

Better Together

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANTMAKING PRIORITIES 2026

Investments from the Leadership Grant program (made possible by the Better Together Fund) are rooted in community plan alignment, and prioritize and foster inclusive engagement and impact to improve quality of life for all in our community. The purpose of the Leadership Grant Program is to **catalyze and challenge Greater Des Moines to impact systems change** and/or **significantly influence community outcomes and opportunities** by:



Expanding Access to Housing and Transportation

- Enhance accessibility to effective transportation and mobility solutions
- Preserve existing affordable and safe housing
- Increase the availability of affordable and safe housing
- Reduce homelessness



Advancing Community Health and Resilience

- Expand access to physical and mental health resources
- Reduce food insecurity
- Empower individuals and families to build stronger, more sustainable financial realities
- Improve public health outcomes related to social, economic and environmental factors



Fostering Inclusive Economic and Workforce Development

- Address systemic barriers to economic growth
- Remove barriers to career progression by upskilling and reskilling
- Prepare youth for careers through education, career pathways and employment opportunities
- Increase access to affordable, quality childcare, preschool and early childhood education



Cultivating a Thriving and Inclusive Community

- Leverage arts and culture to advance community priorities
- Bolster an inclusive community identity
- Foster community development that supports a thriving region

Investments from the Leadership Grant program will drive outcomes and opportunities reflected in these community plans:

[Capital Crossroads](#) ●●●●●
[Central Iowa Food Security Plan](#) ●●
[Central Iowa Regional Cultural Assessment](#) ●●●
[Challenges for Mental Health](#) ●●
[DART 2035](#) ●
[Des Moines Vision 2031](#) ●●●
[Downtown DSM: Future Forward](#) ●●●●

[Ending Youth Homelessness Plan](#) ●●
[Here We Grow](#) ●●●
[Homeless System Assessment Gap Analysis](#) ●●
[In Good Health Regional Plan](#) ●●●
[Mid Iowa Planning Alliance](#) ●●
[Nuestro Iowa Report](#) ●●●●
[One Economy Report: A Path Forward](#) ●●●●●

[OpportUNITY](#) ●●●●
[Polk 2050](#) ●●●●●
[Preservation of Federally-Backed Housing in CI](#) ●●
[Refugee Community Plan](#) ●●●●●
[Safe and Thriving Youth Plan](#) ●●●●●
[The Blueprint to Address Homelessness](#) ●●●●●
[United Way 5 Elements of a Thriving Community](#) ●●●●●
[Unsheltered Des Moines Study](#) ●●