PETER & ELIZABETH **TOWER FOUNDATION**

Community Change
2026 Guidelines

Eligibility

- We will <u>ONLY</u> make grants to organizations <u>CURRENTLY PROVIDING SERVICES</u> in one or more of these regions:
  - Massachusetts: Barnstable County, Dukes County, Essex County, Nantucket County
  - New York: Erie County, Niagara County
- At a minimum, grant applicants <u>MUST CURRENTLY PROVIDE</u> prevention, treatment, and/or recovery services to people aged 26 years or younger from at least one of these populations:
  - People with intellectual disabilities (including those on the autism spectrum)
  - People with specific learning disabilities
  - People with mental illness/mental health challenges
  - People with substance use disorders
- It's easiest for us to accept grant applications from:
  - Not-for-profit organizations with a 501(c)(3) designation that are not private foundations;
  - Not-for-profit public benefit corporations;
  - Public or diocesan school districts; or
  - Private or charter schools.
- Our ideal grant partners serve one or more of the populations listed above who also have intersecting identities as members of historically marginalized communities (e.g., Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latinx, Native American/Indigenous Peoples, disability, housing insecure, immigrant/refugee, LGBTQIA+).

Funding Availability

The Peter & Elizabeth Tower Foundation has not made a discrete budget allocation for 2026 Community Change grants, though we anticipate having approximately $1 million available to award in this portfolio for the year. While all Community Change grants must support work within our funding geography and benefit one or more of the populations we serve, there is no pre-defined allocation of funds to any of its geographies or funding categories.

There is no set amount or cap for Community Change grant awards. Owing to their community-wide or systems-level focus, Community Change grants may be larger than those seen through our Programs & Services portfolio (which typically range from $40,000 to $70,000 per year). We are most interested in establishing a level of support appropriate to the work's scope and duration.

Organizations are welcome to apply an **administrative overhead rate of** 30% of project costs to their grant requests. We cap the administrative overhead rate for colleges, universities, and affiliated organizations at 10%.

Application Timeline

We will accept Community Change requests on a rolling basis in 2026. If you have an idea that meets the criteria listed throughout these guidelines, please schedule a time to speak with a Program Officer.

Further discussion is not an indication of likely support. We don't have a specific timeline for development or award of Community Change grants, as projects vary in their scope and readiness for funding.

What We're Most Interested in Funding

Through its Community Change funding, the Peter & Elizabeth Tower Foundation seeks to forge **equitable relationships** and **more just power dynamics** among different constituencies relating to young people and their families affected by intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, mental health challenges, and/or substance use disorders.

Community Change projects must be aligned with the Tower Foundation's goals (see page four) and involve multiple, diverse stakeholders – **especially those most directly harmed by existing conditions and practices** – working together towards common ends.

Such work can include (but is not limited to) initiatives that:
- challenge existing beliefs, assumptions, and entrenched practices involving these populations;
- supplement, coordinate, or more effectively resource relevant continuums of care;
- employ creative approaches to workforce recruitment and development that enhance the availability of and access to high-quality, culturally relevant services;
- support coalitions and networks built on community assets; and/or
- employ innovative approaches to creating equitable relationships and practices among elements within and across systems.

The strongest projects will incorporate most, if not all, elements of the Foundation's values:

- Diverse Voices – We listen to and learn from those with different points of view and perspectives. We seek to be proximate with the communities we serve – continually engaging in respectful conversation and incorporating what we hear into our work.
- Collaboration – We understand that in order to make progress, we must build relationships with our partners and share knowledge, resources, expertise, and strategies.
- Innovation – We embrace change and are willing to take risks, recognizing the potential for transformative effect. We look for opportunities to try new and creative strategies and encourage others to do the same.
- Perseverance – We recognize that change work can be slow and challenging. We are committed to the long-term improvement of organizations and communities.
- Equity – We pay close attention to the convergence of our focus areas with systemic issues of racism, sexism, classism, ableism, and more, because living at the intersection of multiple identities is a reality that factors importantly into our grantmaking.

Requests to create or expand programs operated or managed by a single agency are more appropriate for the Foundation's Programs & Services grant portfolio.

How to Apply

- If you have an idea for a Community Change project that meets the guidelines in this document, please get in touch with a Program Officer.

How to Contact Us

If you have any questions that aren't covered in these guidelines, you'd like to discuss a special circumstance, or you want to see whether an idea you have for a grant is a good fit for the Foundation, please get in touch with one of our Program Officers.

- Schedule a phone call: https://calendly.com/towerfdn-program
- Send us an email: info@thetowerfoundation.org

TOWER FOUNDATION GOALS

Intellectual Disabilities Goals	Learning Disabilities Goals
1. Children with intellectual disabilities are identified early and receive services that meet their evolving needs. 2. Young people with intellectual disabilities are engaged in meaningful social, vocational, and educational pursuits. 3. Families understand intellectual disabilities and secure needed supports. 4. Communities embrace persons with intellectual disabilities and provide them with a full-range of supports and opportunities to engage in community life.	1. Children with learning disabilities are identified early, diagnosed and connected to services that meet their on-going individual needs. 2. Youth with learning disabilities understand how they learn and pursue resources that support them accordingly. 3. Young adults are confident and do not view their learning disability as a liability 4. Young adults with learning disabilities are ready for work and/or educational pursuits 5. Families are informed about learning disabilities and are able to identify and navigate available services. 6. Communities value persons with learning disabilities and accommodate their needs.
Mental Health Goals	Substance Use Disorder Goals
1. Stigma related to mental illness is eliminated. 2. Children with social, emotional, and behavioral challenges are identified early and connected to appropriate services. 3. Young people with mental health challenges understand and manage their conditions and behaviors. 4. Families understand mental health challenges and help members live productive lives. 5. Communities offer meaningful opportunities and appropriate support to young people with mental health challenges and their families.	1. Community members understand the prevalence and harmful effects of alcohol and drugs, and work to address them. 2. Resources for substance abuse prevention, treatment, and recovery are readily available. 3. Families provide safe environments that support healthy and informed choices about alcohol and drugs. 4. Young people make healthy and informed choices about alcohol and drugs.