



Community Capacity Building Grant Program

Work plan | **Draft**

January 2021

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1. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1.1 MISSION

The Community Capacity Building pilot grant program, co-created by Metro Council, staff and community partners, supports civic and community engagement capacity among community-based organizations (CBOs) who serve Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color. This multi-year grant program works to build trusted relationships, address the increasing demand Metro is placing on CBO partners, expand community networks to include more Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) into Metro processes, and strengthen coalition building so together we can deliver on region-wide efforts to advance livability and racial equity.

1.2 AN OVERVIEW OF CAPACITY BUILDING

From a funders perspective, building the capacity of community-based organizations (CBOs) means providing these organizations with the resources and tools they need to achieve their goals, while preserving their autonomy and accountability to the communities they serve. Capacity building is a long-term project, it requires sustained investment, and should be oriented around relationship and trust building. Furthermore, to reach the ultimate goal of more inclusive decision-making processes and equitable outcomes, capacity building must also mean re-working Metro's own systems to reduce harm, build trust, and empower BIPOC communities.

“Capacity building is the process of building and strengthening the systems, structures, cultures, skills, resources, and power that organizations need to serve their communities.”

- April Nishimura *et al*,
Transformational Capacity Building

1.3 GOALS OF COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING PROGRAM

In 2020, Metro Council established the Community Capacity Building program with the express purpose of strengthening the civic and community engagement capacity of community-based organizations who serve Black, Indigenous, and communities of color, particularly in underserved areas of the region. This is embodied in the following goals.

- Create a vehicle for strategic investment in community capacity in underserved geographic areas and Metro's programmatic areas in anticipation of expanding needs or emerging priorities;
- Invest in building capacity for BIPOC and frontline communities to inform solid waste system decision-making, and other areas of region wide significance.
- Build long-term, trusted relationships with culturally-specific community-based organizations and the Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color they serve.
- Support, through coordination and facilitation, ongoing changes to Metro systems and processes that build trust and reduce harm in its relationships with Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color;
- Support Metro committee recruitment and advance the diversification of these committees through intentional training and recruitment in communities of color across the tri-county region, in partnership with community-based organizations.

2. COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING GRANTS

2.1 GRANT PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Community Capacity Building grant program seeks to:

Grow capacity for BIPOC civic and community engagement.

- CBOs are able to develop, grow, and sustain civic and community engagement capacity for Black, Indigenous and other communities of color.
- CBOs build capacity to more meaningfully inform and impact Metro's policy, program, and resource decisions.

Strategically invest in capacity building.

- CBOs build stronger community networks and more Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) in Clackamas, East Multnomah and Washington counties meaningfully engage in Metro processes.
- CBO staff and community members expand knowledge and expertise around Metro's key programmatic areas.
- CBOs are able to better meet the need for community engagement, consultation, etc. on decisions of regional significance.

Advance racial equity through relationship building.

- More CBOs and BIPOC see Metro as a trusted partner in advancing a shared vision.
- New community leaders engage in Metro processes and committees.

Create a more equitable solid waste system.

- More CBO staff and BIPOC have the knowledge, skills and resources to advise solid waste system decision-making.
- Increased engagement with BIPOC youth and adults, who have been historically underrepresented in garbage and recycling decision-making, particularly around the local implementation of the Regional Waste Plan and the development of new transfer stations.

2.2 GRANT DETAILS

Grant amount

At least five (5) Community Capacity Building grants will be distributed, each a minimum of \$50,000 and up to \$80,000 per year for a total of four hundred thousand dollars (\$400,000) annually in administered grants. Grantees will receive funds in upfront, bi-annual installments. Alternate disbursement schedules may be implemented upon mutual agreement between a Grantee and Metro program staff.

Grant Fund Details

The program will be administered using two separate pathways, or sub-grants, organized by source of funding. This helps Metro ensure we continue to meet our legal requirements and helps provide

clarity to potential and actual grantees about the primary objectives and eligible uses of each type of grant. The two categories of grants are:

General capacity grants

Two to three grants will be funded by Metro general funds and will be more expansive in nature. Applicants may work across any of Metro's programmatic areas and/or focus on civic engagement capacity more broadly.

Solid waste system capacity grants

Two to three grants will be funded out of Metro's Solid Waste Fund and will focus on building civic and community engagement capacity to inform the operation of the solid waste system.

Grant duration

Grantees will be awarded funds for each of three calendar years - 2021, 2022 and 2023 – assuming adherence to grant agreements and conditional to Metro Council approval. Metro recognizes that building civic and community engagement takes time and relationship building. The three-year grant cycle intends to provide Grantees with certainty of funding so they can plan for and invest in their capacity building towards these multi-year goals.

Use of funds

Community Capacity Building grants are intended for organizational capacity building as directed by the grantee but within parameters agreed upon within the grant agreements established between Metro and the grantee. Below are some examples of eligible and non-eligible uses of funds:

Eligible uses for *General Capacity grants* include, but are not limited to:

- hiring or retaining staff responsible for civic or community engagement;
- training or professional development for staff or community members;
- leadership development programming;
- supporting general operations (e.g. program materials, administrative overhead, rent) to advance an organization's civic engagement capabilities.

Eligible uses for *Solid Waste System Capacity grants* will include aforementioned eligible only as if they are applied to a solid-waste system context. For example:

- Member education to improve solid waste system literacy
- Recruiting and supporting members and staff to sit on advisory bodies that relate to solid waste activities
- Leadership development with a focus on building solid waste system literacy and policy development skills
- Preparation for and engagement with Metro and jurisdictional decision-making processes around economic impacts of the solid waste system (e.g. wages, working conditions, rate impacts, etc.)

