



The overarching goal of the Cleveland Black Futures Fund (CBFF) is 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.

Cleveland Black Futures Fund Round 2 Applicant Guide

Hello!

Thank you for your interest in the Cleveland Black Futures Fund! The launch of the Cleveland Black Futures Fund represents a new and more intentionally anti-racist approach in the Cleveland Foundation's work, a direction that is necessary if we wish to move our entire community forward. We appreciate your leadership and the work you are doing in moving our community forward.

In this application packet, you'll find the Cleveland Black Futures Fund Grant Application, the Application Scoring Rubric, and the Frequently Asked Questions. All of this information can be found on the Cleveland Black Futures Fund [website](#).

With Gratitude,

The Cleveland Black Futures Fund

Table of Contents

Round 2 Application	3
Round Two Application Scoring Rubric	10
Key Dates for Round 2	12
Eligibility	12
Amount and Type of Grants	13
About Capacity Building	15
Application Process	16
Other Questions About the Cleveland Black Futures Fund	17

Round 2 Application

October, 2021

Section 1: About your Organization

1. **Organization Name:**

Mailing Address (Applicant address)

2. **Address of Headquarters**

- Headquarters/operational address:
 - Do you own, lease, have an in-kind/partnership space agreement, or other?
 - Is this the primary address for your program's work?
 - Yes/No
 - Is your program's office a commercial or residential office or other?

3. **Executive Director Contact Information**

- Name
- Email

4. **Applicant Contact/Project Person**

- Name
- Phone Number
- Email

5. **Organization Type**

- Which of the following categories does your organization primarily identify with?
 - Arts & Culture: Organizations that preserve core functions of our vital arts and culture sector.
 - Economic Development & Workforce: Organizations working to strengthen Greater Cleveland's economy to ensure equitable economic opportunities for all residents.
 - Education: Organizations working toward assuring access to a high-quality education that prepares every child to be independent thinkers, engaged citizens and successful adults.
 - Environment: Organizations working to preserve, protect and restore our region's environment to ensure residents can lead healthy lives today and in the future.
 - Leadership: Organizations working to attract talent in the workforce, civic sector, and at home - creating a place of opportunity from early childhood to retirement.
 - Neighborhood Revitalization & Engagement: Organizations working toward vibrant, healthy neighborhoods, with a focus on the interactions of people, place, and power.
 - Youth: Organizations working with young people to develop and lead happy, productive lives.

- Health & Social Services: Organizations seeking to provide residents of all ages and backgrounds access to equitable opportunities, comprehensive programming and holistic support systems that maximize their potential in school, work and life.
- Digital Excellence: Organizations working to build a strong, equitable, and resilient digital community.
- Other
- Does your organization identify with any other categories?

6. Staff and Volunteers

- Please tell us about your staff and volunteers.
 - # of Full-time staff, paid
 - # of part-time staff, paid
 - # of seasonal staff, paid
 - # of volunteers, unpaid
 - # of board members

7. Organization Mission:

- What is your organization's mission?

Section 2: About your Work

8. Programming

- Describe how your mission and programming meets the needs of the community.
- Please describe how your organization is uniquely positioned to meet the particular needs of the population you serve.

9. Service Population

- Which Geographical Area aligns best with your service area (select all that apply).
 - Cleveland - Downtown
 - Cleveland - Eastside
 - Cleveland - Westside
 - Greater Cleveland (City and Suburbs)
 - Cuyahoga County
 - Geauga County
 - Lake County
- If you serve the City of Cleveland, please check which neighborhoods you primarily serve:

- Broadway-Slavic Village
- Clark-Fulton
- Collinwood
- Detroit Shoreway
- Fairfax
- Glenville

- Hough
- Kinsman
- Lee-Harvard
- Little Italy
- Midtown
- Ohio City

- Old Brooklyn
- Shaker Square
- St. Clair-Superior
- Tremont
- University Circle
- West Park

- Which of the following populations does your organization serve? Select all that apply.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Children and Youth | <input type="checkbox"/> Black Individuals | <input type="checkbox"/> People Over 60 Years of Age |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Healthcare, Service, and Part-time Workers | <input type="checkbox"/> LatinX Individuals | <input type="checkbox"/> Homeless or Housing Insecure |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Incarcerated or Returning Individuals | <input type="checkbox"/> Other People of Color | <input type="checkbox"/> LGBTQ+ Individuals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> People with Limited English Proficiency | <input type="checkbox"/> People with Physical or Mental Health Needs | <input type="checkbox"/> Refugees |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low-Income Individuals | <input type="checkbox"/> People with disabilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnant Individuals | |

10. Program Timing

- Is your programming seasonal or year-round? (choose one)
 - Seasonal
 - Year-Round

11. Strengths

- What are your organization's top three strengths?

12. Challenges

- What are the top three challenges your organization needs to solve?

13. Capacity Building Needs

What are your top 3 greatest capacity building needs?

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Board Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Fundraising and Grant Writing | <input type="checkbox"/> Risk Management / Disaster Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Business Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology | <input type="checkbox"/> Staff Salaries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Leadership and Management Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Planning or Long-term Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion | <input type="checkbox"/> Legal Services | <input type="checkbox"/> Succession Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evaluation | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing and Communications | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facilities and Operations Costs | <input type="checkbox"/> Program Development | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Management | | |

14. Partnerships

- Please describe how your organization leverages partnerships to increase the impact of your programming or operations.

Section 3: Support Type

NOTE: Applicants can apply for both types of grants (monetary and capacity building program).

15. For which of the following grants is your organization applying to?
 - Monetary Grant Award only
 - Participation in Capacity Building Program only
 - Both
16. Show for monetary awards only: Please select which amount you are applying for:
 - \$100,000 (up to 5 grants are available)
 - \$75,000 (up to 10 grants are available)
 - \$50,000 (up to 10 grants are available)
 - \$25,000 (at least 10 grants are available)<go to section 4 if monetary grant award only>
17. Show for capacity building program only: Please select which cohort you are applying for:
 - Leadership Development
 - Fund Development Strategy
 - Long-term/strategic planning
 - Marketing and Communications



Section 4: Use of Funds (for monetary grant award applicants only).

18. Please select which categories you apply these funds to: (only select up to 3)

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| ● Board Development | ● Fundraising and Grant Writing | ● Risk Management / Disaster Planning |
| ● Business Planning | ● Information Technology | ● Staff Salaries |
| ● Collaboration Development | ● Leadership and Management Development | ● Strategic Planning or Long-term Planning |
| ● Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion | ● Legal Services | ● Succession Planning |
| ● Evaluation | ● Marketing and Communications | |
| ● Facilities and Operations Costs | ● Program Development | |
| ● Financial Management | | |

19. Please describe how you would spend these dollars.

20. Please complete the budget tables below.

Organization Name:				
Total amount requested:				
Requested grant period:				

PROJECT INCOME	Anticipated	Committed	Total	Line Item Description
-----------------------	--------------------	------------------	--------------	------------------------------

Please provide details for each line item in your project budget. Example: Other Foundations- Gund Foundation has awarded \$15,000 listed under Committed column; a proposal that is pending with Sisters of Charity for \$10,000 listed under Anticipated column.

The Cleveland Foundation				
Other Foundations				
Government Grants or Contracts				
Organizational Budget (ie: individual contributions, fundraising events/products, membership/fees/earned income, endowed income)				
In-kind support				
Other				
TOTAL				

PROJECT EXPENSES	Cleveland Foundation Request	Other Funding	Total	Line Item Description
------------------	------------------------------------	---------------	-------	--------------------------

Please provide details for each line item in your project budget. Example: Salary and Wages - \$3,500 in wages will support the Early Childhood Coordinator to implement the program in classrooms and small groups. Wages were calculated as 10% of the Coordinator's time at a salary of \$35,000.

Salaries and Wages				
Consultants and professional services				
Travel				
Equipment				
Office Supplies/Materials				
Postage/Mailing				
Indirect expenses (ie: rent/occupancy, utilities, maintenance)				
Other				
TOTAL				

*If your request is for capital expenses, please edit or add the line items to include the following:

Acquisition Expenses	Construction Expenses
Lands Costs	Construction or Renovation Costs
Building Costs	Fees
	Equipment

21. Please describe how these funds will build your capacity to better fulfill your mission.

22. If awarded the grant, when would your organization begin proposed activities?

a. <Options> Immediately, Within 3-months, Within 6-months, Other

Section 5: Capacity Building Fellowship

Please describe how participating in a cohort-based program will be beneficial to the growth and development of your organization.

23. Who from your organization would participate in the program? (choose up to 2)

- Executive Director
- Leadership Team Member
- Board Member
- Program Manager
- Staff Member

- Other:
- 24. If chosen for this particular program, can your organization commit to attending sessions, conducting follow-up, and making the program a priority?
 - Yes
 - Yes, but I will need to make sure it fits with my schedule first!
 - Yes, but I will likely miss a few sessions because things come up!
 - I can't commit to attending every session, but I will try
 - Other:

Section 6: Demographic Data

This section will collect information about the race of your Executive Director, Board, Leadership Team, and population served.

Documents to Upload:

- Line Item Project Budget
- Board List with Affiliations
- Organization Budget
- Current audit report or most recent financial statement if no audit available
- Optional Additional attachments pertinent to the project

Round Two Application Scoring Rubric

Main Category	Subcategories	1 <i>Below expected level</i>	3 <i>At expected level</i>	5 <i>Above expected level</i>
Alignment with Goals	Purpose Part I	<i>The organization is either not black-led and black-serving or does not have a need for capacity building support.</i>	<i>The organization is black-led and black-serving with capacity building needs, however hasn't defined a clear or specific capacity building need.</i>	<i>The organization is black-led and black-serving with capacity building needs, however hasn't defined a clear or specific capacity building need.</i>
	Purpose Part II	<i>The organization lacks understanding of the needs of its community or has not made a case for why it is uniquely positioned to meet those needs.</i>	<i>The organization has a deep understanding of or is uniquely positioned to meet the needs of its community, but hasn't articulated the connection between the two.</i>	<i>The organization has a deep understanding of the needs of its community and is uniquely positioned to meet those needs.</i>
	Budget	<i>The budget is nonexistent, inaccurate, or not reasonable for the expressed need or size of the organization.</i>	<i>The budget mostly aligns with the stated need, is somewhat reasonable for the size of the organization, but has questionable or incomplete components.</i>	<i>The budget accurately reflects the need for resources, is reasonable as it relates to the size of the organization, and is reasonable relative to the expressed needs.</i>
	Geography	<i>The organization is outside of or does not serve Cleveland Foundation's geographical footprint (Cuyahoga, Lake, Geauga).</i>	<i>Some people the organization serves are within Cleveland Foundations' geographical footprint (Cuyahoga, Lake, Geauga).</i>	<i>The organization serves people within Cleveland Foundation's geographical areas.</i>
	Program Areas	<i>The organization does not align with Cleveland Foundation program areas and does not appear to have the capacity (staff, skills, etc.) needed to be successful at this effort. The project is unlikely to succeed.</i>	<i>The organization somewhat aligns with Cleveland Foundation program areas and demonstrates the capacity, staffing, and skills needed to execute this idea, and/or the organization has articulated how this award will help to build that capacity.</i>	<i>The organization aligns with one or more of Cleveland Foundation's program areas and has significant capacity (staff, skills, other programming, etc.) needed to execute this idea, and has a strong plan in place. The project is highly likely to succeed.</i>
Capacity Building Needs	Capacity to Apply Funding	<i>The organization does not have the organizational or human capacity to apply the grant to its stated purpose.</i>	<i>The organization might have the organizational and human capacity to apply the resources to its stated purpose, but it is questionable.</i>	<i>The organization has the organizational and human capacity to apply the grant to its stated purpose.</i>
	Clarity of Need	<i>The organization has not identified how it will use a Cleveland Black Futures Fund grant to build capacity.</i>	<i>The organization has identified at least one way it will build capacity utilizing the Cleveland Black Futures Fund, but it is vague or unaligned.</i>	<i>The organization has identified one or more ways it will build capacity utilizing the Cleveland Black Futures Fund and has clearly described how it will affect their organization.</i>

	Connection between building capacity and services	<i>The proposal does not explain how receiving the grant will build its capacity to provide better services.</i>	<i>The proposal does explain how receiving the grant will build its capacity to provide better services, but the explanation is vague or unclear.</i>	<i>The proposal clearly articulates how receiving the grant will build its capacity to provide better services.</i>
Impact of Grant	Population Served	<i>The organization does not appear to provide culturally appropriate/specific services to a marginalized population affected by racism.</i>	<i>The organization does appear to provide culturally appropriate/specific services to a marginalized population affected by racism, however the connection is unclear or vague.</i>	<i>The organization provides culturally appropriate services to a population marginalized by the effects of racism.</i>
	Sustainability	<i>It is unlikely that even with the resources of the Black Futures Fund the organization will become sustainable over time.</i>	<i>The organization does appear to provide culturally appropriate/specific services to a marginalized population affected by racism, however the connection is unclear or vague.</i>	<i>The organization provides culturally appropriate services to a population marginalized by the effects of racism.</i>
Outcomes	Connection between need, mission, and programming	<i>There is no connection between the organization's mission and programming.</i>	<i>There is a lack of clarity in how the programming fits within the mission or how the mission and/or program meets community needs.</i>	<i>There is a strong connection between community need and the organization's mission and programming</i>
	Ability to Leverage Collaboration to Increase impact	<i>The organization has not identified partners for the organization.</i>	<i>The organization has identified partners but it is unclear about how these partnerships enhance programming or operations.</i>	<i>The organization has partners that strengthen the operations or programming.</i>
			Score	XX/65

Cleveland Black Futures Fund

Applicant FAQ Sheet

Key Dates for Round 2

- November 15, 2021: Round 2 Launch Webinar at 5:00 p.m. ([click here to register](#))
- Week of November 15, 2021: Online application portal will open. Please continue to check back online for more information.
- November 22, 2021-January 18, 2022: Grant Writing Assistance ([click here to register](#))
- November 29, 2021-January 6, 2021: Technical Assistance Workshops ([click here to register](#))
- January 20, 2022: Application deadline (extended from previous date of January 18th to accommodate for the MLK holiday)
- February, 2022: Notification to applicants who are not advancing to the second stage in the review process
- March, 2022: Notification to applicants who are not advancing to the final stage in the review process
- End of March: Notice of Final Funding Decisions

Eligibility

Who is eligible to apply?

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.

What is 501(c)3 tax-exempt status and how can my organization obtain it?

501(c)3 is a section of the Internal Revenue Code that describes the [requirements](#) for an organization to be considered tax exempt by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). Organizations must [apply to the IRS](#) to receive 501(c)3 tax-exempt status. Your organization must also maintain its tax-exempt status over time by following certain rules. Learn more about applying for, and maintaining, tax-exempt status [here](#).

The Cleveland Foundation can only make grants to organizations that are recognized as tax exempt by the IRS. If your organization does not yet have tax-exempt status, you may be able to apply for a grant using a fiscal sponsor.

What is a fiscal sponsor and how does that process work?

If you are doing mission-driven work, but your organization doesn't have tax-exempt status, you may be able to apply for a grant through a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that is willing and able to serve as your fiscal sponsor. If you decide to apply with a fiscal sponsor, the sponsor will submit

the application on your behalf and must indicate the sponsorship arrangement in the application. However, the application narrative and responses should be written from the perspective of your organization. If the application is approved, the fiscal sponsor will receive the grant funds and distribute them to you. Check out these resources to learn more:

- [Fiscal Sponsorship for Nonprofits \(National Council of Nonprofits\)](#)
- [Fiscal Sponsorship: Who Does What? \(National Council of Nonprofits Infographic\)](#)

If you have specific questions about whether a fiscal sponsor is a good option for you to receive funding from the Cleveland Black Futures Fund, please sign up for a Technical Assistance session.

