



Dear Members of the Maine Initiatives Community,

We are pleased and proud to share with you the opening of the 2019 Grants for Change application process.

In 2016, Maine Initiatives made a multi-year commitment to prioritizing racial justice and racial equity in all aspects of our work. As we kick off the 2019 Grants for Change funding cycle, we reaffirm that commitment: honoring the work of the past three years while looking forward with a realignment and restatement of our funding priorities. This realignment is rooted in feedback from community leaders and grounded in our evolving understanding of specific communities, approaches, and strategies that will allow us to optimize our impact.

In the first three cycles of the Grants for Change program (2016-2018), we designed and implemented a radically participatory grantmaking process that invited our community to gain a deeper collective understanding of the spectrum of racial equity and racial justice work happening in Maine. This process elicited applications from more than 100 organizations doing important and inspiring work at different points along this spectrum; engaged more than 550 people in a process of individual and collective learning about these organizations; and allowed us to make \$750,000 in grants to 30 community-based organizations working on different aspects of racial equity and racial justice in Maine communities. We take great pride in the success and impact of this work to date.

At the same time, our community-based process is intentionally designed to allow our model and priorities to evolve as our shared understanding of racial equity and racial justice evolves and as we identify gaps or omissions in our funding process and in the broader funding ecosystem. The following highlights three innovations in the 2019 Grants for Change Program that reflect this evolution.

**We prioritize Native American/Wabanaki and African-American communities in both our decision-making and our funding.** We recognize that the work of and by these communities has been and continues to be systematically undervalued and underfunded in Maine. We also acknowledge that the legacy of genocide, colonization and slavery, combined with the pervasive

and persistent realities of bias, discrimination and racism affect these communities in unique ways that have not been adequately recognized or addressed in Maine's social justice and funding landscape, despite the extraordinary leadership and advocacy efforts of leaders from these communities. In order to reflect Maine Initiatives' evolving understanding of what a more just and equitable Maine looks like and requires, we are prioritizing the work of these communities in our 2019 grantmaking.

**We prioritize work being done on institutional, structural and systemic expressions of racial injustice and racial inequity.** The second innovation in our work this year is to prioritize work that addresses the institutional and systemic, rather than the individual, expressions of injustice and inequity in our society. Along the spectrum of racial justice and racial equity work, we respect the contributions of all those who engage in the work of building a more just Maine. Within our process, however, we will seek to identify, highlight, celebrate, fund and strengthen work that seeks to reform unjust institutions, dismantle unjust structures and attack unjust systems.

**We prioritize work being done to strengthen community-building, community organizing, grassroots advocacy and policy change as central strategies for advancing racial justice and equity.** Maine Initiatives has long prioritized the work of community organizing and grassroots advocacy in our grantmaking, recognizing that the wisdom, visions and voices of directly impacted communities are the most important for understanding any problem and the solutions to that problem. Our 2019 Grants for Change process will continue to honor this wisdom and practice.

Each of these three priorities will be reflected in modifications to this year's Request for Proposals document and the Evaluation criteria used in the proposal review process. Recognizing each of these innovations as unique and important, it is not necessary that organizations meet all three of the above funding priorities to be eligible for funding. However, we expect that successful applications in this funding round will demonstrate that they are effectively addressing at least one of these priority areas in a substantial way.

We look forward to answering any questions you might have about these innovations, and to working alongside our community partners and allies, throughout the Grants for Change process.

Sincerely,

The Maine Initiatives Team



## 2019 Grants for Change REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

**Maine Initiatives is now accepting proposals for the 2019 Grants for Change Program, which seeks to fund and strengthen community-based organizations whose work is advancing racial justice in Maine.**

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### **Overview: The 2019 Grants for Change Program**

Maine Initiatives' 2019 Grants for Change program will provide three years of general operating support to a cohort of up to ten (10) community-based organizations advancing racial justice in Maine.

The 2019 Grants for Change program is designed as a broadly participatory grantmaking process. The process offers our stakeholders - grantees, donors, stakeholders and the broader community - opportunities to participate in the proposal review, evaluation and decision-making process. We view this process as an opportunity for individual and collective learning about the work that is and needs to be done in our state to advance racial justice.

Members of the 2019 Grants for Change cohort will be selected based on the community's collective determination that their work is advancing racial justice in our state, with specific priority given to organizations whose work reflect the three funding priorities described below.

The organizations selected for the 2019 Grants for Change cohort will receive a general operating grant of \$25,000 paid out over three years. In addition, they will be invited to participate in a series of peer learning, training, capacity-building, and community outreach activities over the course of the grant period.

