

2017 Grants for Change



Maine Initiatives is now accepting proposals for the 2017 Grants for Change Program, which seeks to fund and strengthen community-based nonprofit organizations whose work is advancing racial justice and racial equity in Maine.

Overview: The 2017 Grants for Change Program

Maine Initiatives' 2017 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 2017 Grants for Change cohort will also be invited to participate in a series of peer learning, training, capacity-building, and community outreach activities over the course of the grant period.

The 2017 Grants for Change program is 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. Racial equity is embodied when all people are equally seen, dignified, valued, respected, and supported. Racial justice is achieved when race is not predictive of life outcomes. Our work at Maine Initiatives is to bring our community's reality into greater alignment with these aspirations through both our grants and our grantmaking process.

This commitment to racial justice and equity 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 2017 Grants for Change program, we will select our second racial justice and equity grantee cohort; ten organizations that reflect the diverse array of approaches to the issues and challenges of racial justice and equity. We will identify, highlight, and celebrate their work, both for their benefit and for the benefit of the greater Maine community.

Why a Participatory Grantmaking Process?

Through our participatory grantmaking process, we seek to have a broadly democratic process for selecting our grant recipients. We also seek to create opportunities for individual reflection on and collective conversation about the following questions:

- ▶ What do “racial justice” and “racial equity” mean?
- ▶ What do they look like?
- ▶ What do they require?
- ▶ Who is doing this work?
- ▶ What is my role?

We seek to create opportunities for people to learn about and be inspired by the work currently being done around our state to advance racial justice and equity. And, ultimately, we seek to identify, mobilize, and leverage new resources – financial, social, and human – for advancing racial justice and equity in Maine.

Why a Grantee Cohort?

Racial justice and equity are complex and multidimensional aspirations with many possible and necessary expressions. We adopt a cohort approach to our work, funding ten (10) different organizations in each cycle in order to honor and reflect the broad diversity of racial justice work.

We believe each grantee organization contributes a unique and indispensable piece to our collective understanding of racial justice and what it means, looks like, and requires in our community. We do not seek for our cohort to be a perfect – or a complete – picture of racial justice or the work required to achieve it. To the contrary, each cohort is necessarily imperfect and incomplete. But in understanding that imperfection, we are able to come to fuller understanding of racial justice itself.

ELIGIBILITY AND PRIORITIES / WHO CAN APPLY?

To be eligible for the 2017 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 2017 Grants for Change program. Please follow the process below:

1. Check Your Eligibility: Confirm you meet the above criteria.

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

3. Attend an Optional Information Session: 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 racial justice and racial equity theme. RSVP for an information session here bit.ly/G4C17InfoSessionRSVP

- ▶ **Portland**, 6/6 at 1:00 pm at the Maine Initiatives office at 56 North Street, Portland
- ▶ **Portland**, 6/8 at 9:30 am at the Maine Initiatives office at 56 North Street, Portland
- ▶ **Augusta**, 6/9 at 9:30 am at the Bangor Savings Bank's Board Room at 5 Senator Way, Augusta
- ▶ **Bangor**, 6/9 at 1:00 pm at the Peace and Justice Center of Eastern Maine at 96 Harlow Street, Bangor
- ▶ **Lewiston**, 6/13 at 1:00 pm at Tree Street Youth at 144 Howe Street, Lewiston
- ▶ **Online via Webinar**, 6/12 at 1:00 pm (access details to be sent after registration)

To register for an information session please visit bit.ly/G4C17InfoSessionRSVP

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

The deadline for applications is 5:00pm on Friday, July 14, 2017.

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 2017, \$10,000 in 2018, and \$5,000 in 2019.

