

2016 Grants for Change

Maine Initiatives is now accepting proposals for the 2016 Grants for Change Program. This year, the Grants for Change Program will fund and strengthen nonprofit, community-based, and grassroots organizations whose work is advancing racial justice and racial equity in Maine.

Overview: The 2016 Grants for Change Program

Maine Initiatives' 2016 Grants for Change program will provide three years of general operating support to a cohort of ten (10) community-based nonprofit organizations advancing racial justice and racial equity in Maine.

Members of the 2016 Grants for Change cohort will also be invited to participate in an exclusive series of peer learning, training, capacity-building, and community outreach activities over the course of the grant period.

The 2016 Grants for Change program will be designed around a broadly participatory grantmaking process. The process will offer our grantees, donors, stakeholders, and the broader community opportunities to participate in the proposal evaluation and decision-making process.

Why Racial Justice and Equity?

Racial justice and equity are aspirational values of our community. We affirm our collective commitment to creating a community in which all people are equally seen, valued, and respected, and race is not predictive of life outcomes. This includes acknowledging and embracing the existing diversity of our state, including our tribal communities, as well as creating opportunities for newly arriving Mainers to contribute meaningfully to our community, economy, workforce, and culture.

Here in Maine, we are inspired by the organizations whose work across many sectors—women and gender, economic justice, tribal rights, immigrant issues, criminal justice, youth leadership, environmental activism, community organizing and advocacy—is advancing racial justice and equity in Maine communities. We recognize that much of this work is unheralded and underfunded.

Through the 2016 Grants for Change program, we seek to build a grantee cohort that reflects the diverse array of approaches to the issues and challenges of racial justice and equity. We hope to identify, highlight, and celebrate their work, both for their benefit and for the benefit of the greater Maine community.

ELIGIBILITY AND PRIORITIES / WHO CAN APPLY?

To be eligible for the 2016 Grants for Change program, the applicant organization must:

- ▶ Be a Maine-based 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, or fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3) non-profit; or a tribal entity.
- ▶ Be working exclusively or primarily in Maine communities.
- ▶ Be implementing community-based programs that increase racial justice and racial equity in our local communities or statewide.
- ▶ Have an organizational budget under \$1,000,000.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications are currently being accepted for the 2016 Grants for Change program.

1. Check Your Eligibility: Please visit maineinitiatives.org to take a short survey to confirm that you are eligible to apply.

2. Read the Application: Please read the full application instructions prior to starting your application.

3. Attend an optional information session: We'll be holding information sessions across the state to answer any questions you may have about the RFP, our participatory grantmaking process, and the new racial justice and racial equity theme. RSVP for an information session at bit.ly/1WsQ7ip

- ▶ **Lewiston**, 6/1 at 1:00 pm at Lewiston Public Library's Couture Room at 200 Lisbon Street, Lewiston
- ▶ **Portland**, 6/2 at 1:00 pm at Portland Public Library's Rines Auditorium at 5 Monument Way, Portland
- ▶ **Augusta**, 6/6 at 2:00 pm at Bangor Savings Bank at 5 Senator Way, Augusta
- ▶ **Bangor**, 6/9 at 1:00 pm at Peace and Justice Center of Eastern Maine at 96 Harlow Street, Bangor
- ▶ **Online via Webinar**, 6/10 at 1:00 pm. To register please visit bit.ly/1WsQ7ip

4. Apply: Proposal narratives and all attachments should be emailed to proposals@maineinitiatives.org.

The deadline for applications is 5:00pm on Friday, July 15, 2016.

GRANT AMOUNT INFORMATION

All Grants for Change grant recipients will receive a **\$25,000 general operating grant spread out over three years.** \$10,000 in 2016, \$10,000 in 2017, and \$5,000 in 2018.

