



PETER & ELIZABETH TOWER FOUNDATION

Strengthening Partner Capacity

Fall 2026 Guidelines

Eligibility

- We will **ONLY** make grants to organizations/collaboratives **CURRENTLY PROVIDING SERVICES** 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 partners **MUST CURRENTLY PROVIDE** 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+).
- While organizations/collaboratives may have more than one active grant with the Foundation at any given time, we are likely to give preference to organizations/collaboratives that have not received a grant award recently.
If we decline a funding request, your organization may reapply as soon as the following cycle.

Funding Availability

- Grants are for one year, with a **MAXIMUM AWARD OF \$50,000**, including administrative overhead (at 30%, calculated as a percentage of total direct cost, not the overall request). **We will not consider applications for multi-year awards through this funding opportunity.**
- A total of \$600,000 is available in 2026.
- We anticipate making approximately 20 awards in this cycle at a range of levels: three awards for \$50,000; four awards for \$40,000; five awards for \$30,000; and seven or more awards of \$20,000 or less. We will make additional awards as funds permit.
- Note: We ask that you include a budget for your request, but you do not need to supply quotes for goods or services.

Application Timeline

	Fall 2026 Cycle
Applications Due	October 23, 2026
Decisions Sent	November 23, 2026

What We're Most Interested in Funding

Through its Strengthening Partner Capacity grants, the Foundation is interested in funding requests that, ["build and/or strengthen the systems, structures, cultures, skills, resources, and power that organizations \[and collaboratives\] need to serve their communities."](#)

Here are some examples (in alphabetical order) to get you thinking, but this is not a complete list of everything we'll consider:

- Board/Leadership development
- Diversity, equity, inclusion
- Evaluation/Evaluation design
- Mergers/affiliations
- Shared services
- Organizational or coalition development (e.g., strategic planning; marketing, development, and/or communications support; process improvement; succession planning)
- Professional development or training for individual organizations or shared across multiple organizations
- Program design and planning (not service delivery; [contact us if you have questions!](#))
- Small capital projects/equipment purchases
- Staff mental wellness support
- Technology planning/purchasing
- Data infrastructure and projects including data sharing
- What are your ideas? ([We're happy to discuss them!](#))

We recognize that many of these investments target the growth and well-being of an entire organization, coalition, or collaboration. For capacity-building projects intended to benefit specific programs or departments, we will give preference to requests that address the needs of young people affected by intellectual disabilities, learning disabilities, mental health, and substance use disorders 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+).

What We Will Not Fund

- Existing staff positions (start-up/temporary/short-term positions will be considered)
- General operating support (i.e., support for existing costs of doing business)
- Multi-year projects
- Service delivery or program implementation (these are a better fit for our Programs & Services portfolio).
- **REMINDER: ORGANIZATIONS/COLLABORATIVES MUST CURRENTLY PROVIDE SERVICES TO OUR FOCUS POPULATIONS AND GEOGRAPHIES TO BE ELIGIBLE.**

How to Apply

- We **STRONGLY** encourage first-time Tower Foundation grant applicants to contact us to discuss your proposal idea before applying. Go to <https://calendly.com/towerfdn-program> to book a time to talk with a Program Officer.
- Most of our grant requests come in through [the Foundation's grants portal](https://towerfdn.link/grants-portal). If you don't need any sort of special consideration (see "How to Contact Us" below), please submit your application at: <https://towerfdn.link/grants-portal>
- Please [drop us an email \(info@thetowerfoundation.org\)](mailto:info@thetowerfoundation.org) to let us know what accommodations would make it easier for you to apply.
- For any of the following situations, please [get in touch with a Program Officer](#) to discuss your circumstances:
 - We're happy to take applications in non-written formats (e.g., video, audio). Nothing highly produced, though – keep it simple (but make sure you have good sound quality!).
 - Not one of the organization types listed above? No problem. We'll take proposals from groups or organizations/collaboratives that do not have non-profit status as long as they apply through a fiscal sponsor.
 - We're very open to accepting proposals written for other funders.

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. We particularly recommend that first-time applicants connect with a Program Officer before submitting a proposal – preferably several weeks in advance of the deadline.

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

Having Problems with the Grants Portal?

- If you're having trouble with the grants portal (e.g., you aren't able to create a new application), please use the Support button on the grants portal home page to request assistance. Please **DO NOT** send an email to the general info email address or to any specific Program Officer (even if you know them well and really like them).
- If the issue is that you can't get into the grants portal, please try a password reset (there's a link on the login screen). If that doesn't help anything, please send an email to support@thetowerfoundation.org and our system administrators will get you squared away.