Timeline

2017 GRANTS FOR CHANGE GRANTMAKING TIMELINE

May 31	2017 Grants for Change Request for Proposals Issued
June 15	Proposal Readers/Grantmaking Committee Request for Applications
July 14	2017 Grants for Change Grant Applications Deadline
July 19	Proposal Readers/Grantmaking Committee Applications Due
August 1 and 8	Reader Training Webinars (also available as recordings)
August 11	Readers: Proposal Evaluations Begin
September 12	Readers: Proposal Evaluations Due
October 19-21	Grantmaking Committee Retreat at Schoodic Institute, Winter Harbor, ME
November	Grant Award Announcement



2017 Grants for Change PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING

Maine Initiatives takes an expansive view of who is and who can be a community philanthropist. This view is rooted in our conviction that money is only one of the many resources and assets that our community possesses for advancing justice and equity. We use a broadly participatory grantmaking process in order to identify, mobilize, and leverage key non-financial resources by engaging and connecting the members of our community around our mission and in our work.

We also understand that racial justice and equity are not achieved through perfect grantmaking, but are relational: requiring people to come to a deeper understanding of themselves and in relation to others in the community. We seek to foster this type of transformation through our participatory grantmaking process. We open our process up to the full community to create opportunities for individual reflection on and collective conversation about the following questions:

- ▶ What do racial justice and racial equity mean?
- ▶ What do they look like?
- ▶ What do they require?
- ▶ Who is doing this work?
- ▶ What is my role?

We also seek to create opportunities for people to learn about and be inspired by the work currently being done around our state to advance racial justice and equity. In so doing, we seek to engage people as active agents of greater racial justice in Maine and to mobilize and leverage new resources – financial, social, and human – for advancing racial equity in our communities.

Get Involved: Participate in Our Grantmaking Process

We invite our community to join us as active participants in our grantmaking process in one of two ways:

▶ **BECOME A READER:**
5 to 10 hours at home commitment
(July-Sept 2017)

▶ **JOIN THE GRANTMAKING COMMITTEE:**
5 to 10 hours at home commitment (July-Sept 2017)
and 3 day in person commitment (Oct 19-21, 2017)

BECOME A READER — HELP US EVALUATE PROPOSALS

The initial phase of the grantmaking process is the proposal evaluation phase. We invite our stakeholders, grantees, donors, and members of the broader community to volunteer to serve as proposal readers. Each volunteer will receive training in our grantmaking program, our thematic focus of racial justice and equity, and the proposal evaluation process; and will be asked to read and evaluate approximately three proposals. These evaluations may be done at home or online, permitting participation by a wide-range of people.

▶ **WHO CAN BE A PROPOSAL READER?**

Anyone! No experience necessary. All proposal readers will receive training and guidance about the proposal evaluation process, the evaluation criteria, and the online system.

▶ **WHAT LEVEL OF TIME COMMITMENT IS REQUIRED?**

Each proposal will require approximately one to two hours to read, assess, and score. Proposal readers will be asked to review approximately three proposals.

▶ **WHAT IF I AM A BOARD MEMBER, STAFF MEMBER, OR OTHERWISE AFFILIATED WITH AN APPLICANT?**

That's okay! We are deeply committed to engaging the broadest range of voices in our decision-making process and this means we actively seek to include individuals directly engaged in racial justice and equity work. We have designed our process to permit us to identify and mitigate potential conflicts of interest in this process and will make every effort to structure each individual's participation in such a way that avoids any real or perceived conflicts of interest.

▶ **HOW WILL READER EVALUATIONS BE USED?**

Reader evaluations (both comments and ratings) will individually and collectively inform subsequent activity by staff and decision making by the Grantmaking Committee members.

COMMITTEE MEMBER — HELP CHOOSE OUR GRANTEE COHORT

The second phase of the grantmaking process will be led by a community-based Grantmaking Committee that brings together perspectives representing the full range of our stakeholders: grantees, board members and advisors, donors, and other voices from the broader community in Maine. Members of this Committee will be selected through an open nomination process from the pool of Readers, facilitated by the Maine Initiatives staff and Board.