2016 GRANTS FOR CHANGE GRANTMAKING TIMELINE

May 15	2016 Grants for Change Request for Proposals Issued
July 15	2016 Grants for Change Application Deadline
September	Grant Decisions Announced
Oct. (date TBD)	Grantee Cohort Convenings
Nov. (date TBD)	2016 Grants for Change Gala Event

2016 Grants for Change PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING PROCESS

Maine Initiatives is introducing several major innovations in the 2016 Grants for Change program.

- ▶ A PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING PROCESS
- ▶ THEMATIC GRANTMAKING ADVANCING RACIAL JUSTICE & RACIAL EQUITY
- ▶ GRANTEE COHORT APPROACH

Within the 2016 grantmaking theme, Maine Initiatives will identify, fund, and strengthen a cohort of organizations—approximately ten (10)—whose work reflects the geographic, programmatic, and sectoral diversity of racial justice and racial equity work being undertaken in Maine. We will make three-year funding commitments to the full cohort and also offer each organization a variety of additional in-kind support.

Going Beyond Grant Money

As a grantmaking foundation, we recognize the importance of general operating support for our grantees and commit to fund organizations in this manner. However, we also acknowledge that effectively pursuing and achieving our mission requires more than just well-placed grants. For this reason, we are committed to providing a diverse range of (optional) support and assistance to each member of our grantee cohort:

PEER LEARNING THROUGH NETWORKING & CONVENINGS

We will convene representatives (board and staff) from members of the grantee cohort on a periodic basis throughout the three-year grant period to offer training and capacity-building support, as well as to permit the organizational representatives to share with and learn from each other about their racial justice and racial equity work.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Maine Initiatives will design and implement capacity building opportunities specifically for the members of the grantee cohort based on member needs and requests. These activities will occur throughout the three-year grant period and will be strictly voluntary.

Project #1: Storytelling

*(October and November 2016)
Our inaugural capacity building project will center around storytelling. Grantees will be invited to participate in a multi-part training on storytelling and pitch development, including one-on-one coaching. As the culmination of the storytelling project, Maine Initiatives will support each grantee in the production of a 90-second promotional video about their organization, to be produced by Knack Factory (grantee time commitment of approximately 5 hours for video work).*

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & AWARENESS

Members of the Maine Initiatives community support social, economic, and environmental justice through informed, intentional, and collective philanthropy. We seek to engage and inspire our community by presenting our grantees and their work on center stage. We will use our convening power to offer a platform for members of the grantee cohort to speak directly to our stakeholders and look for innovative ways to encourage our donors and the broader community to make direct donations to grantee organizations. Examples of these opportunities include: speaking at the annual Grants for Change Gala Event, monthly grantee happy hour events, house parties, and more.

While all of these activities are voluntary, we seek applicants that view these non-financial opportunities as valuable opportunities for their organizations.

Grantee travel expenses will be covered by Maine Initiatives for participation in any capacity building program.

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

This first section is designed to collect general organizational information. Please share the following:

1. Organization Name: _____

2. Share your organization's Mission Statement:

3. What is your website address (If you have one): _____

The following questions inquire about the people involved in your organization and the partners you work with:

4. Does your organization have paid staff? Yes No How many? _____

5. Does your organization have volunteer staff? Yes No How many? _____

6. List up to four organizations or groups that are consistent or significant partners in the work you do:

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

7. Who is the Contact Person for this proposal?

Name: _____

Title: _____

Office Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

SECTION C: PROGRAMMATIC SECTORS

This section will help our Grantmaking Committee better understand the specific programmatic areas in which your organization works.

The following list of programmatic areas correspond with the major themes identified in our Maine Insights report (www.maineinitiatives.org/maineinsights).

From the following list, please indicate the top three areas in which your organization works:

- Women and Gender Equity
 - Good Governance and Democracy
 - LGBTQ+
 - Poverty and Economic Opportunity
 - Criminal Justice
 - Tribal Communities
 - Immigrants, Refugees, and Asylees
 - Youth Leadership
 - Climate Change
 - Environmental Activism
 - Organizing and Advocacy
 - Education
 - Health
 - Other
-

SECTION D: LEGAL/FISCAL ORGANIZATION

This section is needed for the fiscal administration of any grants made by Maine Initiatives. Maine Initiatives does fund organizations who do not have official 501(c)(3) status, but those organizations must identify a fiscal sponsor below.

