



# Civic Engagement Capacity Building Grants 2021 Application Handbook

*Apply [online](#) between February 16<sup>th</sup>  
and March 31<sup>st</sup> 2021*

*Version 2.0: Appendix A added*

**Public service**

*We are here to serve the public with the highest level of integrity.*

**Excellence**

*We aspire to achieve exceptional results*

**Teamwork**

*We engage others in ways that foster respect and trust.*

**Respect**

*We encourage and appreciate diversity in people and ideas.*

**Innovation**

*We take pride in coming up with innovative solutions.*

**Sustainability**

*We are leaders in demonstrating resource use and protection.*

**Metro's values and purpose**

We inspire, engage, teach and invite people to preserve and enhance the quality of life and the environment for current and future generations.

If you picnic at Blue Lake or take your kids to the Oregon Zoo, enjoy symphonies at the Schnitz or auto shows at the convention center, put out your trash or drive your car – we’ve already crossed paths.

**So, hello. We’re Metro – nice to meet you.**

In a metropolitan area as big as Portland, we can do a lot of things better together. Join us to help the region prepare for a happy, healthy future.

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**Auditor**

Brian Evans

600 NE Grand Ave.

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## IMPORTANT DATES

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February 16, 2021: Letters of interest open  
March 4, 2021 11:00a.m. – 12:00p.m.: Information session #1  
March 9, 2021 6:00p.m. – 7:00p.m.: Information session #2  
March 31, 2021: Letters of interest due  
April 9, 2021: Finalists announced  
May 7, 2021: Applications from finalists due  
May 28, 2021: Grantees notified

## PROGRAM VISION

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Metro's *Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion* envisions a region where Black, Indigenous and other communities of color shape the many decisions that impact their lives. As Metro's work to advance racial equity and livability continues to expand, this vision is more critical than ever. However, culturally-specific Community Based Organizations (CBOs), who have long played a critical role in making Metro's processes more inclusive and its decisions more equitable, are finding themselves at or beyond capacity. This program will help them scale their civic engagement efforts so they can support new generations of civic leaders, deepen civic participation in every corner of the region, and shape decisions towards more equitable outcomes.

## ABOUT THE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

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The [Civic Engagement grant program](#) will fund community-based organizations working to increase civic engagement and community participation within greater Portland's Black, Indigenous and communities of color. The multi-year grant program's objectives are to:

- Help grantee organizations build capacity and scale their civic engagement efforts;
- Strategically invest in communities facing high barriers to civic participation, particularly in underserved areas of Clackamas, Washington and East Multnomah counties;
- Support equitable decision-making across the garbage and recycling system and Metro's other programmatic areas;
- Build long-term, trusted relationships with community-based organizations and the Black, Indigenous and other communities of color they serve;
- Bring more BIPOC leaders into Metro decision-making processes and committees.

**"Capacity building** is the process of building and strengthening the systems, structures, cultures, skills, resources, and power that organizations need to serve their communities."

- April Nishimura *et al*,  
*Transformational Capacity Building*

## **Funding available**

The program consists of two separate grant tracks totaling \$400,000 per year for three years. Applicants may apply for either or both tracks but will receive funds from only one track. No matching funds are required.

### General Civic Engagement grants

Three grants ranging from \$60,000 - \$80,000 per year for three years will be awarded to organizations looking to build civic engagement within Black, Indigenous and other communities of color in underserved areas of the region. Priority will be given to organizations with a focus on one or more of Metro's programmatic areas: housing and houselessness, transportation, access to nature, land use, economic and workforce development, and climate and environmental justice.

### Garbage and Recycling System grants

Two grants ranging from \$60,000 - \$100,000 per year for three years will be awarded to organizations looking to build civic and community engagement capacity to inform decisions across the garbage and recycling system. Successful proposals will demonstrate a clear tie to system decision-making processes, racial justice and environmental justice.

## **WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?**

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Civic Engagement Capacity Building applicants and proposals must meet the requirements below to be eligible for consideration:

- A. Grants must serve residents who live within the [Metro boundary](#) and Applicant(s) must be based within the Metro boundary and conduct a majority of their work there.
- B. Applicant(s) must be a federally registered 501(c)3 non-profit or satisfy this requirement through fiscal sponsorship from a federally registered 501(c)3 non-profit.
- C. Applicant(s) must primarily work with, advocate for, and/or provide services to Black, Indigenous and other communities of color.
- D. Applicant(s) must have experience with one or more of the following activities:
  - a. Civic or community engagement centered on Black, Indigenous, and communities of color;
  - b. Leadership development with Black, Indigenous, and people of color, queer folks, people with disabilities, and/or youth;
  - c. Community organizing or advocacy around issues of racial justice, solid waste prevention, environmental justice, workforce development, access to nature, housing or Houselessness, transportation or land use.

- E. Applicant(s) must meaningfully integrate anti-racism work into their operations and programming.

