

Better Together

2026 Leadership Grant Program

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



Advancing Community
Health and Resilience



Fostering Inclusive
Economic and
Workforce Development



Cultivating a
Thriving and Inclusive
Community

Leadership Grant Program Timeline

Grant Cycle

Letter of Intent Due

Finalist Applications Due

Finalist Presentations

Grant Awardees Notified

Spring

April 8 at Noon

May 19 at Noon

June 3

June 17

Fall

October 1 at Noon

November 6 at Noon

November 18

December 9

Steps to Apply

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 prior to submitting a Letter of Intent (LOI) each cycle.

Step 1: Schedule

Contact La-Tica Paige, Executive Assistant, paige@desmoinesfoundation.org, to schedule a Leadership Grant conversation with a member of our team.

Step 2: Meet

During the meeting, discuss alignment of your project with Grantmaking Priorities and community plans, potential grant amount (typically, grant investments have exceeded \$100,000) and more.

Step 3: Share

Send a draft of your LOI to our team prior to the submission deadline and we will provide feedback to help you submit the best letter possible.

Step 4: Submit

Complete the **LOI Submission Form** and **upload your Letter of Intent (LOI)** at bit.ly/LeadershipGrantLOI

Leadership Grant Submission Information

When you submit your Letter of Intent, you will be asked to complete an LOI Submission Form with the following information:

Nonprofit/Organization	Project/Initiative	This Grant Request
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organization Name• Mailing Address• Employer Identification Number/Tax ID• Mission Statement• Annual Operating Budget Amount• Executive Director/CEO/ Lead Staff Member and Email Address	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project/Initiative Title• Brief description of timeline• Total Budget Amount• Is this posted on GIVEdsm?<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ If not, are there any barriers to posting on GIVEdsm?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding Amount Requested from the Community Foundation• Person to Contact (Grant Contact) including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Title/Position◦ Email Address◦ Phone Number

Your narrative style Letter of Intent should answer the following:

- Describe the **community issue or opportunity** your project will address. How does this issue or opportunity fit into the Community Foundation's Grantmaking Priorities and where is it highlighted in community plans?
- Why is your organization **uniquely positioned** to address this issue or opportunity?
- How does your project demonstrate **potential to impact systems change** and/or **significantly influence community outcomes**?
- Please provide a **project summary** and reflect on the anticipated outcomes, collaborations or partnerships, and how your project prioritizes and fosters inclusive engagement and impact.

Keep in Mind:

Projects not eligible or competitive for Leadership Grants may be a better fit for our Capacity Building or Strategic Alignment Grant programs or as a funding campaign posted to GIVEdsm.

Ineligible projects 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

For questions about the Leadership Grant Program, please contact:

Dannie Patrick-Valentin, Senior Director of Community Impact
[\(valentin@desmoinesfoundation.org\)](mailto:valentin@desmoinesfoundation.org)
(515) 954-4574

