



CLEVELAND BLACK FUTURES FUND

Request for Proposals August 2022

Background

The Cleveland Black Futures Fund was launched in late 2020 with the overarching goal to strengthen the ecosystem of Black leaders and Black-serving organizations in Greater Cleveland by providing intentional resources to help grow organizational infrastructure and capacity. Long term, the fund aims to deepen the field of leaders working to dismantle systemic racism and advance the community towards racial equity. Since its inception, the Fund has amassed more than \$4.3M. On August 1, 2022, the Fund will launch its third round of grantmaking.

Round 3 Grant Types

In Round 3, applicants can apply for two types of grants: a monetary grant and a capacity building fellowship. Applicants are welcome to apply for one or both grant opportunities and are eligible to receive both.

Monetary Grant Award

Monetary grants range from \$15,000 to \$100,000. The Cleveland Black Futures Fund expects to award between 30 and 40 grants in Round 3.

Capacity Building Fellowship Grant

Capacity Building fellowships will be offered each round of the Cleveland Black Futures Fund. The cohort topics are determined by an analysis of the capacity building needs of previous applicants. For Round 3, four cohort-based fellowship programs will be offered to help participants build capacity in the areas of Leadership Development, Fund Development Strategy, Strategic Planning, and Marketing and Communications. Capacity building fellows will be provided a small stipend to offset the cost of participating in the fellowship. Up to 12 organizations will be selected to participate in each cohort, and cohorts are expected to launch early 2023.

Eligibility

The Cleveland Black Futures Fund will invest in Greater Cleveland-based nonprofit organizations that are BOTH Black-led and Black-serving, with the goal of building organizational capacity. Organizations based in Cuyahoga, Lake or Geauga counties may apply.

Applicant organizations may operate in a range of issue areas, but grants can only be made to organizations currently holding 501(c) 3 tax-exempt status with an operating budget of less than \$1M. Organizations that do not currently have 501(c) 3 tax-exempt status are eligible to apply in partnership with a tax-exempt organization serving as a fiscal sponsor.

Resources for Applicants

Nonprofit organizations seeking to apply for funding from the Cleveland Black Futures Fund in Round 3 can get more information about the grant opportunity and download an applicant guide [here](#). We invite interested applicants to attend a technical assistance workshop. Applicants that have attended technical assistance workshops will be eligible to take advantage of the one-on-one grant writing assistance. You can sign up for one of the technical assistance workshops [here](#).

Can Round 1 and 2 Applicants Apply?

The Cleveland Foundation received an overwhelming response for the initial two rounds of grantmaking—361 unique applications representing nearly \$29 million in funding requests. The amount of available funds was the leading determining factor in selecting our first two cohorts of grant recipients. Our volunteer grant reviewers had to decline many proposals in Rounds 1 and 2 simply because the requests far exceeded our resources. We will continue to grow this Fund and our capacity to support your work, and if you did not receive funding in the initial rounds, we do hope you will re-apply.

Organizations are limited to one grant from the Cleveland Black Futures Fund per year (e.g., an organization that received funding or a capacity-building fellowship in Round 2 will not be eligible to receive another grant until Round 4). However, organizations that applied but did not receive funding in Round 2 may apply again in Round 3. All Round 1 applicants, funded or non-funded, are eligible to apply. You can sign up to receive email updates about the fund [here](#).

Timeline

- August 1: The online application portal opens at noon. Please continue to check the Cleveland Black Futures Fund [website](#) for more information.
- July 26 - August 5: Technical Assistance Workshops are available for applicants, please use the drop-down box on the registration page to choose the date and time that works for you. [Click here to register.](#)
- August 1 - 31: Grant-writing Assistance Sessions are available. All applicants that attend a Technical Assistance Workshop are eligible to receive grant-writing assistance. Please click the link above to attend a Technical Assistance Workshop to sign up to receive grant-writing assistance.
- August 31: The Round 3 application deadline is August 31, 2022.
- Sept. 2022: Applicants who are advancing to the second stage in the review process will receive notification.
- Mid-Oct. 2022: Applicants who are advancing to the final stage in the review process will receive notification.
- December 2022: Notice and announcement of final funding decisions