



The Lake-Geauga Fund

Submission Deadline: ~~Friday, September 8, 2023, by 5pm~~
Deadline Extended: Monday, September 25, 2023, by 5pm

BACKGROUND

The Lake-Geauga Fund (the “Fund”), an advised fund of the Cleveland Foundation, was established in 1988 primarily for the benefit of the residents of Lake and Geauga Counties. Over the past 30 years - utilizing the advice of its committee - the Fund has distributed over \$19 million. Since its inception, the Fund has been a critical resource to the Lake and Geauga County communities as it has provided funding to jumpstart new ideas, guide organizational strategy, leverage additional dollars, and address high priority program needs.

In 2015, the Foundation conducted an assessment of the Fund. After several months of evaluation, the Foundation’s Board adopted an integrated approach whereby Lake and Geauga County nonprofits have access to the Foundation’s monthly grantmaking opportunities. Therefore, the Lake-Geauga Fund now serves as an additional resource with a strategic grantmaking approach. To inform the current focus, the Cleveland Foundation convened the Advisory Committee to review localized data on community demographics and needs, as well as data on the ecosystem of nonprofits in Lake and Geauga Counties. This data revealed that in certain areas (e.g., broadband access), the community is doing quite well but in others (e.g., access to mental health services), opportunities to expand services exist. Based on the examination of this data, two areas of focus were identified for the 2023 grantmaking cycle.

FRAMEWORK & VALUES

The Fund is seeking programmatic grant proposals from organizations within the Cleveland Foundation’s footprint (Lake, Geauga, and Cuyahoga counties) that serve Lake and Geauga residents. Strong submissions will be rooted in community feedback, collaboration, partnership, and will align with the priorities and strategies outlined below.

Priority

- Seniors – Defined as any low-income resident over the age of 60 in Lake and/or Geauga counties.

Strategies

- Aging in Place – The Fund seeks to support programs that allow seniors to successfully remain safely in their homes or to age in place. Such services may include, but are not limited to, home repair, safety modifications, and maintenance services.

- Access to Supportive Services – Fund seeks to support projects that increase access to basic services for seniors including, but not limited to, meals and/or grocery delivery, transportation, and socialization.

Priority

- Mental Health – As the community and nation continues dealing with mental health profession staffing shortages, the demand for mental health services for all ages continues to rise.

Strategies

- Access to Services – The Fund seeks to support programs that will increase the capacity of providers to meet the demand for mental health services in their community. This could include, but is not limited to, clinical staffing, expansion of office space, partnerships with other entities, and telehealth technology.
- Promising Practices – Mental health services have historically been rooted in clinical settings which are vital for the community and supported within this Request for Proposals. Additionally, programs like peer-led support groups and other forums for community building and relational support also enhance mental health. As such, the Fund is open to considering practices that may not be clinical but are rooted in and built upon a foundation of data and research.

The Fund encourages program proposals that align with its values and have a positive impact on the Lake and Geauga County communities. Those values include:

Collaboration

COVID-19 has shown that community impact is amplified and sustained when people and organizations work together. Successful applicants will share this belief, exemplified in their application via the collaboratives and partnerships leveraged to increase and sustain programming. Please note, this does not mean that formal partnerships are required. Applicants who can demonstrate their ability to partner with other organizations are appreciated.

Public-Private Partnership

In addition to collaboration with other nonprofits, collaboration with local government and public entities is important as government funding has and will always be larger in scale than that of philanthropy. Therefore, the Fund encourages partnership with local government, elected officials, and/or public institutions whenever possible and appropriate.

Research-Informed

The Fund seeks to support programs designed upon a foundation of data and research. While the committee understands that best-practices started as “promising” practices, we seek to support programs that are research-informed and data-driven, even if not formally classified as a best-practice.

Valuing Lived Experience

Those with lived experience are the ones with the most practical knowledge in developing solutions to issues in our communities. The Fund values those voices and encourages partners to work strategically and authentically to lift them up.

Approximately \$230,000 is available for this RFP's grantmaking in 2023. The Fund will limit funding to one year and average grant awards will *likely* max out at \$30,000 but the Advisory Committee reserves the right to make awards outside this range. In preparing your budget, please be aware the requested amount should be realistic and align with the size and scope of the project. It is strongly encouraged to demonstrate that other resources are being contributed toward the proposed project.

QUESTION GUIDE

The following questions can serve as a guide to develop your application to the Lake Geauga Fund of the Cleveland Foundation. Reviewing them before proceeding with the application will ensure your project meets the established grant criteria. Strong consideration will be given to applicants that articulate how projects will be sustained beyond Cleveland Foundation funding.

- Please describe your organization's track record in working within the identified priority area (Seniors and/or Mental Health).
- Provide an overview of the program or project including its target audience, eligibility criteria, and how this program is integrated with other organizational services.
- How will this opportunity improve the lives of Lake and/or Geauga County residents (in the short-term and/or long-term)? What will be different because of the work being done?
- What has informed the design of the program for which you are seeking funding? How is research and/or best practices driving the approach?
- What organizations are you partnering with? How will these partners help address your priority?
- How will you ensure all voices in the community are included as part of the solution (i.e., gender and gender identity, race/ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, socio-economic)?
- How are you going to leverage Cleveland Foundation dollars to raise additional funding and/or in-kind support?
- What is the timeline for this program?

Please feel free to provide any other information in the online application that will help the Cleveland Foundation's Lake Geauga Fund better understand your proposal.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND REVIEW PROCESS

The Cleveland Foundation will host a Technical Assistance Session on Monday, August 21st from 10am to 11am. *Registration is required and can be completed: [here](#).* This session will be recorded and available on the Fund's website and will include an overview of the RFP and the Grants Gateway.

The review process for these applications includes several layers of input and dialogue. After submission, Grantmaking & Community Impact staff will conduct an initial review of applications. Once that screen is complete, the remaining applications will be shared with the Advisory Committee who will provide their own independent review and feedback. Once comments are organized, the Advisory Committee's Fall meeting will be spent in discussion and selection of those organizations that will receive funding.

Applications are due by ~~Friday, September 8th~~ **Monday, September 25th** and applicants should expect to hear from the Cleveland Foundation by early November 2023.

ELIGIBILITY

Grants are awarded to 501(c)3 tax-exempt organizations that provide programs and services that benefit the inhabitants of Lake and Geauga counties. All nonprofit organizations located in Cuyahoga, Lake, and Geauga counties and providing services in Lake and Geauga are eligible to apply. *Groups or organizations that do not have or are awaiting tax-exempt status must partner with a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization for the project to be considered for funding. The tax-exempt organization must initiate the application process and will be considered the Fund applicant.*

SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION

All applications must be submitted online through [Grants Gateway](#). If you do not have access to our online system, please begin the [registration process](#) on our website.

To begin the application, login to [Grants Gateway](#)

1. Establish or update your organization profile
2. Click on the *Apply for a Grant* link
3. Scroll down to find the **Lake-Geauga Fund application**
4. Complete the online application questions and then SUBMIT.
5. Once you have "Submitted", you can upload the Required Attachments, which include:
 - Applying organization's Board List
 - Letters of support from all partner institutions/agencies named in the application (if applicable)
 - Project Budget Form (Excel document)
 - Financial Audit
 - If applying with a fiscal agent/sponsor, a completed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining responsibilities and associated fees.

For questions about eligibility, the application process, or technical assistance with Grants Gateway, contact:

Grants Management
216-615-7254; grantsmgmt@clevefdn.org

For programmatic questions or information, contact:

Andrew Katusin, Officer of Grantmaking Initiatives
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