

# Mini Grant Program

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Mini grants are part of our historic competitive grants program to be responsive to the needs of nonprofit organizations serving La Crosse County. La Crosse Area Community Foundation has allocated roughly \$260,000 this year specifically for nonprofits seeking awards of \$1,000 - \$15,000 for result-oriented projects and programs that address a proven community need or priority aimed at making La Crosse County a better place now and for future generations. Preference will be given to applications that focus on building opportunities for community engagement and building of social capital across differences.

### Organizational Eligibility

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The primary eligibility criteria are:

- Applicant organization must be a public charity, exempt from federal income taxes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or governmental bodies, including schools and municipalities, as long as the project is above and beyond regular budgeted items and does not fill budget gaps OR;
- Must have a formal fiscal sponsor relationship with an IRS verified 501(c)3 nonprofit.
- Must be located in and primarily serve residents of La Crosse County.
- Agrees to meet all Grant Awardee Requirements & Expectations listed below.
- Organizations must comply with “Appendix A” of LACF’s DEIB Policy

### Funding Priorities

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The Impact Committee prioritizes applications that focus on reducing barriers to resources which includes:

- Food
- Shelter
- Transportation
- Access to mental health/wellness services (includes art & humanities programming)

### Eligible Use of Funds

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Grant awards may be used for any project related activities unless listed as ineligible below.

Ineligible mini grant expenses include the following:

- Repeat grants to the same project on an open-ended basis
- Partisan political activities
- Organizational endowments
- Scholarships or grants to individuals
- Religious activities for the primary purpose of proselytization\*
- Retroactive expenses or activities that occur before notification of an award
- Loan or debt payments

### Limitations

Units of Government (city, county, township, etc.): The Foundation does occasionally fund units of government whose proposal extends beyond the traditional governmental functions that impact the



broader community or when the request for support is judged to be an effective means to address a priority issue.

**Schools:** The Foundation will consider funding for public, charter, and private/parochial Pre-K-12 schools and post-secondary educational institutions, when the request for support is judged to be an effective means to address a priority issue, particularly when the issue addresses the needs of a substantial or underserved portion of the population.

**\*Proselytization:** Participation in the funded program is dependent on required attendance at religious services or participation in religious study/instruction to access services and/or the purposeful intent to convert one's faith.

### Application Timeline

The form will open on March 3, 2026, and will close on March 31, 2026, at 11:59pm. Late applications will not be considered. Technical assistance will be available on an on-going basis to organizations who want to receive assistance in preparing their application.

**RFP announced:** February 16, 2026

**Eligibility Quiz Open:** March 3, 2026

(the eligibility quiz will determine if your organization meets the basic requirements for this grant and then the applicant is able to apply within the process if they are found eligible through the quiz)

**Applications open:** March 3, 2026

**Technical assistance:** Ongoing, schedule a time

**Applications close:** March 31, 2026, at 11:59 pm

**Awards announced:** June 1, 2026

**Grant period begins:** Upon award notification

### Applying for a Grant

This process is anticipated to take 2 hours or less.

### **Grant Application**

All grant applications must be submitted using the foundation's online grant portal. The form will open March 3, 2026, and will close on March 31, 2026, at 11:59pm. Preference will be given to applicants whose mission and/or project supports building social capital in our community. No code required to access application.

### **Application form pdf (viewing only):**

["Click here to preview"](#)

### **Technical assistance contact:**

Keli Frigo, Impact Specialist | 608-782-3223 x29

### Application Evaluation

The LACF Impact Committee, including the Foundation's Impact Director, will score competitive mini grant requests and send recommendations to the full board for ultimate approval. The Impact



Committee uses the attached rubric to score applications before they make allocations. \*NOTE: No paid staff members participate in the formal voting and recommendation process, only initial evaluation scoring.

\*\*The Impact Specialist, who facilitates the committee, does not participate in evaluating grant applications. We highly encourage applicants to seek technical assistance from the Impact Specialist, as needed, to support putting your best grant application forward.

### Grant Awardee Requirements & Expectations

Grant awardees commit to the following engagement with La Crosse Area Community Foundation:

- Completion of a brief and concise written report to share impact stories/materials and verify eligible spending. Written reports are due upon completion of the grant period. Organizations may request an alternative reporting method, if needed.
- Participation in a Nonprofit Networking session to share outcomes and successes from your mini grant and to learn about other organization's projects at the same time. We anticipate facilitating these opportunities multiple times during the year
- **SAVE THE DATE:**
  - Nonprofit Networking & Sharing | February 3, 2026, at 4:30pm
  - Nonprofit Networking & Sharing | May 6, 2026, TBA

### Appendix A: DEIB Policy Compliance

La Crosse Area Community Foundation is committed to building diverse, equitable, inclusive, and belonging communities for all to thrive. LACF is committed to supporting our partners in becoming more accessible, welcoming organizations as well. All grantees agree to comply with the following DEIB practices within their organizations, including volunteers and staff:

- Grantees have a responsibility to treat all those with whom they engage with dignity and respect at all times
- Grantees will center DEIB best practices in their internal and external engagement
- Grantees strive to build board and committee member recruitment practices that produce a governing body representative of La Crosse County residents and inclusive of lived experience relevant to its mission
- Grantees strive to ensure equitable access to resources, services, and opportunities provided to the community
- Grantee organization culture expects staff and volunteers to uphold DEIB values in their personal and professional lives

LACF supports an open-door policy and is always willing to help grantees navigate challenges that arise due to their commitment to DEIB efforts in their organization and community. Please contact Lauren at [lauren@lacrosseareafoundation.org](mailto:lauren@lacrosseareafoundation.org) with questions or for assistance.