its core.

who can apply

Projects must serve the Evanston community. Organizations or groups can include:

- New applicants
- Current grantees
- Former grantees
- Previous applicants

¹ ECF uses the term BIPOC to highlight the unique history of oppression and continual, systemic discrimination that Black and Indigenous people experience within a U.S. context. These systems, built on white supremacy culture, impact all People of Color. As such, ECF prioritizes organizations led by and/or centered on the voices of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and Asian community members, and those impacted by multiple intersectional systems of oppression

Note: Organizations are only eligible for one E-Town Innovation grant per 12-month period. Organizations can apply for and receive other types of ECF grants during the same year.

funding guidelines

Grant amounts range from \$2,500 – \$20,000.

- Proposed project budgets should be appropriate to the scope
- Grant period is for a 12-month period

These grants do not fund endowments, fundraising or sponsorship of events, or individuals. We also do not fund religious-based projects. Faith-based organizations may apply for projects benefiting the general community.

what the committee considers

A diverse committee of Evanston residents reviews the applications and decides which projects are funded. Here are the main areas the committee considers when deciding which projects to fund:

Evanston Service

- How the project serves the Evanston community
- Balance of # of people served and intensiveness of services
- Ability to explain project need

Collaboration

- Strength of collaborations, if applicable
- Roles of any partners

Plan and Impact

- Community need for the project
- How the project impacts systems

Clarity of Proposal

- How clearly the proposal explains the overall project
- How effectively the proposal describes what the project intends to accomplish and how to reach these outcomes

Equity

- How the project advances racial equity
- How the project creates more opportunities and equitable outcomes for BIPOC Evanston residents

Financials

- Appropriateness of project budget and anticipated use of resources
- How well the group/organization can successfully handle the project

Community Voice

- Who key stakeholders are + how they are involved
- How BIPOC community voices are centered in the project

how to apply

You can find all applications, including questions and materials, in [ECF's online grant portal](#) starting on Monday, July 31st. Applications for the fall 2023 cycle must be submitted through our online grant portal by **Monday, September 11th, 2023 at 11:59 PM CST**.

We will announce grant awards in November 2023.

attachments to submit

Below is a brief overview of documents that your organization will need to submit. You can find further details in the grant portal.

Document	Additional Instructions
<input type="checkbox"/> Current fiscal year operating budget	Include current annual budget with revenue sources
<input type="checkbox"/> Prior fiscal year operating budget, with Budget-To-Actuals	Include prior fiscal year operating budget including revenue sources and budget-to-actuals
<input type="checkbox"/> Project Budget Form	Please submit a budget including full costs of your project, indicating which costs ECF would cover. (Template provided)
<input type="checkbox"/> Board Roster	Include each member's name, race, gender identity, and city of residence
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>(If applicable)</i> Collaboration Letter of Support	Include a letter of support if working on a joint project (clearly defined roles, partner expectations, etc.) with another organization
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>(If applicable)</i> Fiscal Sponsorship Letter	Include a letter explaining fiscal sponsorship relationship

You will also need to provide a two-sentence summary that describes the project. If your project receives grant funding, we may use this summary in ECF publications.

Note on Budgets: You will need to include a line item for administrative overhead in the project budget. This includes, but is not limited to, expenses relating to rent, utilities, insurance, technology, and accounting. If overhead is over 25%, you will need to provide a brief narrative to describe how these expenses contribute to the project.

If relevant, also provide a brief budget narrative to address any significant gap in the annual operating budget or actuals.

key grant application questions

Below are application questions you will be asked to answer in the grant portal. See the grant portal for specific information about character limitations.

About Your Organization

- What is your organization's mission and scope of work?
- What is the need or challenge your organization is designed to meet? How did you come up with the idea for this project?
- If you are an organization working with a fiscal sponsor, please provide their name and information, and please upload a letter of agreement.
- Please be prepared to provide board & staff demographic information.
- Please attach a roster of board members or governing body. Include name, race, gender identity, and city of residence.
- If you are working with a fiscal sponsor, please upload their leadership list (e.g. taskforce, steering committee, advisory board, etc.)

About Your Project

- Amount requested
- Project Description: Please share a description of the project you are applying for.
- How is this need being addressed currently in the community? How will your project add to already existing efforts?
- How will you encourage participation in your project? How will you break down any barriers to participation?
- What is your plan? How will you bring it to life? What is your anticipated timetable? (**Note:** You must complete the project within 12 months of the grant award.)
- How will you know your project is successful

How Your Project Centers Racial Equity

- Tell us who do you plan to serve through this project
- About how many people do you expect to serve through this project? (if unsure, please give your best estimate)
- What percentage of people served through this project do you expect to be Evanston residents?
- What percentage of people served through this project do you expect to be BIPOC?
- How will this project advance Racial Equity?
- Tell us how the voices of Black, Brown, Indigenous, People of Color are an integral part of your organization's overall decision-making processes. How do you engage program participants in determining your current and future programming?

About Your Financials

- What is the date of your fiscal year end? For example: ECF's fiscal year runs from 1/1 - 12/31
- Please upload your organization's **current** fiscal year operating budget including revenue sources (if you have it).
- Please upload your organization's **prior** fiscal year operating budget including revenue sources and budget-to-actuals.
- Please share a brief budget narrative to address any significant variances in the annual operating budget or actuals (optional).

questions

Contact Program Officer Jenny Valdés Del Valle at valdesdelvalle@evanstonforever.org.