



PETER & ELIZABETH TOWER FOUNDATION

2021 COVID-19 Response Grant Guidelines

COVID-19 and its impact on how we live and work is still very much with us in 2021. The Peter & Elizabeth Tower Foundation will offer two opportunities in 2021 to apply for funding to support community organizations that continue their work in the face of challenges tied to the pandemic.

Applications to the first funding round will be due by January 13, and by July 7 for the second round. Applicants must be local organizations or collaborative efforts with a programmatic presence in the Foundation’s funding geography that serve children, adolescents, and/or young adults affected by intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, mental illness, and/or substance use disorders.

Note: In addition to these two COVID-19 response opportunities, the Foundation will resume regular grantmaking through its Programs & Services, Strengthening Partner Capacity, and Community Change opportunities. Please review the guidelines for those opportunities on the Foundation’s website.

The COVID-19 Response application is brief and focuses on helping the Foundation understand the needs and opportunities that organizations and the people they serve face because of COVID-19. COVID-19 has had a disproportionately negative impact on communities of color and other marginalized groups (e.g., people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ people, incarcerated individuals, immigrant/refugee communities). The Foundation will give preference to applicants working to address these inequities.

New to the application in 2021 will be a short form asking you to identify the racial/ethnic composition of your executive director(s), staff, board of directors, and people served. The Foundation will also give preference to organizations that reflect the communities they serve. You can preview the application on page 4 of these guidelines.

The total allocation to each of the two funding rounds is \$400,000. Please keep your requests as lean as possible so that we can maximize the number of organizations (and by extension, the families and individuals they serve) benefitting from these dollars.

Who Can Apply?

Organizations **currently providing services** within the following regions are eligible to apply under this grant opportunity:

| Massachusetts | New York |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Barnstable County · Dukes County · Essex County · Nantucket County | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Erie County · Niagara County |

Please note that applicants must deliver services *within* these counties. For example, a clinic serving people exclusively in Boston, some of whom happen to live in Essex County, would not be eligible to apply. Organizations that are headquartered elsewhere are eligible to apply, provided that grant funds are used to support the work performed within these counties.

Services must focus on people aged zero to twenty-six and on one or more of the following Tower Foundation funding areas (see sidebars on pages two and three for definitions):

| Young people age 0-26 affected by: | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| Intellectual Disabilities | Learning Disabilities | Mental Illness | Substance Use Disorders |

Additionally, applicants must be:

- Not-for-profit organizations with a 501(c)(3) designation that are not private foundations, or
- Not-for-profit public benefit corporations

Schools, school districts, and colleges/universities are not eligible to apply for COVID-19 Response grants.

Funding Preferences

This funding opportunity is intended as a short-term response to organizational challenges relating to the COVID-19 pandemic. We expect to prioritize applications from **organizations serving young people affected by intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, mental health, and/or substance use disorders** that:

- Have an annual operating budget of \$8 million or less.
- Reflect the community they serve in the ethnic/racial diversity of leaders, staff, and board members.
- Include beneficiary voice and feedback in the design and delivery of their services.
- Continue to serve, whether in person or virtually, populations disproportionately affected by COVID-19 (e.g., people experiencing homelessness, people who are incarcerated, people with disabilities, refugee and immigrant communities, communities of color).
- Continue to provide necessary in-person services (e.g., residential care, inpatient, in-home) to the highest-need populations despite increased risk to staff.

A **learning disability** is a lifelong condition which interferes with the ability to learn. It is a neurological disorder that affects the ability of the brain to process, store and respond to information. There are different types of learning disabilities that can affect different areas of processing, such as learning to read, reading comprehension, writing and spelling, organizing written and spoken language, mathematical operations, decision making, and the development of fine motor skills. Individuals with LD may be particularly gifted in other skills and are typically of normal intelligence.

American Association for Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus

Mental illness includes medical conditions that disrupt a person's thinking, feeling, mood, ability to relate to others and daily functioning. Just as diabetes is a disorder of the pancreas, mental illnesses are medical conditions that often result in a diminished capacity for coping with the ordinary demands of life.

Serious mental illnesses include major depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), panic disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and borderline personality disorder.

National Alliance on Mental Illness

- Continue to serve families and caregivers who are supporting children and young adults in their home, including services to combat isolation; to support health and well-being; and to provide family respite.

How Much Funding is Available?

The Foundation has allocated \$400,000 to each of the two 2021 COVID-19 Response grant opportunities. The Foundation anticipates awarding approximately 16-25 grants of up to \$25,000 in each funding round.

How Does My Organization Apply for a Grant?

Unless you have made alternative arrangements, all grant requests must be submitted online at the following link:

<https://towerfdn.link/covid-19>

Note: To simplify the application process, submissions will be made through a form that will be completed outside of our grant management system.

When Can I Apply?

| | COVID-19 Response Round One | COVID-19 Response Round Two |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Application Deadline | January 13, 2021 | July 7, 2021 |
| Award Notifications | February 17, 2021 | August 4, 2021 |

How Do I Get in Touch with the Foundation If I Have More Questions?