*Recommended (but not required):*

- F. Preferred applicants will request an annual grant amount that does not exceed 100% of their 2020 annual budget OR will have one or more full-time staff equivalents (FTE).

## HOW DO I APPLY?

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The grant application process will occur in two phases: a letter of interest and a grant application. This process intends to reduce administrative burden on applicants and allow for early dialogue between Metro staff and potential applicants.

### **Letter of interest**

Interested applicants may submit a letter of interest through the form on the [Civic Engagement Grants program webpage](#). Applicants may also submit relevant information through other mediums, such as video or audio applications, which should be emailed to [Reed.brodersen@oregonmetro.gov](mailto:Reed.brodersen@oregonmetro.gov). If alternative methods are used, applicants should include answers to the questions below. Applicants should also indicate which grant track they are applying for (*General Capacity* or *Solid Waste System Capacity*). Letters of interest may also be accompanied with supplemental materials (like annual reports, other grant applications, etc.) that provide more information about the Applicant. Letters of interest will be reviewed by the Community Capacity Building Advisory Group who will select up to fifteen (15) applicants to invite to submit a grant application.

### Letter of interest questions

#### Organization Information and Eligibility

- Organization/Group: Name, contact name, email, address, phone number
- Is your organization a 501(c)(3) nonprofit?
- Please describe the ways in which your organization is accountable to Black, Indigenous and other communities of color.
- Are you applying as a collaborative? If so, please describe who will be involved and what is the unique value-add of the collaboration?
- List some of your organization's accomplishments in the areas of civic engagement, policy advocacy, and leadership development.

#### Proposal overview

- Funding amount requested
- Keeping in mind this is a three year grant cycle, what is your vision for these funds?
- Please describe the kinds of outcomes you envision achieving if you were to receive a civic engagement capacity grant. Specific scopes of work will be co-created with Metro staff once grantees are selected.

#### Proposal Alignment and Organizational History

- Describe how your proposal would increase your engagement in the following areas (describe all that apply):
  - Black or Indigenous communities
  - Underserved geographic areas
  - Metro-specific processes or programmatic areas

Garbage and Recycling System Alignment\*

*\*only for Applicants to the Garbage and Recycling System Track*

- How do you envision your outcomes interfacing with ongoing or upcoming programs, projects, policies or infrastructure decisions being developed and implemented within the regional garbage and recycling system?

**Grant application**

Invited applicants will be able to submit a formal grant application that details their proposed use of funds, areas of alignment with Metro planning or programmatic areas, plans for evaluation, and provides more background on their organization (e.g. financial health, past successes, etc.). Applications will be reviewed by the Community Capacity Building Advisory Group who will make recommendations to Metro's Chief Operating Officer (COO).

**METRO'S WORK ON CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND INCLUSIVE DECISION-MAKING**

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The Civic Engagement Capacity Building Program is guided by the following Metro policies and strategies. You can consult these documents as you develop your application to better understand the background behind the program and its desired outcomes:

The [Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion](#) focuses on removing barriers for people of color and improving equity outcomes for communities of color and other historically marginalized communities by improving how Metro works internally and with partners around the Portland region. Goal B (p. 25-30) describes how Metro seeks to meaningfully engage communities of color and include them in decision-making and implementation. Goal E (p. 45-50) describes how Metro seeks to advance equity through funding programs like the Civic Engagement Grant Program.

The [2030 Regional Waste Plan](#) calls on Metro to develop authentic partnerships and community trust, emphasize resource allocation to communities of color and historically marginalized communities and take action to repair past harms and disproportionate impacts caused by the regional solid waste system. The plan also directs Metro to increase the engagement of historically underrepresented communities in garbage and recycling decision-making by enhancing civic engagement and leadership opportunities (Goal 1, p. 55).

The [2018 Regional Transportation Plan \(RTP\)](#) is a blueprint to guide investments for all forms of travel – motor vehicle, transit, bicycle and walking – and the movement of goods and freight throughout the Portland metropolitan region. The RTP calls on Metro to deepen its engagement with communities of color and calls for accountability to all communities across the region (Goal 11, p. 2-23).

## EVALUATING THE APPLICATIONS

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A review panel of Metro staff and community leaders with expertise in civic engagement and community partnerships will review letters of interest and grant applications. The review panel will be looking for projects that:

- Strategically invest in civic engagement capacity in underserved areas of the region: Clackamas, Washington or East Multnomah counties.
- Supports the development of new and/or deeper relationships and trust between CBOs and the Black, Indigenous and communities of color they serve.
- Increases organizational and community capacity to engage with Metro advisory bodies, planning processes, projects and programs, and engagement activities.
- Supports more inclusive decision-making and increases equity across the garbage and recycling system.
- Meaningfully adds capacity and/or flexibility to an organization's civic or community engagement efforts.

### Civic Engagement

The Funders' Committee for Civic Participation defines civic engagement as: "The active participation of people in the decision-making processes that shape their communities and their lives." This program uplifts this expansive definition and encourages deeper participation not only in Metro decision-making but also in decision-making across the many democratic, institutional and community spaces that shape the lives of Greater Portland residents.

**For a full list of selection criteria, please see Appendix A.**

The letter of interest and subsequent grant application contains evaluation questions related to each of these areas. Make sure your application is clear, compelling and sufficiently developed so that reviewers can understand how well it meets the program's objectives.

## ADDITIONAL GRANT DETAILS

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### Grant duration

Grantees will be awarded funds for each of three calendar years - 2021, 2022 and 2023 – assuming adherence to grant agreements and conditional to Metro Council approval. Metro recognizes that building civic and community engagement takes time and relationship building. The three-year grant cycle intends to provide Grantees with certainty of funding so they can plan for and invest in their capacity building towards these multi-year goals.

### Use of funds

Community Capacity Building grants are intended for organizational capacity building as directed by the grantee but within parameters agreed upon within the grant agreements established between Metro and the grantee. Below are some examples of eligible and non-eligible uses of funds:



Eligible uses for General Capacity grants include, but are not limited to:

- hiring or retaining staff responsible for civic or community engagement;
- training or professional development for staff or community members;
- leadership development programming;
- supporting general operations (e.g. program materials, administrative overhead, rent) to advance an organization's civic engagement capabilities.

Eligible uses for Garbage and Recycling Capacity grants will include aforementioned eligible uses only as they are applied to a solid-waste system context. For example:

- Member education to improve solid waste system literacy
- Recruiting and supporting members and staff to sit on advisory bodies that relate to solid waste activities
- Leadership development with a focus on building solid waste system literacy and policy development skills
- Preparation for and engagement with Metro and jurisdictional decision-making processes around economic impacts of the solid waste system (e.g. wages, working conditions, rate impacts, etc.)
- Preparation for and participation in community benefit agreement processes or other similar conversations meant to enhance community benefits of solid waste investments

Ineligible uses for all grants include, but are not limited to:

- participating or intervening in any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office;
- inducing or encouraging violations of law or public policy or improper private benefit to occur.
- any political lobbying activities or any activities that violate local, state or federal statutes, regulations, codes or laws including but not limited to any of Oregon's ethics and/or elections laws, rules or regulations.

## **APPLICATION ASSISTANCE**

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Applicants are encouraged to contact Metro staff to discuss your idea. Staff do not play a role in advocating for applicants or making the funding recommendation, and instead is available to help you make your application as strong as possible. Contact information is available below.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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For more information or individual assistance with the grant application, please contact Reed Brodersen at [reed.brodersen@oregonmetro.gov](mailto:reed.brodersen@oregonmetro.gov)

## **Appendix A**

### **COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT SELECTION CRITERIA**

Grant recommendations are made by the Advisory Group using the evaluation criteria detailed here. The Advisory Group will use these criteria to help determine whether to recommend an applicant for funding. Not every criterion must be met, but priority will be given to proposals/organizations that clearly satisfy multiple criteria in each category. Considerations will also be made to ensure the cohort of recommended grantees as a whole meets the vision and objectives of the program.

#### **Strategic investment**

1. Increases civic engagement capacity (e.g. the building/strengthening of new relationships, connecting with and developing new leaders, or civic education and awareness raising) in underserved areas of the region: East Multnomah County, Clackamas County and Washington County.
2. Adds community capacity to inform decision-making around key areas of Metro's portfolio – environmental justice, waste prevention, economic justice, housing and houselessness, transportation, access to nature, and land use.
3. Supports applicant(s) that have experienced systemic barriers to institutional and philanthropic funding due to systemic inequities.
4. Focuses on communities that have experienced heightened barriers to civic engagement through past and ongoing histories of disenfranchisement.

#### **Civic and community engagement**

1. Meaningfully adds capacity and/or flexibility to an organization's civic or community engagement efforts.
2. Supports the development of new and/or deeper relationships, and trust, between the applicant(s) and the Black, Indigenous, and communities of color they serve.
3. Increases organizational and community capacity to engage with Metro advisory bodies, planning processes, projects and programs, and engagement activities.
4. Supports long-term growth in organizational capacity, coalition strength or movement building.

#### **Organizational history and approach**

1. Applicant(s) demonstrates a history of successful community and civic engagement and/or leadership development.
2. Applicant(s) demonstrates commitment to anti-racist practice and eliminating anti-Black racism within their organization and the communities they serve.

***Solid waste system alignment\****

\*The *Solid Waste System Capacity grants* will be judged on the aforementioned criteria, as well as the following criteria:

1. Proposal advances the vision and goals of the Regional Waste Plan.
2. Proposal outlines specific solid waste system elements or decision-making processes to focus capacity building towards.

Applicants must clearly demonstrate the capacity to carry out the specified activities as outlined in their application materials.