



Systems Change Grant Opportunity

A special grant opportunity to support systems change work to advance equity in Northeast Minnesota communities and Tribal Nations.

Request for Proposals

Background on the Grant Opportunity

The purpose of this special grant opportunity is to provide dedicated support to organizations working on systems change and equity efforts in [our service area](#). The work should align with the areas that the Northland Foundation [prioritizes in our grantmaking](#):

- **Basic Needs:** Food security, homeless services, affordable housing, and other human needs essential to wellbeing.
- **Early Childhood Care and Education:** Early care and education quality and access, parenting education, and supports.
- **Out-of-School-Time:** Out-of-school-time programming and enrichment activities for children and youth.
- **Domestic and Sexual Violence:** Prevention and intervention in relation to domestic and family violence, sexual assault, and human trafficking.
- **Belonging:** Efforts to help all people be fully a part of their community with the voice and power to shape institutions and systems.

Successful applications for work in any of our priority areas should include efforts to support all people being fully a part of their community with the voice and power to shape institutions and systems.

Systems Change is work that targets the root causes of social issues over providing direct services to those impacted by the issue. Work that seeks to shift policies, mindsets, and power dynamics that enable the issue to persist are considered systems change. Additionally, efforts to significantly modify how services are delivered that result in better outcomes by those being served is also considered systems change. The changing of systems involves work beyond a single organization; successful applications will involve partners and stakeholders in this work, especially those impacted by the systems being changed.

Equity is to promote justice, impartiality, and fairness within the procedures, processes, and distribution of resources by institutions or systems. Tackling equity issues requires an understanding of the underlying or root causes of outcome disparities within our society.

We understand that systems change and equity work requires persistent focus of effort and takes time, far beyond the scope of a grant period. This opportunity makes available dedicated resources to support organizations that are taking on these challenges and opportunities.

This is an opportunity to support systems change and equity work and is not intended to support the general operations of an organization or ongoing program costs. Organizations seeking general operating or program support should refer to our general grant program.

Availability of Funding and Implementation Period

Up to two grants of up to \$150,000 each will be awarded for a two-year grant period. Implementation period will begin July 1, 2023.

Key Dates and Process

The application process opens January 5, 2023 and closes March 1, 2023. A select number of applicants will be invited for a site visit in late April or early May. Applicants will be notified of a decision by the end of May 2023.

Eligibility

Organizations interested in applying for the opportunity should:

- Be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, local unit of government, or a community group with a fiscal sponsor.
- Provide services in any of the seven counties of Northeast Minnesota (Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis County) or five Tribal Nations that share the same geography: Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe (District 1), and Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe (District II).

Exclusions

Ineligible organizations or activities include:

- Organizations seeking to do work within our geographic service area which do not have staffing or a physical location within the region.
- Support for the general operations of the applicant organization. Administrative costs associated with the implementation of the grant activities is allowed.
- Individuals, businesses, or private foundations.
- Projects taking place outside the geographic region we serve.
- Sectarian religious programs.
- Purchase of real estate, building construction, or renovation projects.
- Endowments, capital campaigns or projects, or support for fundraising events.
- Replacement of traditional government services or public funding that has been cut.

How to Apply

Applicants will complete the Special Initiatives Application and supporting documents (attached) and upload them via our online [Special Initiatives Grantee Portal](#). **The deadline for submitting an application is March 1, 2023.**

The application includes three documents:

- 1) Project narrative – see page 4. We have provided a Word doc of the questions to help you prepare your responses before entering the portal,
- 2) Project budget in the format of your choice, and
- 3) Current fiscal year budget for the applicant organization.

Please complete the application documents and save them to your computer. When you are ready to submit your application, please log into the [Special Initiatives Grantee Portal](#) to upload and submit your application and supporting documents.

Contacts

For questions about grant criteria and eligibility:

Erik Torch, Director of Grantmaking erik@northlandfdn.org

For questions about accessing and navigating the grantee portal:

Carol Chipman, Grants Manager carolc@northlandfdn.org

About the Northland Foundation

The Northland Foundation is a publicly supported foundation serving seven northeast Minnesota counties: Aitkin, Carlton, Cook, Itasca, Koochiching, Lake, and St. Louis, and all or parts of five Native nations: Bois Forte Band of Chippewa, Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe (District I), and Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe (District II). Through grantmaking, business lending and technical assistance, an operating program, and special initiatives, we help people and communities in our region to move forward together.



Systems Change Grant Opportunity

Application Narrative Questions

If you have any questions about your application, please contact:

Erik Torch, Director of Grantmaking: erik@northlandfdn.org

If you have any questions about the grantee portal, please contact:

Carol Chipman, Grants Manager: carolc@northlandfdn.org

Please refer to the RFP for additional information about this request.

One or two grants of up to \$150,000 will be awarded for either two or three years (grantee can select duration of grant period). Implementation period will begin July 1, 2023. **The application deadline is March 1, 2023.**

The completed narrative, project budget, and organization budget should be uploaded separately as attachments via the [Special Initiatives Grantee Portal](#) using the Special Initiatives Application.

Narrative Questions:

Please complete the following narrative questions along with the basic questions in the grant portal.

1. Describe your organization's mission and programs.
2. What systems change and/or inequity are you seeking to address with this funding? (Please include relevant data to support the need for this work as well as an analysis of the root causes that perpetuate this issue)
3. Please describe your approach to systems change and/or advancing equity and the root causes that perpetuate this issue.
4. What activities will you undertake to advance this work?
5. What is your definition of success for this work? How will your activities shift the conditions that keep the root cause(s) of the issue in place?
6. How will you measure progress and the lessons you learn?
7. Who will be carrying out this work? Include staff as well as any partners outside of your organization.
8. Why is your organization best suited for this work?

Budget

- Please provide a project budget using your own format. Please also include additional sources, if any.
- Provide a current fiscal year organizational budget.