

Metro Civic Engagement Grant program

Frequently Asked Questions

Updated: 3.19.2021

Note: This FAQ will be updated and posted to the website each week on Thursday afternoon and will include generally applicable questions asked to program staff from any potential applicant. For additional questions or to provide clarity on any answer below, please email reed.brodersen@oregonmetro.gov

*Additions or edits made since the previous draft are highlighted.

Program design/structure

- What is the grant period?
 - Answer: Grant agreements will likely run from July 2021 until July 2024.
- What is Metro's definition of civic engagement?
 - Answer: We use the Funders' Committee for Civic Participation definition, which defines civic engagement as: "The active participation of people in the decision-making processes that shape their communities and their lives."

Organizational eligibility

- Are emerging nonprofits able to be part of a coalition? How is a coalition defined or what are the requirements?
 - Answer: Yes, emerging organizations are able to be a part of a coalition. Metro is not defining what a coalition needs to be and will leave this up to participating organizations. Metro will request additional information about the structure and function of an applicant coalition if they are selected as a finalist, however, to understand the proposed flow of resources, scopes of work and responsibilities.
- Will organizations who do not have full time staff or \$80,000 annually be likely to succeed?
 - Answer: This preferred requirement is put in place as a proxy for organizational readiness. Metro is looking to fund organizations who are ready to quickly scale up civic engagement efforts with the support of these funds. If a small or emerging organization has the civic engagement experience, a robust community and volunteer network, or other infrastructure that will support organizational readiness they should consider applying.
- Is it required that our work be 100% in the Metro area? Can statewide organizations apply?
 - Answer: Statewide organizations can apply and organizations that conduct work outside the region are still eligible. However, 100% of the work funded by this grant needs to be conducted within the [Metro boundary](#).
- Are government agencies eligible for these funds? Are community groups supported by government agencies eligible?
 - Answer: Government agencies are not eligible for these funds. Community organizations are eligible to apply even if they receive funding from government agencies.

- How strict about fiscal sponsorship is Metro being? What is Metro's definition of a fiscal sponsor?
 - Answer: Below are the responsibilities we would expect of a fiscal sponsor, should an organization choose to apply with a fiscal sponsor. We would expect to see a written fiscal sponsorship agreement from finalists (so folks would need to have these ready by mid-May) but will not require agreements to be provided during the letter of interest process.
 - Fiscal sponsors should expect to participate in the following ways:
 - Complete and return a W-9 form
 - Carefully review and sign the legal agreement
 - Provide insurance coverage for the duration of the grant project
 - Receive payments from Metro and distribute funds appropriately
 - Review and sign payment requests and progress report/verification of funds spent forms, and submit to Metro
 - Participate in grantee gatherings and evaluation activities
- If we apply through a fiscal sponsor, does the preferred 1+ full time staff and \$80,000 annual revenue would apply to the fiscal sponsor, or to us?
 - Answer: This preferred qualification will not be met, however, a fiscal sponsorship will support the readiness for the organization to take on this capacity building grant and scale quickly so the selection committee will take that into account during their considerations.
- Are North Portland based organizations eligible to apply?
 - Answer: Organizations based anywhere in the region can apply as long as they meet the other eligibility requirements. While we are prioritizing organizations and activities in Clackamas, Washington and East Multnomah counties, we are also prioritizing Black and Indigenous organizing which may be occurring anywhere across the region.

Eligible fund uses

- Are grantees expected to turn out people to Metro related things like committee or council meetings?
 - Answer: Specific deliverables around activities, like engaging with Metro Council or specific engagement processes, will not be included in these grants. We are looking more broadly, at outcomes, one of which is to build community capacity to inform decision-making. Turning out people to Metro Council meetings is one way to speak to this outcome, but organizations may demonstrate this in other ways as well.
- Are these general operating funds or programmatic funds?
 - Answer: They can be either or both. As long as organizations articulate a link to building civic engagement capacity, they can use these funds accordingly and according to the individual grant agreement co-created between the grantee and Metro.
- How many programs could this grant fund?

- Answer: There is no particular limit to how many programs this money can fund. These may be used for a single area of focus or spread across a broader set of work or efforts. The only requirement is that these funds go towards building capacity for civic engagement.
- **Can these funds be used to pay or stipend participants or community members?**
 - Yes, these funds may be used to compensate community members for their participation in relevant programs or events.
- **Can these funds be used for service provision or mutual aid?**
 - We recognize that there is a large need for immediate relief and support for communities of color across the region. However, these funds may not be used for direct service provision (e.g. rent support, food aid, etc.) unless a clear tie is made to civic engagement support. In general, these funds are intended to support communities in advocating for their needs rather than meeting them directly through this grant program.

Application process

- If my organization fiscally sponsors another organization, can both organizations submit their own LOI?
 - Answer: Yes, an organization may apply even if organizations they fiscally sponsor also apply.
- Can an organization with multiple programs submit multiple LOIs, each one focusing on a different program?
 - Answer: Yes, organizations may submit more than one distinct LOI as long as each articulates a different vision, set of outcomes or strategies.
- Does Metro have the questions in a pdf so they can be viewed in advance of submission?
 - Answer: LOI questions are included in the applicant handbook and may be accessed on the [Civic Engagement Grants](#) website.
- **What types of outcomes is Metro looking for?**
 - We are looking for outcomes associated with enhanced civic engagement capacity – either within your organization and/or within your community. Our programmatic outcomes are listed in the grant handbook, under program goals, but outcomes for individual grants may take a variety of forms as long as they contribute towards those larger program outcomes. A further note: we are not looking for specific deliverables like “we turned out 5 people to a Metro Council meeting”, rather, we are hoping organizations speak to broader outcomes like “community readiness to engage in decision making”.

Garbage and Recycling Track

- What has it looked like to partner with the Waste and Recycling department in the past?
 - Partnerships have looked like many things – contracts for consultation or supporting community engagement, capacity building to inform the development of transfer stations, contracts for services, etc. This department is very eager to work alongside community partners and are interested in exploring many types of partnership.
- Are organizations engaged in food systems work eligible for a grant through the Garbage and Recycling track?
 - Food waste is a key intersection with the garbage and recycling system, so organizations advocating around food waste issues may apply. If organizations can articulate other clear

- intersections between the food system and the garbage or recycling system (e.g. food packaging) they may also be eligible to apply.
- Regarding CBAs - What are examples of how CBOs have been involved with that process? What are examples of some activities CBOs would do?
 - Metro has not yet undergone a CBA process in its history. The Regional Waste Plan calls on Metro to engage in these types of processes in the future. We are eager to think through what this could look like with our community partners.