



*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 3 Applicant Guide**

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](#).

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# Round 3 Application

June 2022

## **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?

**8. Annual Revenue:**

- What was the annual revenue that your organization had in your most recent fiscal year?

**9. Fiscal Agent:**

- Does this request involve the use of a Fiscal Agent? (Yes/No)
  - If so, who is the Fiscal Agent? (Short Answer)
  - What group/entity is being fiscally sponsored? (Short Answer)

**10. Applicant History:**

- Is this your first time applying to the Cleveland Foundation? (Yes/No)
- Is this your first time applying to the Cleveland Black Futures Fund? (Yes/No)

**Section 2: About your Work**

**11. 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.

**12. Service Population**

- Which Geographical Area aligns best with your service area. Please select one.
  - Cleveland - All Neighborhoods
  - Cleveland - Mainly Downtown
  - Cleveland - Mainly Eastside
  - Cleveland - Mainly Westside
  - Greater Cleveland (City and Suburbs)
  - Cuyahoga County - Whole County
  - Geauga County
  - Lake County

- Below is a list of populations that organizations serve; we know that many organizations serve many populations.. Please check the primary population your organization serves below. (choose one)

- |  |   |   |
|--|---|---|
| ○ Children and Youth                         | ○ People with Limited English Proficiency | ○ People with Physical or Mental Health Needs |
| ○ Healthcare, Service, and Part-time Workers | ○ Low-Income Individuals                  | ○ People with disabilities                    |
| ○ Incarcerated or Returning Individuals      | ○ Black Individuals                       | ○ Pregnant Individuals                        |
|  | ○ LatinX Individuals                      | ○ People Over 60 Years of Age                 |
|  | ○ Other People of Color                   |   |

- Homeless or Housing Insecure
- LGBTQ+ Individuals
- Refugees
- Other

13. Below is a list of populations that organizations serve; we know that many organizations serve many populations. Please check a second primary population your organization serves below. (choose one)

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

14. **Program Timing**

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

15. **Strengths**

- What are your organization's top three strengths?

16. **Challenges**

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

17. **Capacity Building Needs**

Below is a list of common capacity building needs for organizations. Please list your top 3 greatest capacity building needs below.

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

18. **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).

19. For which of the following grants is your organization applying to?

- Monetary Grant Award only
- Participation in Capacity Building Program only
- Both

20. Please select which amount you are applying for:

- \$100,000

- \$75,000
- \$50,000
- \$25,000
- \$15,000
- N/A - I am applying for the Capacity-Building Fellowship only

21. Please select which cohort you are applying for:

- Leadership Development
- Fund Development Strategy
- Long-term/strategic planning
- Marketing and Communications
- N/A - I am applying for the Monetary Grant only



**Section 4: Use of Funds**

Below is a list of capacity building categories in which you can apply funds to. Please select which area you are planning on applying a majority of your funding request to. If applying for the Capacity-Building Fellowship only, please skip this question.

- |                                    |   |   |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| ● 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          | ● N/A - I am applying for the Capacity-Building Fellowship only |
| ● Facilities and Operations Costs  | ● Program Development                   |   |
| ● Financial Management             |   |   |

22. Please describe how you would spend these dollars. If you received a grant in Round 1, please describe how you used the previous grant, and how you will use this new grant. If applying for the Capacity-Building Fellowship only, please put N/A in the section below.

23. Please complete the budget tables below to reflect the budget of the particular project you are applying for a monetary grant to support. If you are applying for a fellowship award only, please skip this section.

<b>Organization Name:</b>				
<b>Total amount requested:</b>				
<b>Requested grant period:</b>				

<b>PROJECT EXPENSES</b>	<b>Cleveland Foundation Request</b>	<b>Other Funding</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Line Item Description</b>
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.				
<b>Salaries and Wages</b>				
<b>Consultants and professional services</b>				
<b>Travel</b>				
<b>Equipment</b>				
<b>Office Supplies/Materials</b>				
<b>Postage/Mailing</b>				
<b>Indirect expenses (ie: rent/occupancy, utilities, maintenance)</b>				
<b>Other</b>				
<b>TOTAL</b>				

24. If you are applying and did not previously receive a grant from the Black Futures Fund: Please describe how these funds will build your capacity to better fulfill your mission. If you did receive a grant from the Black Futures Fund in Round 1, please describe how a second grant will help your organization to continue to build capacity. If applying for the Capacity-Building Fellowship only, please skip this question.

25. If awarded the grant, when would your organization begin proposed activities? (choose one) If applying for the Capacity-Building Fellowship only, please skip this question.

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

**Section 5: Capacity Building Fellowship**

26. Please describe how participating in a cohort-based program will be beneficial to the growth and development of your organization. If applying for the monetary grant only, please put N/A in the section below.
27. Who from your organization would participate in the program? (choose one)
- Executive Director
  - Leadership Team Member
  - Board Member
  - Program Manager
  - Staff Member
  - Other:
  - N/A - applying for the monetary grant only.
28. 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:
  - N/A - applying for the monetary grant only.

**Section 6: Demographic Data**

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

29. Racial demographic of your Executive Director:
- White/Caucasian/European
  - Black/African American/African
  - Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx
  - Native American/Indigenous
  - Asian/Asian American/Pacific Islander
  - Multiracial/Multiethnic
  - Additional Ethnicities
  - Unknown or Decline to State

30. Racial makeup of your Board of Directors (in percentages)

White/Caucasian/European	
Black/African American/African	
Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx	



Native American/Indigenous	
Asian/Asian American/Pacific Islander	
Multiracial/Multiethnic	
Additional Ethnicities	
Unknown or Decline to State	
<b>Total (should equal 100%)</b>	

31. Racial makeup of your Leadership Staff (in percentages)

White/Caucasian/European	
Black/African American/African	
Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx	
Native American/Indigenous	
Asian/Asian American/Pacific Islander	
Multiracial/Multiethnic	
Additional Ethnicities	
Unknown or Decline to State	
<b>Total (should equal 100%)</b>	

32. Racial makeup of your Staff (in percentages)

White/Caucasian/European	
Black/African American/African	

Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx	
Native American/Indigenous	
Asian/Asian American/Pacific Islander	
Multiracial/Multiethnic	
Additional Ethnicities	
Unknown or Decline to State	
<b>Total (should equal 100%)</b>	

33. Racial makeup of your Population Served (in percentages)

White/Caucasian/European	
Black/African American/African	
Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx	
Native American/Indigenous	
Asian/Asian American/Pacific Islander	
Multiracial/Multiethnic	
Additional Ethnicities	
Unknown or Decline to State	
<b>Total (should equal 100%)</b>	

**Documents to Upload:**

- Board List with Affiliations
- Organization Budget (all applicants, both monetary and fellowship)
- Current audit report or most recent financial statement if no audit available

- Optional Additional attachments pertinent to the project

## Round Three Application Scoring Rubric

Main Category	Subcategories	1 <i>Below expected level</i>	3 <i>At expected level</i>	5 <i>Above expected level</i>
<b>Alignment with Goals</b>	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, and has defined a clear 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 or how it is able to meet those needs of the community it serves.</i>	<i>The organization has a deep understanding of its community and may be able to utilize that understanding to meet the needs of the community it serves.</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 of the organization's services are within Cleveland Foundations' geographical footprint (Cuyahoga, Lake, Geauga).</i>	<i>The organization serves within Cleveland Foundation's geographical footprint.</i>
<b>Capacity Building Needs</b>	Program Areas	<i>The organization does not align with Cleveland Foundation program areas and does not appear to have the capacity 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 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 needed to execute this idea, and has a strong plan in place. The project is highly likely to succeed.</i>
	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	<i>The proposal does not explain how receiving</i>	<i>The proposal does explain how receiving the</i>	<i>The proposal clearly articulates how</i>

	between building capacity and services	<i>the grant will build its capacity to provide better services.</i>	<i>grant will build its capacity to provide better services, but the explanation is vague or unclear.</i>	<i>receiving the grant will build its capacity to provide better services.</i>
<b>Impact of Grant</b>	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>It is likely that investment from the Cleveland Black Futures Fund will help this organization move toward sustainability.</i>	<i>With investment from the Cleveland Black Futures Fund, this organization is highly likely to continue its path toward sustainability.</i>
<b>Outcomes</b>	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 any partners.</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>
			<b>Score</b>	<b>XX/60</b>

# Cleveland Black Futures Fund

## Applicant FAQ Sheet

### **Round 3 Key Information and Timeline -**

- August 1: The online application portal opens at noon. Please continue to check the Cleveland Black Futures Fund [website](#) for more information.
- August 1- 31: Three 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

## 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 shows 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 and/or second round. Can I apply again?](#)

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 or a fellowship in Round 2 may apply again in Round 4. All Round 1 applicants, funded or non-funded, are eligible to reapply in Round 3. 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.

### [What type of Grants are available 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 up to 40 grants in Round 3. 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 12 organizations will be selected to participate in each cohort, and cohorts are expected to launch in early 2023.

### 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 7 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.

#### *\$15,000 or \$25,000 Grant Award*

- During each round, the Cleveland Black Futures Fund will award **at least ten grants** of \$15,000 or \$25,000. 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 3?

During Round 3, the Cleveland Black Futures Fund is expecting to award a total of \$1,000,000 in monetary grant awards, in the categories outlined above. We expect to award up to five grants of \$100,000, up to five grants of \$75,000, and nearly 20 grants of \$50,000 or less.

In addition, the Cleveland Black Futures Fund will award approximately 40-44 organizations a Capacity Building Fellowship that covers the cost of participation in the program and a small participation stipend. Up to 12 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 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    | ● Information technology | ● Marketing          |
| ● Business planning    | ● Leadership development | ● Program design     |
| ● Evaluation           | ● Legal services         | ● Quality management |
| ● Facilities planning  | ● Management development | ● Staffing           |
| ● Financial management |                          | ● Strategic planning |
| ● Fundraising          |                          |                      |

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 3 of the Cleveland Black Futures Fund will open on August 1, 2022. The deadline to apply is August 31, 2022.

### What if my application is not funded in Round 3?

A decline for now is not a permanent decline. The Cleveland Black Futures Fund plans on conducting grantmaking for the foreseeable future. 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 3. 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 watch the [Round 3 Launch](#) Video, attend 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](#). Applicants that attend a technical assistance workshop are eligible to receive 1:1 grant-writing assistance, which you can sign up for during the technical assistance workshop.

#### [Will there be future grantmaking rounds? When?](#)

The Cleveland Black Futures Fund hopes to continue grantmaking once per year 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 watch the Round 3 Launch Video, attend 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](#). Applicants that attend a technical assistance workshop are eligible to receive 1:1 grant-writing assistance, which you can sign up for during the technical assistance workshop.

For programmatic questions or information, contact: [ClevelandBlackFuturesFund@clevelandfn.org](mailto:ClevelandBlackFuturesFund@clevelandfn.org). For application or technical questions, contact: [grantsmgmt@clevelandfn.org](mailto: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](https://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.