Does your organization have 501(c)(3) status? Yes No

If you do not have your 501(c)(3) status, who is your Fiscal Sponsor? _____

What is your Organizational EIN or the EIN of your Fiscal Sponsor? _____

SECTION E: ORGANIZATIONAL BUDGET

This section requests general budgetary information about your organization. A review of your budget will help our Grantmaking Committee members better understand the fiscal health of your organization and your funding model.

- ▶ Please provide a breakdown of your budgeted operating income and expenses for your current fiscal year.
You may attach your own spreadsheet or may use the provided format.
- ▶ Does your organization have audited financial statements? If so, please provide a copy of your most recent audit.

ORGANIZATIONAL BUDGET TEMPLATE

Organization Name: _____

Budget Start Date: _____ Budget End Date: _____

INCOME TYPE	AMOUNT	NOTES
Government Grants/Contracts		
Foundation and Corporate Grants (please list names and amounts in Notes field)		
Individual Contributions		
Earned Income (please specify in Notes field)		
Interest Income		
In Kind Support (please specify in Notes field)		
Other Income (please specify in Notes field)		
TOTAL		

EXPENSE TYPE	AMOUNT	NOTES
Program Expenses		
Staff Salaries		
Administrative Expenses		
Fundraising Expenses		
Other Expenses: (please specify in Notes field)		
Other Expenses: (please specify in Notes field)		
Other Expenses: (please specify in Notes field)		
TOTAL		

SECTION F: PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

This proposal narrative is your opportunity to share with our Readers and Grantmaking Committee information about your organization and the work you do to advance racial justice and racial equity in Maine.

All applicants are asked to write a maximum of four (4) pages, single spaced with 12 point font, addressing the following seven (7) evaluative factors. Please note, the word counts are only approximations and completely optional. We include them to help guide you in dividing up your proposal narrative, but again, they are provided as suggestions only.

1. Your Organization (approximately 250 Words)

Please explain what your organization seeks to achieve in Maine. Why is your mission important generally and in the specific context of Maine in 2016?

2. Your Work (approximately 250 Words)

What are the programs and activities your organization implements to achieve its mission?

3. Advancing Racial Justice and Racial Equity (approximately 350 words)

How are issues of racial injustice and inequity related to your work? How does your organization foster greater racial justice and racial equity in Maine?

4. Who You Work With (approximately 250 words)

What racial or ethnic communities or groups do you work with and where are they geographically located? To what extent does your organization create opportunities for non-majority Mainers to engage on issues of racial justice and equity?

5. Leadership and Empowerment (approximately 250 words)

Please explain the ways minority Mainers are engaged in the design and implementation of your organization's programming; the decision-making process within your organization; and the evaluation of your organization's success and effectiveness.

6. Distinctiveness (approximately 250 words)

What is distinctive (unique or innovative) about your organization's programs, who you work with, and/or where your programs are implemented?

7. Success (approximately 350 words)

How do you know when your organization is being successful? Please provide a success story from your organization's work to date that highlights the impact of your organization.

SECTION G: ANYTHING ELSE?

In no more than one additional page, please share with us anything you wish we would have asked about, but didn't or anything else that will help our Readers and Grantmaking Committee make their decisions. Please note, no additional supplemental materials are allowed.

2016 Grants for Change GRANT EVALUATION CRITERIA

In a commitment to transparency, we are pleased to share with all prospective grantees the evaluation criteria our Readers and Grantmaking Committee will use to evaluate each proposal. As you can see, the following assessment areas are directly related to the proposal narrative questions. All Readers will be expected to review the entire proposal document and complete the assessment worksheet based on the materials submitted.

It is our recommendation that each applicant organization use this assessment document to internally evaluate their own proposal before submitting to ensure that all questions are clearly addressed in the narrative.