If you have questions about the Foundation’s 2021 COVID-19 Response grant guidelines, please contact us. You can send us an email at info@thetowerfoundation.org or schedule a 30-minute phone call with a Program Officer at <https://towerfdn.link/30-min-call>

Accommodations

The Peter & Elizabeth Tower Foundation is committed to making its guidelines and applications accessible to all. Please contact Don Matteson at dwm@thetowerfoundation.org or 716-906-8903 to make accessibility arrangements (e.g., submissions via alternative media, text-to-speech software licenses, transcription).

An **Intellectual disability** is a disability characterized by significant limitations both in intellectual functioning and adaptive behavior, which covers many everyday social and practical skills. This disability originates before the age of 18. Intellectual functioning refers to general mental capacity, such as learning, reasoning, and problem solving.

Adaptive behavior comprises three skill types:

1. Conceptual skills (e.g., language and literacy; money; time; number concepts; self-direction)
2. Social skills (e.g., interpersonal skills, social responsibility; self-esteem, gullibility, naïveté, social problem-solving; ability to follow rules/obey laws and avoid being victimized)
3. Practical skills (e.g., personal care, occupational skills; healthcare; travel/transportation; schedules/routines; safety use of money use of telephone.

American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, 2011

Substance use disorders occur when the recurrent use of alcohol and/or drugs causes clinically and functionally significant impairment, such as health problems, disability, and failure to meet major responsibilities at work, school, or home.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

2021 COVID-19 Response Application Preview

Section One: Organization Information

1. Organization Name
2. Employer Identification Number (EIN)
3. Contact Person First Name, Last Name, Email Address, Phone Number
4. Signatory First Name, Last Name, Email Address
5. If we award your organization a grant, would you prefer a paper check or direct deposit?
6. If you would prefer a paper check, to what mailing address should we send it? (Please skip this question if you'd prefer direct deposit.)
7. What is your organization's annual budget?
8. What population(s) are you serving? (Please check all that apply)

| | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> People with intellectual disabilities | <input type="checkbox"/> People with disabilities (other than intellectual disabilities or learning disabilities) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> People with learning disabilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Refugee and immigrant communities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> People with mental health issues | <input type="checkbox"/> Communities of color |
| <input type="checkbox"/> People with substance use disorder | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> People experiencing homelessness | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> People who are incarcerated | |
9. In what Tower Foundation county/counties do you currently provide services? (Please check all that apply)

| | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Barnstable County, MA | <input type="checkbox"/> Nantucket County, MA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dukes County, MA | <input type="checkbox"/> Erie County, NY |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Essex County, MA | <input type="checkbox"/> Niagara County, NY |
14. How would you characterize the community/communities you serve? (Please check all that apply): Urban. Suburban. Rural

NOTE: Unless you have made alternative arrangements, you must submit your application online via this link:

<https://towerfdn.link/covid-19>

Section Two: Diversity Information

The Peter & Elizabeth Tower Foundation is working to incorporate a deliberate diversity-equity-inclusion (DEI) lens in its grantmaking practice. To help the Foundation understand more about the organizations and beneficiaries it supports, we are asking grant applicants to provide us with a better sense of how your organization's leadership, workforce, and governance reflect DEI. The Foundation will give preference to applications from organizations led by people of color and/or people with disabilities and that reflect the communities they serve. No organization will be excluded from consideration solely because it is not led by people of color and/or people with disabilities.

The Foundation recognizes that DEI extends beyond race and disability. We have chosen to focus on these two characteristics in light of our focus on serving people with intellectual disabilities and learning disabilities, and in explicitly recognizing the profound inequities created as a product of a culture and institutions imbued with systemic racism.

15. Does your organization currently collect demographic data about:

| | Yes | No |
|--------------------|-----|----|
| Staff | | |
| Board of Directors | | |
| People Served | | |

16. If your organization collects demographic data, please enter the number of individuals of each race/ethnicity for each role in the chart below to give us a sense of your organization’s racial and ethnic diversity. (Continue to the next question if your organization does not collect this information.)

| Race/Ethnicity (Please enter numbers for each) | Executive Director(s) | Staff (excluding Executive Director) | Board of Directors | People Served |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| African American/Black | | | | |
| American Indian/Alaskan Native | | | | |
| Asian | | | | |
| Hispanic/Latina/ Latino | | | | |
| Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander | | | | |
| White | | | | |
| Biracial/ Multiracial | | | | |
| Total # | | | | |

17. Is your organization led by a person with a disclosed disability? Yes No

18. What additional information about your organization’s diversity and inclusion practices would you like to share?

Section Three: COVID-19 Response

- 19. What services are you providing in response to the COVID-19 pandemic? Indicate any ways in which you have been able to incorporate input/feedback from the people you serve into your services. **(750 word limit)**
- 20. What needs and/or opportunities does your organization have as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic? **(500 word limit)**
- 21. What needs and/or opportunities do the people you serve have as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic (even if they’re not things your organization can address)? **(500 word limit)**
- 22. How much money are you requesting? (Maximum request is \$25,000, but please only ask for what you need!)

REMINDER:
 Unless you have made alternative arrangements, you *must* submit your application online via this link:
<https://towerfdn.link/covid-19>