### **2019 Funding Priorities**

The following updates to the 2019 Grants for Change Program reflect a deepening in our understanding of issues of racial justice, racial equity and our role in this work. In summary, the 2019 Grants for Change grantmaking program will prioritize:

- Work led by and in service to Native American/Wabanaki and African-American communities in Maine;
- Work being done on institutional, structural and systemic expressions of racial injustice and racial inequity; and
- Work being done to strengthen community building, community organizing, grassroots advocacy and policy change as central strategies for advancing racial justice and equity.

Please note that it is not necessary that organizations meet all three of these funding priorities to be eligible for funding. Successful applications will demonstrate that they are effectively addressing at least one of these priority areas in a substantial way.

All 2019 Grants for Change grant recipients will receive a \$25,000 general operating grant spread out over three years: \$10,000 in 2019; \$10,000 in 2020; and \$5,000 in 2021. Additionally, grant recipients will be invited to participate in capacity-building opportunities over the three-year grant period.

### **The Participatory Grantmaking Process**

Through our participatory grantmaking process, we seek to have a broadly democratic process for selecting our grant recipients led by community members. To accommodate this multi-phase process our grantmaking cycle extends from June through December.

The initial phase of the grantmaking process invites volunteer from the community to serve as Proposal Readers, who read and review proposals during the month of August. The second phase of the grantmaking process will be led by a community-based Grantmaking Advisory Committee that brings together individuals representing the broad diversity of identities and perspectives in our community for a multi-day retreat in October. Members of the Grantmaking Advisory Committee participate in an intensive participatory process of learning and engagement related to our theme, and guide the selection of our 2019 Grants for Change. Final decisions about the Grants for Change grantee recipients will be announced in December of 2019.

For more information about our participatory grantmaking program or to participate as a Proposal Reader visit:

<http://maineinitiatives.org/grants/grants-for-change/participatory-grantmaking/>

### **Eligibility Requirements**

To be eligible for the 2019 Grants for Change Program, the applicant organization must:

- Be a Maine-based organization or group or a coalition/alliance of groups (we do not fund individuals):

- o If your group is - or is sponsored by - a Wabanaki Tribal government or other official Tribal entity you may apply without additional IRS designation.
  - o If your organization is a nonprofit with 501(c)(3) designation from the IRS, you may apply.
  - o If your organization is fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, you may apply.
  - o If you do not currently have a fiscal sponsor or nonprofit 501(c)(3) status, you are still welcome to apply, but will need to obtain a fiscal sponsor before the Grantmaking Advisory Committee's Retreat in October. Maine Initiatives cannot serve as your fiscal sponsor, but will help you identify a potential fiscal sponsor after you have submitted your application.
- Be working exclusively or primarily in Maine communities.
  - Be implementing programs that increase racial justice in local communities or statewide.
  - Have an organizational operating budget under \$1,000,000. (Not required for groups applying with sponsorship from a Wabanaki Tribal government or other tribal entity.)

## **How To Apply**

Applications are currently being accepted for the 2019 Grants for Change program. Please follow the process below:

1. Check your eligibility: Please confirm that your organization meets the eligibility criteria listed above.
2. Read the Application: Please read the full application instructions prior to starting your application.
3. Schedule an informational call: Andrea Berry will be available throughout the application period to answer any questions you may have about the RFP, our participatory grantmaking process, and the new funding priorities. Sign up for a 30-minute phone call here: <https://calendly.com/andrea-berry/g4c-info-call>
4. Apply: Proposal narratives and all attachments should be emailed to [proposals@maineinitiatives.org](mailto:proposals@maineinitiatives.org).

***The deadline for applications is 5:00pm on Friday, July 19, 2019.***

Due to the multi-phase nature of this process, the Grants for Change decisions will not be made public until early December of 2019. Groups that receive a grant can anticipate receiving the first installment of grant funds within a month of providing Maine Initiatives with documentation of fiscal sponsorship or 501(c)(3) status.



## 2019 Grants for Change Grant Application Form

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### Section A: General Information

This first section asks for 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 ask 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:
  - A. \_\_\_\_\_
  - B. \_\_\_\_\_
  - C. \_\_\_\_\_
  - D. \_\_\_\_\_

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 Director of your organization?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Who is the Contact Person for this proposal (if different from the Director)?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Office Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Section B: The Narrative Proposal**

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

Please write a **maximum of four (4) pages, single spaced with 12 point font**, addressing the following six (6) questions. 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 suggestions.

### **1. Your Organization (approximately 350 Words)**

Please explain what your organization seeks to achieve in Maine. Why is your mission important, especially in the context of Maine in 2019?

### **2. Your Work (approximately 300 words)**

What programs and activities does your organization implement to achieve its mission?

### **3. Advancing Racial Justice (approximately 450 words)**

Which of our funding priorities does your work align with?