Participation in the Grantmaking Committee is a unique opportunity to engage in intensive exploration of the themes of racial justice and racial equity and to shape the Grants for Change 2017 grantee cohort. Members of the grantmaking committee will commit to an intensive participatory process of learning and engagement related to our theme, and decision-making about our 2017 Grants for Change. In addition to making funding recommendations to Maine Initiatives' Board, committee members will be invited to participate in a process of networking, training, capacity-building and collective learning around issues of racial justice and racial equity in Maine.

HOW WILL THE GRANTMAKING COMMITTEE OPERATE? All grantmaking committee members must first participate in this process as proposal readers. After the reading period the full grantmaking committee will convene over the course of three-days for a workshop retreat in October 2017 that combines opportunities for shared learning about issues of racial justice and racial equity as well as a participatory deliberative and decision-making process about our grants.

The workshop will be structured around four distinct objectives:

Community building and networking: We put a priority on the power that a networked community can have in addressing the challenging issues of racial justice and racial equity. In response, we will emphasize community building throughout the Grantmaking retreat. We hope that Committee Members leave the three-day program having formed strong bonds with fellow participants, strengthening our state's progressive community and our ability to respond in coordinated, collaborative, and creative ways to justice and equity challenges.

Training and capacity-building around issues of racial justice & racial equity: We recognize that racial justice and racial equity are complex social, economic, and historical concepts. For this reason, we are building into the grantmaking process an explicit commitment to training and capacity-building related to these themes.

Co-creation of knowledge and collective learning about racial justice & equity in Maine: We also recognize that there exists in our community incredible knowledge, experience, relationships, and expertise about racial justice and racial equity that can be brought to bear for our collective benefit. For this reason, we will also incorporate explicit opportunities for the grantmaking committee to identify and connect around their native wisdom.

Discussion, deliberation, and decision-making about our racial justice & racial equity grants: Fundamental to the grantmaking process is a broadly democratic practice that engages a range of voices and perspectives in our decision-making. To this end, we will engage the committee in a collective and collaborative process of reviewing, evaluating and deciding which organization should receive the 2017 Grants for Change funds.

At the conclusion of the three-day grantmaking committee retreat, the committee will make formal funding recommendations to Maine Initiatives' Board of Directors regarding the proposals. The Board of Directors, as the fiduciary authority, will make the final funding decisions based on the committee recommendations.

Additional Questions about the Grantmaking Committee

▶ **WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO SERVE ON THE GRANTMAKING COMMITTEE?**

All committee members will be drawn from the pool of individuals who participate as proposal readers in the first round. The members will be selected by Maine Initiatives staff and Board. It is mandatory for Grantmaking Committee members to attend the Grantmaking Retreat October 19-21 at the Schoodic Institute in Winter Harbor. Unfortunately, those with date conflicts will be unable to join the committee.

▶ **HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL SERVE ON THE COMMITTEE?**

The committee will be comprised of between 40-45 individuals, with approximately equal representation from the following groups: past grantees, board members, donors and advisors, and community members.

▶ **WHAT SORT OF DIVERSITY WILL THE COMMITTEE REFLECT?**

We will make every effort to ensure that the committee reflects both the geographic and demographic diversity of the state as well as other forms of diversity, including cross-class and cross-cultural diversity.

▶ **HOW WILL THE GRANTMAKING COMMITTEE BE SELECTED?**

Maine Initiatives will request volunteers and nominations to serve on this committee. Board and staff will collaborate to make the final determination about committee membership.

▶ **WHAT COSTS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH SERVING ON THE GRANTMAKING COMMITTEE?**

The costs associated with individual participation in the grantmaking committee workshop, including mileage/travel costs, overnight accommodation, event space, food, and materials, will be covered by Maine Initiatives. Any participant or community member interested in offsetting budgetary costs are encouraged to contact Phil Walsh (phil@maineinitiatives.org or 207-607-4070) to make a much appreciated donation.

