evanston!communityfoundation

2023 E-Town Innovation Grant Overview for…
Evanston-Based Business with a Charitable Purpose

This document provides information for **Evanston-based businesses with a charitable purpose interested in applying for an E-Town Innovation grant.** Businesses must meet one or more of these criteria:
- Meet a basic human need
- Provide a service not offered by local nonprofit sector (or has a demand that exceeds availability)
- Broaden workforce development pathways to living wage careers for BIPOC-identifying community members

If you are with another type of group or organization, download the E-Town Innovation grant guidelines for your type of organization at evanstonforever.org. Questions and required paperwork may differ.

funding priorities

We want Evanston to thrive as a vibrant, just, and inclusive community. We fund projects that:
- Create real opportunities for Black people, Indigenous people, and People of Color (BIPOC)[1] to make Evanston more equitable
- Meaningfully engage BIPOC community members to identify problems and develop solutions - from program start to finish
- Encourage collaboration between organizations or groups

We fund projects that develop new ideas as well as expand or improve on existing work. Whether a project is new or ongoing, we look to support work that disrupts "how it's always been done" and centers racial equity at its core.

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[1] ECF uses the term BIPOC to highlight the unique history of oppression and continual, systemic discrimination that Black and Indigenous people experience within a U.S. context. These systems, built on white supremacy culture, impact all People of Color. As such, ECF prioritizes organizations led by and/or centered on the voices of Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and Asian community members, and those impacted by multiple intersectional systems of oppression

who can apply

Businesses must be Evanston-based, serve the Evanston community, and can include:
- New applicants
- Current grantees
- Former grantees
- Previous applicants

Note: Businesses are only eligible for one E-Town Innovation grant per 12-month period.

funding guidelines

Grant amounts range from $2,500 – $20,000.
- Proposed project budgets should be appropriate to the scope
- Grant period is for a 12-month period

These grants do not fund endowments, fundraising or sponsorship of events, or individuals. We also do not fund religious-based projects. Faith-based organizations may apply for projects benefiting the general community.

what the committee considers

A diverse committee of Evanston residents reviews the applications and decides which projects are funded. Here are the main areas the committee considers when deciding which projects to fund:

Evanston Service
- How the project serves the Evanston community
- Balance of # of people served and intensiveness of services
- Ability to explain project need

Plan and Impact
- Community need for the project
- How the project impacts systems

Equity
- How the project advances racial equity
- How the project creates more opportunities and equitable outcomes for BIPOC Evanston residents

Community Voice
- Who key stakeholders are + how they are involved
- How BIPOC community voices are centered in the project

Collaboration
- Strength of collaborations, if applicable
- Roles of any partners

Clarity of Proposal
- How clearly the proposal explains the overall project
- How effectively the proposal describes what the project intends to accomplish and how to reach these outcomes

Financials
- Appropriateness of project budget and anticipated use of resources
- How well the group/organization can successfully handle the project

how to apply

You can find all applications, including questions and materials, in [ECF's online grant portal](#) starting on Monday, July 31st. Applications for the fall 2023 cycle must be submitted through our online grant portal by **Monday, September 11th , 2023 at 11:59 PM CST**.

We will announce grant awards in November 2023.

attachments to submit

Below is a brief overview of documents that your organization will need to submit. You can find further details in the grant portal.

Document	Additional Instructions
❑ Project Budget Form	Please submit a budget including full costs of your project, indicating which costs ECF would cover. (Template provided)
❑ Current fiscal year operating budget	Include current annual budget with revenue sources
❑ Prior fiscal year operating budget, with Budget-To-Actuals	Include prior fiscal year operating budget including revenue sources and budget-to-actuals
❑ Ownership Chart	Include each owning member's ownership share, as well as name, race, gender identity, and city of residence. (Ownership Chart Template provided if needed)
❑ *(If applicable)* Collaboration Letter of Support	Include a letter of support if working on a joint project (clearly defined roles, partner expectations, etc.) with another organization

You will also need to provide a two-sentence summary that describes the project. If your project receives grant funding, we may use this summary in ECF publications.

Note on reporting: You will need to submit all project receipts when reporting back to ECF on project.

Below are application questions you will be asked to answer in the grant portal. See the grant portal for specific information about character limitations.

About Your Business
- What is your business EIN #?
- Tell us about your business and your service to the community.
- What is the date of your fiscal year end? For example: ECF's fiscal year runs from 1/1 - 12/31
- (provided in the system) Ownership Chart Template: Once completed, please upload in this section. Please include each member ownership's share, as well as name, race, gender identity, and city of residence.
- Please upload your organization's current fiscal year operating budget including revenue sources.
- Please upload your organization's prior fiscal year operating budget including revenue sources and Budget-to-Actuals.

About Your Project
- Amount requested
- Project Description: Please share a description of the project you are applying for.
- What expertise does your business have? How did you come up with the idea for this project?
- How is this need being addressed currently in the community? How will your project add to already existing efforts?
- Tell us about your project timeline. What will happen when? (**Note:** You must complete the project within 12 months of the grant award.)
- How will you know this project has made a difference in the community?
- What are the demographics of the Evanston residents you plan to serve through this project? About how many people will you reach? If you're not sure, give your best to estimate.
- *For workforce projects:* Tell us about supports you will provide participants, directly or through community partnerships, including during and after your program.

How Your Project Centers Racial Equity
- How will your idea be transformative? How will project advance racial equity in Evanston? How will you know if your project has been successful?
- Tell us how the voices of Black, Indigenous, and people of color are an integral part of your organization's overall decision-making processes. How do you engage program participants in determining your current and future programming?
- Tell us who do you plan to serve through this project

- About how many people do you expect to serve through this project? (if unsure, please give your best estimate)
- What percentage of people served through this project do you expect to be Evanston residents?
- What percentage of people served through this project do you expect to be BIPOC?

questions

Contact Program Officer Jenny Valdés Del Valle at valdesdelvalle@evanstonforever.org.