- Advancing racial justice through work that addresses systemic, structural, and institutional expressions of racial injustice;
- Prioritizing leadership by and work that strengthens Maine's Native American/Wabanaki and African-American communities in Maine; and
- Strengthening community building, community organizing, grassroots advocacy and policy change as central strategies for advancing racial justice and equity.

Please explain how your organization works to advance racial justice in Maine through one or more of the above priorities.

### **4. Who You Work With (approximately 250 words)**

What racial or ethnic communities or groups are most impacted by your work and where are they geographically located?

### **5. Leadership and Empowerment (approximately 250 words)**

Please explain the ways Black, Indigenous, and/or other People of Color 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 advancing racial justice in Maine?  
Please provide a story that will illustrate this impact.



## Section D: Program Areas

This section will help our Grants Advisory Committee better understand the specific program areas in which your organization works. The following list of program areas corresponds to the major themes identified in our Maine Insights report ([www.maineinitiatives.org/mainainsights](http://www.maineinitiatives.org/mainainsights)) and the past three application pools for the Grants for Change program.

1. From the following list, please indicate the top three (3) areas in which your organization works:

- Agriculture/Food Security
- Arts and Culture
- Black Liberation
- Criminal Justice
- Decolonization
- Education
- Environmental Activism
- Gender Equity
- Good Governance and Democracy
- Health Equity
- Housing
- Immigrants' Rights
- Legal Aid
- LGBTQ+ Rights
- Organizing and Advocacy
- Poverty and Economic Opportunity
- Transportation
- Tribal Rights and Sovereignty
- Youth Empowerment and Leadership
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please explain why you chose these three programmatic areas:

## Section E: 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 any such applicants will need to obtain a fiscal sponsor or sponsorship by a Tribal entity before the Grantmaking Advisory Committee's Retreat in October 2019.

- Is this application presented on behalf of a Tribal government or other entity? Yes/No
  - If yes, please indicate the Tribal government or other entity:

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- Does your organization have 501(c)(3) status? Yes/No
  - If you do not have your 501(c)(3) status, please name your Fiscal Sponsor (if you have one)?
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- What is your Organizational EIN or the EIN of your Fiscal Sponsor? (if you have one)
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## **Section F: 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 completed fiscal year. If this is your first year, please submit a current budget. You may attach your own spreadsheet or may use the format provided below.
- Does your organization have audited financial statements? If so, please provide a copy of your most recent audit.

## Organizational Budget Template

Budget Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Budget End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Income Type	Budgeted Amount	Actuals 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	Budgeted Amount	Actuals Amount	Notes
Program Expenses			
Staff Salaries			
Administrative Expenses			
Fundraising Expenses			
Other Expenses: _____			
Other Expenses: _____			
Other Expenses: _____			
Expense Total			

## **Section G: 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. Photos, charts and graphs, or newspaper and blog post links are all appropriate to include here. Please note, no additional supplemental materials are allowed beyond this page.



## 2019 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 grant application and complete the assessment worksheet based on the materials submitted.

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

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### 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 assessment and at the end of the form.

**Assessment: Organization**

- What is your impression of this organization?
- Is its mission clear, important, and timely?

Rating	
	This is an inspiring organization.
	This appears to be a good organization.
	I was not very impressed with this organization.



**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**

Please rate the following questions on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being “not at all” and 10 being “in a significant way”. Indicate N/A if the organization has noted they do not work in this area.

To what extent does this organization advance racial justice by addressing systemic, structural, and institutional expressions of racial injustice?

N/A “not at all” ----- “in a significant way”  
 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9 ----- 10

To what extent does this organization advance racial justice by prioritizing leadership by and work that strengthens Maine’s Native American/Wabanaki and/or African-American community?

N/A “not at all” ----- “in a significant way”  
 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9 ----- 10

To what extent does this organization use community organizing, grassroots advocacy and policy change as central strategies for advancing racial justice and equity?

N/A “not at all” ----- “in a significant way”  
 1 ----- 2 ----- 3 ----- 4 ----- 5 ----- 6 ----- 7 ----- 8 ----- 9 ----- 10

**Assessment: Target Populations**

- Does this organization’s work clearly benefit Black, Indigenous, and/or other People of Color in Maine?

Rating	
	This organization’s work directly and primarily addresses and engages Black, Indigenous, and/or other People of Color in Maine.
	This organization’s work has a positive impact on Black, Indigenous, and/or other People of Color in Maine.
	This organization’s work does not appear to address or engage Black, Indigenous, and/or other People of Color 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 the community they seek to serve.
	This organization clearly is committed to fostering leadership within the community they seek to serve.
	I question whether this organization’s work is engaging the community they seek to serve in meaningful leadership opportunities.

**Assessment: Success**

- Is the organization’s success story of advancing racial justice 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: