



Release Date: October 1, 2022

## *Boots on the Ground Fund*

### Call for Proposals

Greater Cincinnati Foundation (GCF) announces a new partnership with the City of Cincinnati to strengthen the capacity of small, community-based organizations to drive equitable change in our community. Through this partnership, GCF has established *The Boots on the Ground Fund* to provide capacity-building grants, up to \$25,000, that will allow non-profits to build and grow their organizational effectiveness. Historically, these resources have been inaccessible for small, grass roots organizations, especially those led by people of color. As such, The Boots on the Ground Fund is one way that the City of Cincinnati and Greater Cincinnati Foundation create equitable solutions and invest in those who have deep ties in, and knowledge of, the communities most in need of resources.

With the support of the City of Cincinnati, GCF plans to distribute approximately \$400,000 through this fund in its first year. Grants will be awarded to non-profit organizations with an operating budget of less than \$1M and located within the city of Cincinnati. Priority will be given to organizations that demonstrate the involvement of community members in its decision making; and center the voices of those directly impacted by the organization.

#### **Funding Focus**

The Fund intends to focus investments on small organizations that have historically received the least amount of funding, but are often the closest to the solutions. “Small” or “grassroots” organizations are defined as non-profits with an operating budget of less than \$1 million and prioritize community voice to ensure that solutions are grounded in lived experiences.



Additionally, Boots on the Ground seeks to fund organizations that demonstrate need in the following areas:

- Homelessness prevention & access to affordable housing
- Access to affordable, healthy foods (reduction of food deserts)
- Access to health care and public health
- Gun Violence & gang prevention
- Workforce Development
- Youth Development
- Mental Health, Behavioral Health, and Substance use services

The program areas listed above aim to be flexible and responsive to community needs, with consideration given for other innovative community-based solutions.

### Use of Funds

Funding may be used to support, expand or strengthen existing programs, launch a new program, or build organizational capacity\*. Collaboration between organizations is highly favored. Funding will not be awarded for campaigns, capital campaigns, or special events. GCF is interested in hearing of innovative programs within our region.

\*A capacity-building grant is an award used to develop competencies, strategies, systems, and structures in order to improve organizational effectiveness. These capacity-building grant activities strengthen an organization to grow its impact and accomplish its mission and goals.

### Criteria

- Applicants must be classified as tax-exempt by the IRS, typically 501(c)(3) status or government agency. If your organization is not a 501(c)(3), you may utilize a fiscal agent, however the fiscal agent must be identified in the application.
- Applicants must have an annual operating budget less than \$1 million
- Grants will be made to organizations with efforts based in the Greater Cincinnati region which directly impacts residents within the city of Cincinnati.
- Preference will be given to:



- Organizations that prioritize inclusion and community voice and engage leaders of color
- Proposals with clear and measurable outcomes
- Organizations that have demonstrated partnerships and alignment to community-wide efforts
- Organizations that have demonstrated learnings from their past results
- Organizations using an asset-based approach in any of the aforementioned priority areas (homelessness prevention, gun violence, workforce development, youth development, mental health services, and access for vulnerable residents.)
- If your organization needs to utilize a fiscal agent, the fiscal agent must be identified in the application.

### Deadline

To be considered for funding, proposals must be submitted **by October 31, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. EST**

### Application Process

Respond to this RFP via [GCF's online grantmaking system](#) using the "Boots on the Ground Application". After creating a new account and/or logging in, complete the application and submit by the deadline of October 31, 2022.

Upload the following 4 documents in the final section of the application:

- Organizational Budget (or most 990 if available)
- Project Budget
- Demographic Template
- Key Staff Members



## Proposal Timeline

Key Steps	Date
Request for Proposal/RFP Workshop* Virtual – Register <a href="#">Here</a>	Thursday, October 13, 2022 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.
Non-Profit Management Workshop: “Program Design, Delivery, and Evaluation” <i>(optional)</i>	Thursday, October 20, 2022 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.   GCF – River Room 720 E. Pete Rose Way, Suite 120 Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
Non-Profit Management Workshop: “Fundraising and Development” <i>(optional)</i>	Thursday, October 27, 2022 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.   GCF – River Room 720 E. Pete Rose Way, Suite 120 Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
Non-Profit Management Workshop: “Improving Leadership and Governance” <i>(optional)</i>	Thursday, November 3, 2022 4:00 – 5:00 p.m.   GCF – River Room 720 E. Pete Rose Way, Suite 120 Cincinnati, Ohio 45202
<b>Proposal Deadline</b>	<b>October 31, 2022 at 5:00 p.m. EST</b>
<b>Decisions Communicated</b>	<b>Early December</b>
<b>Funding Received</b>	<b>Late December</b>

\*The RFP workshop is meant to provide a brief overview of the application process as well as a deeper dive into this RFP. We encourage all applicants to review the application prior to the grant workshop.

## Questions

We are here to be a resource throughout the application process. Please direct any additional questions to [bootsontheground@gcfdn.org](mailto:bootsontheground@gcfdn.org).