2017 GRANTS FOR CHANGE GRANTMAKING TIMELINE

June 15	Proposal Reader/Grantmaking Committee Request for Applications
July 19	Proposal Reader/Grantmaking Committee Applications Due
August 11	Readers: Proposal Evaluations Begin
September 12	Readers: Proposal Evaluations Due
October 19-21	Grantmaking Committee Retreat at the Schoodic Institute at Acadia National Park

2017 Grants for Change GRANTEE COHORT APPROACH

In 2017, Maine Initiatives will identify, fund, and strengthen our second racial justice cohort: ten (10) organizations whose work reflects the 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 and capacity building support. Our commitment to a cohort approach in our funding is an integral part of the impact we seek through both our participatory grantmaking process and our efforts to fund and strengthen our grantee partners.

In our participatory grantmaking process, we start from the premise that racial injustice and inequity are complex and multidimensional realities. Racial justice and equity, in turn, are aspirations that have many possible and necessary expressions. Our commitment to funding a cohort of ten different grantee organizations seeks to acknowledge, honor, and reflect the broad diversity of racial justice work that is necessary and is happening in our communities.

In order to select a racial justice cohort, our community must engage in a collective conversation about racial justice and equity: what it means, looks like, and requires in the community. The diversity embodied by the grantee cohort represents our collective answer to those questions. We recognize that each cohort will be imperfect and incomplete. But through both the process of coming to a decision about the make-up of the cohort and the reflection on what is missing from each cohort after the process is completed, we are able to continually refine and deepen our collective understanding of racial justice in our community. In this way, we view each cohort as an iterative step in our process of seeking to understand and advance racial justice in our community.

In funding a grantee cohort, we are explicitly seeking to support and strengthen a racial justice sector in Maine. This means, as we fund and strengthen each individual organization in the cohort, we are also seeking to strengthen the relationships between and among the members of the cohort. We pursue these dual objectives through a variety of activities, including:

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 are voluntary.

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 may include: speaking at the annual Changemakers Celebration, 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)? _____

4. What is your Facebook address (If you have one)? _____

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

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

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

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

1 _____	3 _____
2 _____	4 _____

8. Has your organization received a previous grant from Maine Initiatives? Yes No

If yes, please note when and at what amount: _____

9. Who is the Contact Person for this proposal?

Name: _____ Title: _____

Office Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

SECTION C: 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 D: 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 operating income and expenses (Budget) for your most recent 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)		
INCOME 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)		
EXPENSE TOTAL		

SECTION E: THE NARRATIVE PROPOSAL

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 six (6) evaluative factors. Please note, the word counts are only approximations and are completely optional. We include them to help guide you in dividing up your proposal narrative, but again, they are provided only as suggestion.

1. Your Organization (approximately 350 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 2017?

2. Your Work (approximately 300 Words)

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

3. Advancing Racial Justice and Racial Equity (approximately 450 words)

How does your work advance 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-minority 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. Success (approximately 350 words)

How do you know that your organization is being successful at advancing racial justice and racial equity in Maine? Please provide a story that will illustrate this impact.

SECTION F: ANYTHING ELSE?

In no more than one (1) 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.

2017 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 after each section and 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?
- ▶ Does the organization make the case that their programs and activities will bring about the impact they seek?

RATING	
	I strongly agree that the organization's work is clear and compelling.
	I agree that the organization's work is clear and compelling.
	I disagree. I do not think the organization's work is clear and compelling.
	I strongly disagree. I do not think the organization's work is clear and compelling.

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: **SUCCESS**

- ▶ Is the organization’s success story of advancing racial justice and racial equity compelling and important?
- ▶ Does this organization’s success story demonstrate meaningful impact in this area?

RATING	
	Yes
	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.

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

▶ Include any additional comments here:

▶ This organization has a RED FLAG. I have the following specific concerns about this proposal: