



Volunteer Readers at the 2023 Grants for Change Reader Gathering. Photo credit Polychrome Collective.

READER OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT



Immigrant-Led Organizations Fund

a program of Maine Initiatives

Maine Initiatives invites community volunteers to become application Readers, reading and evaluating three applications submitted to the 2024 Immigrant-Led Organizations (ILO) Fund. Readers are a key component of our participatory grantmaking process, providing our Grantmaking Advisory Committee valuable community data to support their decision-making work, while also inviting the broader public in to learn more about immigrant-led organizations working right now across our state.

APPLICATIONS DUE **JUNE 10, 2024**

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overview

THE 2024 IMMIGRANT-LED ORGANIZATIONS FUND

Immigrants have and continue to be essential for the social and economic development of Maine. Since its inception in 2018, the ILO Fund has forged deep relationships with the multifaceted, highly skilled, and robust ecosystem of immigrant-led organizations in our state. The continual growth of this ecosystem was one of the driving forces behind the ILO Fund's transition from rapid-response, short-term awards to multi-year, unrestricted grants in 2024. This shift reflects the ILO Fund's steadfast belief that immigrant flourishing is vital to advancing racial justice and equity statewide.

The newly redesigned and expanded ILO Fund at Maine Initiatives is a participatory grantmaking program that funds, strengthens, and convenes immigrant, refugee, and migrant non-profit organizations in Maine, unceded Wabanaki Territory. The Fund seeks to organize people and resources in support of efforts across the state that intervene on persistent issues experienced by immigrants of color: xenophobia, racialized discrimination, and insufficient support from municipal and state governments.

From 2024 through 2029, the ILO Fund Program has committed to providing \$1.35 million in multi-year, unrestricted,

general operating support to immigrant-led and serving organizations whose work advances immigrant, refugee, and asylum seeker flourishing in Maine. Help inform the selection of the 2024 ILO Fund cohort: ten (10) organizations who will each receive unrestricted, general operating grants of \$45,000 paid out over three (3) years, \$15,000 per year.

We understand that advancing immigrant flourishing and justice are not achieved through perfect grantmaking but are relational, requiring people to come to a deeper understanding of themselves in relation to others in community. We seek to foster this type of transformation through our participatory grantmaking process, creating opportunities for individual reflection and collective conversation about the needs of a robust and sustainable ecosystem of immigrant-led organizations. This is an opportunity for the broader community to learn about and be inspired by the work currently being done in our state to advance immigrant flourishing. We seek to engage people as active agents in racial justice work and to leverage new financial, social, and human resources to advance racial equity in our communities.



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THE PARTICIPATORY GRANTMAKING PROCESS

HOW TO PARTICIPATE:

- **Apply to become a Reader:** Complete [this application](#) by June 10, 2024.
- **Read and evaluate your assigned applications:** 5 to 10 hours of at-home commitment (June - July 2024)
- **Grantmaking Advisory Committee** (if selected): Readers can apply to join the Grantmaking Advisory Committee, which entails a two-day in-person retreat (August 2-3, 2024).

READERS HELP US EVALUATE APPLICATIONS!

Who can be a reader?

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

What level of time commitment is required?

Readers will be asked to review three (3) applications. Each application will require approximately one to two hours to read, assess, and score. Additionally, Readers will be invited to participate in a one-hour Reader Orientation via Zoom on **Wednesday, June 12, from 12:00pm - 1:00pm.**

What if I am a board member, staff member, or otherwise affiliated with an applicant organization?

That's okay! We are deeply committed to engaging a range of voices in our decision-making process and actively seek to include individuals directly involved with work that advances immigrant flourishing. We have designed our process to permit us to identify and mitigate potential conflicts of interest in this process. We 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 be compiled and summarized by Maine Initiatives staff and shared with the members of the Grantmaking Advisory Committee members to inform their decision-making about the 2024 cohort selection.

2024 ILO FUND GRANTMAKING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Grantmaking Advisory Committee (GMAC) is a cross-race and cross-class committee (majority immigrant identifying) of approximately 20-25 individuals. We prioritize those with relevant lived experience and those most impacted by our grantmaking, while also reflecting geographic, demographic, and other forms of diversity within the Maine Initiatives community.

Committee members may include representatives of the following groups:

- past ILO Fund grantee organizations;
- current ILO Fund applicant organizations;
- individuals with specific proximity to and knowledge about the ecosystem of immigrant-led organizations in Maine;
- BIPOC individuals with an expressed interest in greater proximity to immigrant-led efforts;
- Maine Initiatives volunteers, donors, or institutional funders; and
- Individuals with peer and partner organizations with a clear commitment to deepening their learning and funding of immigrant-led efforts to advance immigrant flourishing.

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