



Live. Give. Better Together.

www.desmoinesfoundation.org
515.883.2626

2023 Leadership Grants

The Community Foundation plays a key role in providing significant funding to projects that improve quality of life in Greater Des Moines. We have intentionally focused our grantmaking priorities and cycles to center grant awards around equity and support projects that have the potential to create significant impact on community issues and opportunities.

Leadership Grant Program Timeline

- **Grant Cycle 1:** Letter of Intent due **April 26 at Noon**, Finalists notified (approximately May 16); Full application due (June 7 at Noon); Grants approved (July 11)
- **Grant Cycle 2:** Letter of Intent due **October 6 at Noon**, Finalists notified (approximately October 24); Full application due (November 14 at Noon); Grants approved (December 14)

The Leadership Grant program awards grants to launch or scale up initiatives positioned to strengthen our community in seven key focus areas drawn from community priorities. We focus our grantmaking on organizations serving Greater Des Moines, and our Better Together philosophy embraces projects that leverage the strengths of diverse stakeholders.

Characteristics of a well-aligned Leadership Grant project:

- Addresses one or more of the [2023 grantmaking priorities](#), noting how the project utilizes equity-centered strategies for strengthening our community.
- Leverages other funders, partners, and/or stakeholders in a project that has the potential to create significant impact on community issues and opportunities in Greater Des Moines.

Projects not eligible or competitive for the Leadership Grant program may be a better fit for our Capacity Building or Strategic Alignment Grant programs or as a funding need posted to our [GIVEdsm](#) platform. This might include:

- Ongoing annual operating and program expenses.
- Capital infrastructure projects (bricks and mortar) that do not have strong alignment to our grantmaking priorities.
- Sectarian religious programs promoting a particular faith.

Grant amounts: Typically, Leadership Grants range from \$20,000 to \$250,000 although there is no formal minimum or maximum.

Interested in applying? Our goal is to help facilitate strong applications. For this reason, we require potential applicants to explore project alignment with a member of the Community Impact team. Please reach out to Ellie Burns, burns@desmoinesfoundation.org to schedule a meeting.

How to apply. Applicants are encouraged to draft responses to the letter of intent questions below as the Community Impact team is available to provide reflections prior to submission. Organizations will be asked to submit a letter of intent electronically via our Manage My Grants portal; contact Sarah Cahill, cahill@desmoinesfoundation.org to obtain login credentials. The grantmaking committee will review letters of intent and finalists identified to complete a final application and present to the grantmaking committee.

Letters of Intent should include the following headings:

- An **overview of your organization** including your mission and strategic goals.
- An **executive summary** of the project you are seeking funding to support. Elements of the narrative *must include*: Specific project goal/s, population served, project timeline, anticipated outcomes, and any collaborations/partnerships supporting the work. The [grantmaking priority being addressed](#) by your project noting how the project utilizes equity-centered strategies for strengthening our community and specific connections to relevant community plans/initiatives. Please reflect on why your organization is uniquely positioned to address the issue.
- Please describe the potential this project has to **create significant impact** on a community issue and/or opportunity.
- Provide an overview describing how your organization is **intentionally reflecting racial equity** as part of your overall programming and practices.
- **Budgetary information** relevant to the project, noting any additional pending requests/award from other funders. Please include the specific amount requested from the Community Foundation.
- **Contact name, email and phone number** for the staff person most appropriate for us to contact with any additional questions.

For more information on the Leadership Grant Process, please contact:

Ellie Burns, Director of Nonprofit Relations | burns@desmoinesfoundation.org or (515) 883-2629.