GRANT PROPOSAL EVALUATION FORM

Instructions: Readers, please review the entire grant proposal packet for the organization you are evaluating and then answer the following questions based on what you read. For each “Rating Chart” please check off the statement that most accurately reflects your thoughts on the proposal. A comment section is available at the end of the form.

ASSESSMENT: ORGANIZATION

- ▶ What is your impression of this organization?
- ▶ Is its mission clear, important, and timely?
- ▶ Does it seek to address important justice and equity issues in our state?

RATING	
	This is an inspiring organization that is doing critically important work advancing justice and equity in our state.
	This appears to be a good organization that is addressing important justice and equity issues in Maine.
	I was not terribly impressed with this organization, but they are working on justice and equity issues.
	I don't think their work is directly related to important justice and equity issues in our state

ASSESSMENT: THE WORK

- ▶ Does this organization's programmatic approach make sense?
- ▶ Will the organization's activities, if successful, bring about the impact it seeks?

RATING	
	This organization's programs appear to be all of the following: well-conceived, smartly designed, and effectively implemented.
	This organization's programs are two of the following: well-conceived, smartly designed, and effectively implemented.
	This organization's programs are one of the following: well-conceived, smartly designed, and effectively implemented.
	This organization's programs are neither well-conceived, smartly designed, nor effectively implemented.

ASSESSMENT: RACIAL JUSTICE AND RACIAL EQUITY

- ▶ Does this organization advance greater racial justice and racial equity in our state?
- ▶ Will their success serve to inspire our community of stakeholders that greater racial justice and racial equity is possible in Maine?

RATING	
	This organization has substantial and meaningful impact on issues of racial justice and equity in Maine.
	This organization has some impact on issues of racial justice and equity in Maine.
	This organization's work does address racial justice and equity, but not in a particularly significant way.
	It is unclear whether this organization's work is advancing racial justice or equity in Maine
	This organization is clearly not having a significant impact on racial justice and equity in Maine.

ASSESSMENT: **TARGET POPULATIONS**

- ▶ Does this organization’s work clearly benefit racial or ethnic communities that are and/or have been traditionally or historically marginalized in Maine?
- ▶ Does this organization’s work create opportunities for non-majority Mainers to become engaged on issues of racial justice and racial equity?

RATING	
	This organization’s work directly and primarily addresses and engages traditionally marginalized racial and ethnic minorities in Maine.
	This organization’s work has a positive impact on traditionally marginalized racial and ethnic minorities in Maine.
	This organization’s work does not appear to address or engage traditionally marginalized racial and ethnic minorities in Maine.

ASSESSMENT: **COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP**

- ▶ Does this organization increase capacity and leadership within the community they seek to serve?

RATING	
	This is an organization run by and for traditionally marginalized communities in Maine.
	This organization clearly is committed to fostering leadership within traditionally marginalized communities in Maine through their work.
	I question whether this organization’s work is engaging traditionally marginalized communities in Maine in meaningful leadership opportunities.

ASSESSMENT: **DISTINCTIVENESS**

- ▶ Did the applicant make the case that their work is distinctive?

RATING	
	This organization made the strongest case that they are doing unique or uniquely effective work in our state/in the community where it operates.
	This organization made a good case that their work is distinctive in our state/in their community.
	This organization did not make a compelling case that their work is particularly distinctive or unique.

ASSESSMENT: **SUCCESS STORY**

- ▶ Is the organization's vision of success compelling and important?
- ▶ Is this organization's success story compelling?
- ▶ Does the organization's success reflect a commitment to racial justice and racial equity?

RATING	
	Very much
	Somewhat
	No

OVERALL RATING

▶ Please choose one option:

- This is one of my top choices.
- This is a good proposal, definitely fundable, but not one of my top choices.
- I liked this proposal, but I am not quite convinced that it merits funding.
- I don't think this proposal should be funded at this time.
- This is a RED FLAG. (I have the following specific concerns about this proposal...)

▶ Please explain your reasoning for rating this proposal the way you did:

▶ Include any additional comments here: