2025 APPLICATION QUESTIONS

**Forever Austin Fund**

**This document is for reference ONLY. All applications must be filled out and submitted through the Foundation’s online grant portal.**

# Introduction & Eligibility

Please note all proposals for the Forever Austin Fund grant cycle are due **Friday, April 25, by 5 p.m. Central Time**.

### Timeline

### Application Opens: Monday, March 3, 2025

* **Applications Due:** Friday, April 18, 2025, by 5 p.m. Central Time
* **Award Decisions Announced:** July 15, 2025

**Connect with Us**

* **Grant Opportunity Contact:** Rachel Joachimi, **rjoachimi@austincf.org**

**Funding Categories**

Every year, ACF will make Forever Austin Fund grants to address both urgent and systemic needs in Central Texas. This year, our grants will focus on Economic Mobility, Health & Humanities, and Nurturing our Region.

**Economic Mobility**: Ensuring paths to economic mobility for Central Texans is a critical strategy in ACF's focus to close the opportunity gap. By partnering with and funding organizations that tackle immediate and systemic economic challenges, we aim to eliminate wealth disparities and create lasting change. Grants in this category will focus on four key areas:

* **Housing Stability**: Stable housing is the anchor of economic mobility. When individuals and families have access to safe, affordable housing—whether renting or owning—they can build assets and work toward long-term economic mobility. ACF will invest in strategies that support housing stability and/or create asset-building opportunities through home ownership.
* **Career Pathways & Resources**: For many Central Texans, limited job opportunities, lack of affordable childcare, senior care, and unreliable transportation make finding and keeping stable employment difficult. Earning a living wage is essential for building financial security and weathering economic ups and downs. ACF will invest in programs that support access, sustainability, and mobility among living-wage careers.
* **Small Business & Entrepreneurship**: Owning a business can offer a strong path to financial security and upward mobility. Entrepreneurship is a critical way to build personal wealth and assets that can benefit future generations. ACF will support programs and investment vehicles that give undercapitalized entrepreneurs and small business owners the support they need to achieve their goals.
* **Addressing Systemic Barriers**: Systemic inequities have led to ongoing wealth disparities, disproportionately affecting women and people of color. Closing these wealth gaps is vital to improving individual lives and boosting our regional economy. ACF will support initiatives that increase savings or reduce debt for communities that have experienced historic wealth inequality to build generational wealth.

**Health & Humanities**: The future of our region is inextricably linked to the health of our people and the growth of our creative community. Grants in this category will focus on:

* **Health & Wellness:** Applications should be focused on the improvement of health outcomes by connecting people to quality health resources, culturally competent health education and reducing health disparities. Health is broadly defined to include mental and physical health and wellness.
* **Arts & Culture**: Applications should catalyze work that champions the diversity of our community, expands access to arts and cultural experiences for residents, and/or increases opportunities for artistic expression.

**Nurturing our Region**: Preserving and protecting our rich ecosystem ensures generations of Central Texans can live and thrive. Grants in this category will focus on:

* **Environmental Sustainability**: Applications should focus on environmental efforts that support a healthier, cleaner, and more resilient region.
* **Green Spaces**: Applications should encourage the preservation and enjoyment of green spaces (e.g. parks, trails, preserves) in Central Texas.
* **Animal Welfare**: Applications should promote the well-being of animals and/or defend against abuse or neglect.

###

### Funding Information & Amounts

Through the Forever Austin Fund grant cycle, we anticipate awarding 50-75 grants between

$5,000 - $50,000 each. Award amounts will be determined by application scores, donor priorities, and individual endowment budgets. Grants may be approved for full or partial funding of the requested amount, which cannot exceed 30% of the organization’s budget.

**Additional information per impact area:**

* **Economic Mobility:** 20-30 grants, up to a total of $1,250,000
* **Health & Humanities:** 15-20 grants up to $550,000
* **Nurturing our Region:** 10-15 grants up to $200,000

All awards will be considered general operating support, with the intention of building organizational capacity and sustainability to execute an organization’s mission.

###

### Reviewers

Grant proposals will be reviewed by a diverse pool of community reviewers. Your application will be read and scored by a combination of the following categories of reviewers, in partnership with ACF staff:

* Community members recruited for their personal and professional expertise in our funding categories
* Philanthropists connected through ACF’s network of donor advised funds
* ACF board and committee members

###

### Who is eligible?

We welcome proposals from organizations from across the spectrum including those providing direct services, advocacy, community organizing, partnerships, and other approaches as appropriate.

* Nonprofit organizations serving the 6 county Central Texas region, which includes: Travis, Bastrop, Burnet, Caldwell, Hays, and Williamson counties.
* 501(c)(3) public charities in good standing with the IRS, religious organizations, and governmental entities that are serving the Central Texas region. Projects with an established IRS 501(c)(3) fiscal sponsor are also eligible to apply.
* Number of Applications: Each applicant may submit only one application to only one category.
* Partnership Applications: We encourage collaboration. For collaborations between two or more nonprofits, the partners should select one nonprofit to serve as the lead applicant. Any awarded funds are to be used for the sole purpose of the partnership’s work, and the lead applicant will be responsible for managing the funds on behalf of the partners. The lead applicant organization—and any partner organizations--may also submit a separate individual application for its own organization.

## *Introductory Questions*

## Location\*

Does your organization work in Central Texas (Travis, Bastrop, Burnet, Caldwell, Hays, and/or Williamson counties)?

### Choices: Yes / No

##

## Charitable Status\*

Please select the designation that fits your organization.

### Choices:

* 501(c)(3): public charities 501(c)(3): private foundations
* Tax-exempt churches and religious organizations
* Fiscally sponsored projects
* Government entity
* Other

## If you selected "other" in Charitable Status above, please explain here:

*Character limit: 250*

## If you are applying with a fiscal sponsor, please share their organization name and EIN here:

*Character limit: 250*

## Austin Community Foundation does not grant funds for:\*

* Endowment funds
* Scholarships
* Religious organizations for religious purposes
* Fundraising activities or events
* Umbrella funding organizations that intend to distribute funds at their own discretion
* Individuals
* Organizations with discriminatory hiring practices based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, etc.

**Do you confirm your organization does not meet any of these restrictions and would not use ACF funding for these purposes?**

### Check box: I agree

# Demographic Profile

The Forever Austin Fund seeks to partner with organizations whose leadership, staff, and board represent the populations they serve.

Where applicable, please share numbers for a full 12-month time period. This can be the latest full year where the data is available, your fiscal year, or a calendar year— whichever is easiest for your organization to provide.

**Remember, in each of the charts, the total at the bottom should be equal to your organization's total for that specific population**. For example, the total under "People Served" should be equal to the number of people your organization serves within your chosen 12-month time period.

If you've submitted an application for ACF's 2024 Programs (Women's Fund and Hispanic Impact Fund) Grant Cycle, you may be able to copy over answers into this application. Please see [**here**](https://support.foundant.com/hc/en-us/articles/4523861991575-Applicant-Tutorial-Copy-Request) for more information.

##

## People Served Demographics - Income\*

Percent of those you project to serve who are at or below 200% of the federal poverty level (for a family of 4 in 2025, this is an annual income of[**$64,300**](https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/dd73d4f00d8a819d10b2fdb70d254f7b/detailed-guidelines-2025.pdf)). If you do not collect this information, please put your best-estimated percentage.

**Note:** Answers must be between 0 – 100%.

*Character limit: 3*

## People Served Demographics - Location\*

Percent of those you project to serve who live in Central Texas (Travis, Burnet, Bastrop, Caldwell, Hays and Williamson County). If you do not collect this information, please put your best-estimated percentage.

**Note:** Answers must be between 0 – 100%.

*Character limit: 3*

## People Served Demographics - Race & Ethnicity

Please complete with data reflecting the population served by your organization. Estimates are acceptable and should be input as the **number of individuals**, *not* percentages.

If your organization does not have members in a certain category, put 0 in the field. If an individual identifies as more than one race, please include them in the "other" category.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Demographic** | **Number of People Served in this Demographic** |
| **Asian** |  |
| **Black/African American** |  |
| **Hispanic/ Latina/ Latino** |  |
| **Indigenous/Native American** |  |
| **Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander** |  |
| **White/Caucasian** |  |
| **Other** |  |
| **Unknown** |  |
| **Total** |  |

##

## Board Member & Executive Staff Demographics - Race & Ethnicity

Please complete with data reflecting the board and executive staff of your organization. Estimates are acceptable and should be input as the **number of individuals**, *not* percentages. If your organization does not have members in a certain category, put 0 in the field. If an individual identifies as more than one race, please include them in the

"other" category.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Demographic** | **Number of Board Members and Executive Staff in this Demographic** |
| **Asian** |  |
| **Black/African American** |  |
| **Hispanic/Latina/Latino** |  |
| **Indigenous/Native American** |  |
| **Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander** |  |
| **White/Caucasian** |  |
| **Other** |  |
| **Unknown** |  |
| **Total** |  |

## Non-Executive Staff Demographics - Race & Ethnicity

Please complete with data reflecting the non-executive staff of your organization. Estimates are acceptable and should be input as the **number of individuals**, *not* percentages.

If your organization does not have members in a certain category, put 0 in the field. If an individual identifies as more than one race, please include them in the "other" category.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Demographic** | **Number of Non-Executive Staff in this Demographic** |
| **Asian** |  |
| **Black/African American** |  |
| **Hispanic/Latina/Latino** |  |
| **Indigenous/Native American** |  |
| **Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander** |  |
| **White/Caucasian** |  |
| **Other** |  |
| **Unknown** |  |
| **Total** |  |

## If you are not able to report on any of the above demographic categories, please explain why:

*Character limit: 3000*

# Organizational Information & Budget

## Organization Name\*

*Character limit: 100*

## Incorporation Date\*

*Character limit: 10*

## Mission Statement\*

*Character limit: 10000*

##

## Annual Operational Budget\*

*Character limit: 20*

##

## Budget Narrative

Provide any additional details about your budget attachment (**upload at bottom of application**) that you want reviewers to be aware of.

*Character limit: 3000*

*Assurance Checklist*

I certify that the organization submitting this proposal meets the following criteria or can provide a reasonable alternative method to meet standards.

##

## Board Activity\*

The board meets regularly, has an active committee structure, terms, and recruits new members periodically.

### Choices: Yes / No

##

## Policies\*

The organization has written personnel, operating, and financial management policies.

### Choices: Yes / No

##

## Controls\*

The organization has internal controls in place to manage expenditures of these grant funds and is able to maintain appropriate financial records.

### Choices: Yes / No

## Additional Comments

If you selected no for any of the statements above, please provide comments and alternative methods for meeting the criteria in the space below.

*Character limit: 3000*

# Funding Area & Narrative

## Funding Category\*

Review the Funding Category descriptions and select **one** area.

### Choices:

* Economic Mobility: Housing Stability
* Economic Mobility: Career Pathways & Resources
* Economic Mobility: Small Business & Entrepreneurship
* Economic Mobility: Addressing Systemic Barriers
* Health & Humanities: Health & Wellness
* Health & Humanities: Arts & Culture
* Nurturing our Region: Environmental Sustainability
* Nurturing our Region: Green Spaces
* Nurturing our Region: Animal Welfare

## Population Description\*

Select up to **3** descriptors of the population you serve. If more than 3 descriptors are selected, only the first 3 in alphabetical order will be considered. *This area is* ***not*** *scored.*

### Choices:

* Animals
* BIPOC communities Elderly
* Emergency-impacted individuals
* Entrepreneurs
* Foster system immigrants & refugees
* Incarcerated or justice-involved individuals
* Intellectual/developmental disabilities
* LGBTQIA+
* Low-income (below 200% FPL)
* Physical disabilities
* Substance use disorder
* Survivors of domestic violence
* Unhoused individuals
* Veterans
* Volunteers
* Women
* Youth (0-19)
* Other

##

## If you selected "other" in Population Description above, please provide your descriptor(s) here:

*Character limit: 250*

##

## Nature of Work\*

Select up to **3** statements that best describe your organization's nature of work. If more than 3 statements are selected, only the first 3 in alphabetical order will be considered. *This area is* ***not*** *scored.*

### Choices:

* Mission or programming targets the creative community (artists, musicians,
performers, etc.)
* Work supports systems change and/or includes advocacy
* A two-generation impact is core to the mission or programming
* Established partnerships with other NPOs is critical to fulfilling the mission or programming
* Leadership of organization reflects the population served
* Focus of work is in Bastrop, Burnet, Caldwell, Hays, or Williamson Counties (NOT in Travis County)
* Other

##

## If you selected "other" in Nature of Work above, please provide your Nature of work statement here:

*Character limit: 250*

##

## Request Amount

Please note awards will range from $5,000 - $50,000. Amount must be no more than 30% of your organization's annual operating budget.

*Character limit: 20*

###

### *Narrative Questions*

We have worked to streamline and simplify the application process. In this spirit, we have set the character restrictions to the maximum amount available so that you don't have to spend your important time wordsmithing to fit within Character limitations. We do NOT expect you to write to the maximum limit.

Please be complete but brief with your responses.

##

## Statement of Need\*

Describe the community need your organization is addressing, including the target population and the main outreach strategies to engage them.

*Character limit: 10,000*

## Core Programming\*

Tell us about your organization’s core programming **as related to** your selected funding category.

*Character limit: 10,000*

##

## Implementation\*

Describe how/why your organization is well-positioned to implement your vision/address this community need. You can include relevant partnerships, staff expertise, ongoing work, etc.

*Character limit: 10,000*

##

## Request for Funding\*

How would additional funding support your organization’s ability to carry out your mission?

*Character limit: 10,000*

##

## Goals & Evaluation\*

Please share your specific goals and any evaluation processes in place to successfully address the need(s) identified in your statement of need.

*Character limit: 10,000*

#

# Attachments

## IRS Determination Letter\*

Please provide a copy of your IRS Determination Letter. If you are working with a fiscal sponsor, please provide their IRS Letter as possible.

*File size limit: 2 MB*

## Organization Logo\*

*File size limit: 1 MB*

##

## Current Operating Budget\*

Please upload your organization’s current operating budget (a [template](https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.austincf.org%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2020%2F01%2FACF_3-Year-Organization-Operating-Budgets-Template.xlsx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK) is provided for your use but it is **not** required, you may submit your organization’s own working document).

*File size limit: 3 MB*

##

## List of Board Members\*

*File size limit: 1 MB*

## Supplemental Information

Upload any additional information you would like to share about your work such as a video, photos, news stories, or brief reports. We recommend sharing no more than five pages of content or five minutes of video.

*File size limit: 8*