What do you mean by Black-led and Black serving?

For the purposes of this grant, we seek to support organizations that have Black chief executive leadership AND that serve the Black community. Unfortunately, national data show us that the race of an organization's executive leadership has historically been correlated with its likelihood of obtaining grant funding. Therefore, this grant opportunity is designed to be intentional about providing grant funding to organizations with Black leaders. Organizations that serve Black communities but do not have Black executive leaders will not be eligible for this particular grant opportunity.

I applied in the first round. Can I apply again?

The Cleveland Foundation received an overwhelming response for the initial round of grantmaking—223 unique applications representing nearly \$20 million in funding requests. The amount of available funds was the determining factor in selecting our first cohort of grant recipients. Our volunteer committee had to decline many proposals in Round 1 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 Round 1 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 in Round 1 will not be eligible to receive another grant until Round 3). However, organizations that applied but did not receive funding in Round 1 may apply again in Round 2. You can sign up to receive email updates about the fund [here](#).

Amount and Type of Grants

What are the funding priorities?

The overarching goal of the Cleveland Black Futures Fund is 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. The Cleveland Foundation supports organizations that work to solve problems and innovate in the areas of education, environment, youth and health and human services, arts and culture, and economic development.

Will applicants who applied during Round 1 but did not receive funding be prioritized in Round 2?

The Cleveland Foundation received an overwhelming response for the initial round of grantmaking—223 unique applications representing nearly \$20 million in funding requests. The amount of

available funds was the determining factor in selecting our first cohort of grant recipients. Our volunteer committee had to decline many proposals in Round 1 simply because the requests far exceeded our resources. While we will continue to grow this Fund and our capacity to support the work of all Black-led and Black-serving nonprofits, we will designate 50-75% of the funds available for Round 2 to returning Round 1 applicants.

What type of Grants are available in Round 2?

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 \$25,000 to \$100,000. The Cleveland Black Futures Fund expects to award up to 35 grants in Round 2. See the answer to the question 'How much should my organization apply for?' for details on the different grant levels.

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 Rounds 2 and 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 15 organizations will be selected to participate in each cohort, and cohorts are expected to launch late spring / early summer 2022.

How much should my organization apply for?

Use the categories below to determine what amount your organization would be best positioned for.

\$100,000 Grant Award

- During each round, the Cleveland Black Futures Fund will award **up to five grants** of \$100,000 each. Organizations will be best positioned to receive a \$100,000 grants if they:
 - have at least 1 paid FTE (full time equivalent) employee. Having more than 1 employee to accommodate the 1 FTE requirement is acceptable (i.e. two 0.5 employees or four 0.25 employees make 1 FTE).;
 - can clearly demonstrate how receiving the grant will build capacity to provide better services that are needed in the community;
 - have funding from at least three additional sources; and
 - have a mission and programming that addresses more than one need. (ex. Housing insecurity for families with children).

\$75,000 Grant Award

- During each round, the Cleveland Black Futures Fund will award **up to five grants** of \$75,000 each. Organizations will be best positioned to receive grants of this amount if they:

- have at least 1 paid PTE (part time equivalent) employee. Having more than 1 employee to accommodate the 1 PTE requirement is acceptable (i.e. two employees working 10 hours per week is equal to 1 part-time employee);
- can clearly demonstrate how receiving the grant will build capacity to provide better services that are needed in the community; and
- have funding from at least one additional source.

\$50,000 Grant Award

- During each round, the Cleveland Black Futures Fund will award **up to ten grants** of \$50,000 each. Organizations will be best positioned to receive grants of this amount if they:
 - can clearly demonstrate how receiving the grant will build capacity to provide better services that are needed in the community; and
 - have funding from at least one additional source.

\$25,000 Grant Award

- During each round, the Cleveland Black Futures Fund will award **at least ten grants** of \$25,000 each. Organizations will be best positioned to receive grants of this amount if they:
 - can clearly demonstrate how receiving the grant will build capacity to provide better services that are needed in the community.

How many grants will the Cleveland Black Futures Fund be making in Round 2?

During Round 2, the Cleveland Black Futures Fund is expecting to award a total of \$1,500,000 in monetary grant awards, in the categories outlined above. We expect to award up to five grants of \$100,000, up to 10 grants of \$75,000, and at least 20 grants of \$50,000 or \$25,000.

In addition, the Cleveland Black Futures Fund will award 40-60 organizations a Capacity Building Fellowship that covers participation and a stipend. Up to 15 organizations can receive a Fellowship in one of the following categories:

- Leadership Development
- Fund Development Strategy
- Long-term/strategic planning
- Marketing and Communications

If I apply for \$100,000 and don't get it, will I be considered for another grant amount?

Yes, if an organization applies for \$100,000 or \$75,000, but does not receive that grant, they are still eligible to receive a grant award of a lesser amount.

How will my application be evaluated?

All applications will be evaluated by a review team comprised of community leaders, Cleveland Black Futures Fund Advisory Committee members, and Cleveland Foundation program officers and staff. A scoring rubric will be used to determine how well proposals describe the organization and programming.

About Capacity Building

Why organizational capacity?

[Candid.org](#) states: “Capacity building can help make an organization more focused, efficient, and productive,” and this, “makes it easier to attract the money, leadership and visibility that nonprofits need to thrive.”

What are some examples of organizational capacity activities and components?

The [Free Management Library](#) describes a host of capacity building activities, including:

- Board development
- Business planning
- Evaluation
- Facilities planning
- Financial management
- Fundraising
- Information technology
- Leadership development
- Legal services
- Management development
- Marketing
- Program design
- Quality management
- Staffing
- Strategic planning

This is not an exhaustive list but is meant to provide some insight into the types of activities the Cleveland Black Futures Fund welcomes in proposals. Learn more about capacity building activities [here](#).

Application Process

When is the deadline to apply?

Round 2 of the Cleveland Black Futures Fund will open on November 15, 2021. The deadline to apply is January 20, 2022.

What if my application is not funded in Round 2?

A decline for now is not a permanent decline. The Cleveland Black Futures Fund plans on conducting two rounds of grantmaking per year for the next five years, one each winter and one each summer. If your first application does not get funded, we hope you will re-apply in a future round. You can sign up to receive email updates about the fund [here](#).

Can I meet one-on-one with anyone to help me get my application ready?

We know that many organizations will have questions about how to best prepare your application during Round 2. While we would love to meet with each organization individually, we learned during Round 1 that we don't have the capacity to do this well. We've designed a series of technical assistance workshops and one-on-one grant writing assistance opportunities to ensure that each organization can get its questions answered. We kindly ask that you attend the Round 2 Launch Webinar, a technical assistance workshop, and take advantage of the one-on-one grant writing assistance available to you before reaching out to Cleveland Foundation program team members individually. You can sign up for one of the technical assistance workshops [here](#). You can sign up for a grant writing assistance session [here](#).

Will there be future grantmaking rounds? When?

The Cleveland Black Futures Fund hopes to continue its work through two grant cycles per year, one each winter and summer for the foreseeable future.

I have additional questions. How can I learn more?

Due to the volume of applicants, the Cleveland Foundation is unable to meet with every applicant one-on-one. If you are seeking guidance on your application, we kindly ask that you attend the Round 2 Launch Webinar, a technical assistance workshop, and take advantage of the one-on-one grant writing assistance available to you before reaching out to Cleveland Foundation program team members individually. You can sign up for one of the technical assistance workshops [here](#). You can sign up for a grant writing assistance session [here](#). For programmatic questions or information, contact: ClevelandBlackFuturesFund@clevelandfn.org. For application or technical questions, contact: grantsmgmt@clevelandfn.org.

Other Questions About the Cleveland Black Futures Fund

Why a specific fund?

The Cleveland Black Futures Fund was established to acknowledge that Black residents of Cleveland face a higher likelihood of negative life outcomes solely because of the color of their skin. In the city of Cleveland's historically redlined neighborhoods, where more than 90% of residents are Black, the life expectancy is nearly 24 years less than in suburbs a mere seven miles away, where more than 90% of residents are white.

According to [2018 research from The Center for Community Solutions](#), Black residents in Cleveland are more likely to experience higher rates of infant mortality and childhood poverty, be overrepresented in the criminal justice system, be disproportionately represented in lower wage occupations and have shorter life expectancies. Data indicates that these disparities in life outcomes cross all socioeconomic barriers.

The Association of Black Foundation Executives (ABFE) has also reported that significant inequities exist within the national philanthropic field at a time when outcomes and disparities for Black children, families and neighborhoods in many areas have widened.

We are guided by the principle that the people closest to the problem are often closest to the solution. We know that there are many dynamic, trusted organizations already working within the community to eradicate these disparities and more. This fund is an intentional opportunity to incubate and accelerate the visions of active Black community leaders, especially those who have not previously secured much institutional philanthropic support.

Where did the money come from for this fund, and will it affect the foundation's traditional grantmaking?

Foundation staff identified a restricted fund as the source for the initial \$2.5 million investment, allowing for our traditional grantmaking to proceed unaffected, which includes funding for Black-led and Black-serving organizations that apply as part of our standard monthly and quarterly grantmaking cycles. Thanks to the contributions of generous donors, the Cleveland Black Futures Fund has amassed more than \$4.3 million since its inception. The Cleveland Black Futures Fund is currently working to raise additional dollars to support this work.

Why the name "Cleveland Black Futures Fund"?

The Cleveland Black Futures Fund is part of a larger movement to address historic funding inequities and well-documented disparities in outcomes affecting Black people and Black-led organizations in our communities. When choosing a name for our fund, we felt it was important

that the name be short, descriptive, and inspirational – and that it acknowledge the fund’s place-based and placekeeping focus. We sought a forward-looking name that stood for something rather than against something. The name Cleveland Black Futures Fund evokes the concept of Afrofuturism, defined by sociologist Alondra Nelson as describing, “visions of the future...through the experience and perspective of African diasporic communities.” We are aware of longstanding efforts and funds nationally and in other sectors with similar names or focus areas. The Black Arts Future Fund supports Black-led arts organizations nationwide. The name also draws inspiration from our peer community foundations that have launched similar funds, such as the Seattle Foundation’s Black Future Co-op Fund. We celebrate the work of these philanthropic advocates for the Black future.

How long will this fund exist?

Dismantling structural racism is not an overnight project. This fund is designed to launch a long-term strategy of building Black-led organizations to lead in this work. This work should be additive to, not in replacement of, what we are already funding to improve the lives of all Greater Clevelanders. We must be committed for the long haul.

Why were other people of color and marginalized populations not included in this funding list?

We believe in working with specificity and intention. Racial inequity is not a simple Black/white divide, and the strategies and tactics to address racial inequities must be specific and tailored to communities. Furthermore, the needs of all racial and ethnic communities are too vast for one fund to address; we felt it was critical to initially develop a strategy to address some of the funding inequities that have specifically affected the Black community.

At the same time, because solutions will not be one-size-fits-all, the Cleveland Foundation is working with partners to develop strategies that address the particular needs of other communities of color.

I want to help. Can I contribute to this fund?

The foundation encourages individual donors, philanthropic foundations and companies to contribute to the fund. Donations of any amount are welcomed, and all contributions are eligible for a charitable deduction. You can give here: ClevelandFoundation.org/FuturesFund.

If you are a Cleveland Foundation fund holder and would like to recommend a grant from your fund, please log in to the donor portal or contact your donor relations officer for instructions.