

2026 COMMUNITY-LED GRANTS

The logo for Evanston Community Foundation (ECF), consisting of the letters "ECF" in a bold, sans-serif font inside a white circle.

Community Voices, Community Choices

These grants are selected by ECF's community-led committees to receive unrestricted operating support. Each reflects a strong commitment to equity and meaningful impact in Evanston. These grants are truly community-led, where community members who live or work in Evanston, some of whom are from divested communities, evaluate and rate our proposals.

TOTAL FUNDING (SPRING 2026) - \$240,000

ARTSIE INC

Grant Amount: \$25,000

Artsie Inc empowers children and families of color, providing free-of-cost arts and education programming at District 65 Schools and Fleetwood Jourdain Community Center. Their programming aims to bridge and strengthen communities with culturally sensitive and bilingual offerings. Their goal is to inspire creativity, improve literacy rates and building social-emotional skills.

Books & Breakfast

Grant Amount: \$25,000

B&B aims to provide a supportive and equitable educational environment for all students who have been impacted by systems of oppression. By offering a nutritious breakfast and homework assistance to students in need, B&B ensures that students are prepared for their academic journey. Their programming is committed to disrupting the impact of systemic racism on Black and Latino students and filling resource gaps for those who qualify for free or reduced-price lunch.

Connections for the Homeless

Grant Amount: \$25,000

Connections for the homeless is ending homelessness, one person at a time by targeting the systems of oppression that result in homelessness and housing instability that disproportionately affect Evanston's BIPOC and marginalized communities. Through critical homelessness prevention, shelter, and housing services, they address the root causes of homelessness and systemic inequities by advocating for affordable housing policies that center those most impacted by redlining, discrimination, and displacement.

Evanston Grows

Grant Amount: \$25,000

Evanston Grows is dedicated to increasing healthy food access, promoting food literacy, and advancing health equity in the Evanston Community with an emphasis in the historically segregated 5th Ward. Their mission focuses on building a local fresh food system that is just, sustainable, and resilient, aiming to reduce food insecurity and improve health outcomes. The organization engages in urban farming education, distributes organic produce, and offers workforce development programs to empower community members.

COMMUNITY-LED GRANTS CONTINUED



Evanston Scholars

Grant Amount: \$25,000

Evanston Scholars' mission is to improve college access and success for Evanston students, particularly those who are first-generation college entrants, students from low-income families, and students of color. They provide individualized and intensive college counseling, success and career readiness support along with crucial college affordability support to create a more equitable educational landscape, supported by a strong network of mentors and peers.

Foundation 65

Grant Amount: \$25,000

Foundation 65 strengthens public education by investing directly in educators, eliminating opportunity gaps, enhancing student support and confidence, hence helping students achieve their full potential.

F65 supports educator-led initiatives to respond where families and students need it most, working collectively to address racialized disparities. Their vision focuses on educational justice, addressing racial inequities through important conversations, and uplifting the entire District 65 community.

James B. Moran Center for Youth Advocacy

Grant Amount: \$25,000

The James B. Moran Center for Youth Advocacy in Evanston is dedicated to providing community-based legal, social work, and restorative services for youth and families. They advance a vision of a more just, racially equitable, and restorative society at the local, regional, and state levels. The center employs a holistic, healing-centered, client-driven approach to address the complex needs of youth and families, including legal, mental health, and restorative justice services. The center's work is deeply rooted in the community, aiming to dismantle systemic barriers and improve the lives of historically marginalized youth and families.

Open Communities

Grant Amount: \$25,000

Open Communities mission aims to eradicate housing discrimination and protect neighbors' rights to fair housing and prevent homelessness in Evanston. They foster thriving, inclusive communities through housing counseling, education, outreach, and advocacy. By holding communities and institutions accountable for discriminatory policies, they look to end unjust systemic practices that perpetuate segregation and inequity. Their free services are offered in English and Spanish to increase accessibility.

Open Studio Project

Grant Amount: \$25,000

Open Studio Project (OSP) brings the transformative power of art therapy to individuals for personal growth, social emotional learning, and community well-being. They create a welcoming environment for people of diverse backgrounds and abilities with a particular emphasis of Evanstonians of color and historically segregated 5th ward. Through workshops, classes, exhibitions, and extensive community partnerships, OSP teaches participants how to use art-making effectively as a safe, powerful, and reliable medium for growth.

2026 COLLECTIVE AND ENDURING GRANTS



Rooted in Partnership, Built to Last

Collective & Enduring Grants support long-term solutions through collaboration and multi-year investments. These grants fund partnerships between nonprofits and community stakeholders working together to tackle complex challenges and drive lasting, systemic change in Evanston. By supporting shared strategies over multiple years, ECF helps build stronger, more resilient systems that serve the community for the long haul.

TOTAL FUNDED (SPRING 2026): \$75 ,000

Northlight Theater

Grant Amount: \$50,000, \$25,000 each year for 2-years

Northlight's bold vision is to build a world-class theatre in Evanston, the vibrant community where Northlight began in 1974. Today, our intensely entertaining productions broaden perspectives and deepen compassion. Our education programs touch the lives of thousands of young people each year, and we enrich our community through audience engagement and creative partnerships. With a new theatre in downtown Evanston, we will entertain and inspire audiences with compelling new and existing work. We'll nurture and grow the next generation of theatregoers, expand our civic impact, spark economic development, and serve as a cultural hub for the entire community. The continued progress of our Next Act Campaign continues, following breaking ground in March 2025 and ongoing construction, which is well underway. The 2025-26 season is expected to be the final season in our current home at the North Shore Center for the Performing Arts, with an anticipated opening of our new home in Fall 2026.

Reparation Stakeholder Authority of Evanston (RSAE)

Grant Amount: \$50,000

This award will support a job-share Director position with the goal of strengthening Evanston's reparations infrastructure during a critical phase of implementation of the feedback. This shared role will provide dedicated leadership capacity to:

- Implement the RSAE reparations programs, including the delivery of direct and/or community-based benefits to eligible Evanston residents and organizations
- Ensure ongoing communication, transparency, and engagement with the Evanston community and reparations partners
- Coordinate public events in partnership with FirstRepair that support education, Black culture, empowerment, and community trust
- Support fundraising, systems development, and stewardship of reparative resources
- Strengthen the operational capacity of RSAE as a community-led companion to the City of Evanston Reparations Program