- Preparation for and participation in community benefit agreement processes or other similar conversations meant to enhance community benefits of solid waste investments

Ineligible uses for all grants include, but are not limited to:

- participating or intervening in any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office;
- inducing or encouraging violations of law or public policy or improper private benefit to occur.
- any political lobbying activities or any activities that violate local, state or federal statutes, regulations, codes or laws including but not limited to any of Oregon's ethics and/or elections laws, rules or regulations.

2.3 COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Community Capacity Building applicants and proposals must meet the requirements below to be eligible for consideration.

- A. Grants must serve residents who live within the [Metro boundary](#) and Applicant(s) must be based within the Metro boundary and conduct a majority of their work there.
- B. Applicant(s) must be a federally recognized 501(c)3 non-profit or satisfy this requirement through fiscal sponsorship from a federally recognized 501(c)3 non-profit.
- C. Applicant(s) must primarily work with, advocate for, and/or provide services to Black, Indigenous and other communities of color.
- D. Applicant(s) must have experience with one or more of the following activities:
 - a. Civic or community engagement centered on Black, Indigenous, and communities of color;
 - b. Leadership development with Black, Indigenous, and people of color, queer folks, people with disabilities, and/or youth;
 - c. Community organizing or advocacy around issues of racial justice, solid waste prevention, environmental justice, workforce development, access to nature, housing or Houselessness, transportation or land use.
- E. Applicant(s) must meaningfully integrate anti-racism work into their operations and programming.

Recommended (but not required):

- F. Preferred applicants will not request an annual grant amount that exceeds 50% of their 2020 annual budget.

2.4 COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING APPLICATION PROCESS

The grant application process will occur in two phases: a letter of interest and a grant application. This process intends to reduce administrative burden on applicants and allow for early dialogue between Metro staff and potential applicants.

Letter of interest

Interested applicants may submit a letter of interest, a template of which will be made available on Metro's website. The letter of interest will include preliminary answers to key questions of eligibility and proposed use of funds, and will indicate which grant pathway they are applying for (General Capacity or *Solid Waste System Capacity*). Letters may also be accompanied with supplemental materials (like annual reports, other grant applications, etc.) that provide more information about the Applicant. The intent of this pre-application process is to provide opportunities for early and ongoing dialogue with applicants about their applications and minimize the number of organizations who submit more lengthy and time-consuming application. Letters of interest will be reviewed by the Community Capacity Building Advisory Group (see Section 3.3 below), who will select up to fifteen (15) applicants to invite to submit a grant application.

Grant application

Invited applicants will be able to submit a formal grant application that details their proposed use of funds, areas of alignment with Metro planning or programmatic areas, plans for evaluation, and provides more background on their organization (e.g. financial health, past successes, etc.). Applications should speak to the selection criteria outlined in the following section. Applications will be reviewed by the Community Capacity Building Advisory Group who will make recommendations to Metro's Chief Operating Officer (COO).

2.5 Technical Assistance

Metro staff will provide technical assistance to organizations who request it, for either application phase, and will advertise this option on application materials. Technical assistance may include, but is not limited to, support in developing a proposal, vetting the eligibility of potential activities, and connecting applicants with Metro staff specific to programmatic areas of interest. Technical assistance will not be provided by Metro staff who sit on the Community Capacity Building Advisory Group (section 3.4).

2.5 GRANT COHORT SELECTION

The Community Capacity Building Program has a variety of intended objectives. To meet all of these objectives Metro must award grants in a holistic manner, funding a cohort of organizations that provide different strengths, address different areas of need and serve different BIPOC communities and disparate geographies. Accordingly, the Community Capacity Building Advisory Group will not only use the grant selection criteria (outlined in section 2.6 below) to make their recommendations, but will also consider ways in which a cohort of grantees will meet the vision and objectives of the program.

2.6 COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT SELECTION CRITERIA

Grant recommendations are made by the Advisory Group (see section 3.4 below) using the evaluation criteria detailed here. The Advisory Group will use these criteria to help determine whether to recommend an applicant for funding. Not every criterion must be met, but priority will be given to proposals/organizations that clearly satisfy multiple criteria in each category. Considerations will also be made to ensure the cohort of recommended grantees as a whole meets the vision and objectives of the program (see section 2.5 above).

Strategic investment

1. Increases civic engagement capacity (e.g. the building/strengthening of new relationships, connecting with and developing new leaders, or civic education and awareness raising) in underserved areas of the region: East Multnomah County, Clackamas County and Washington County.
2. Adds community capacity to inform decision-making around key areas of Metro's portfolio – environmental justice, waste prevention, economic justice, housing and houselessness, transportation, access to nature, and land use.
3. Supports applicant(s) that have experienced systemic barriers to institutional and philanthropic funding due to systemic inequities.
4. Focuses on communities that have experienced heightened barriers to civic engagement through past and ongoing histories of disenfranchisement.

Civic and community engagement

1. Meaningfully adds capacity and/or flexibility to an organization's civic or community engagement efforts.
2. Supports the development of new and/or deeper relationships, and trust, between the applicant(s) and the Black, Indigenous, and communities of color they serve.
3. Increases organizational and community capacity to engage with Metro advisory bodies, planning processes, projects and programs, and engagement activities.
4. Supports long-term growth in organizational capacity, coalition strength or movement building.

Organizational history and approach

1. Applicant(s) demonstrates a history of successful community and civic engagement and/or leadership development.
2. Applicant(s) demonstrates commitment to anti-racist practice and eliminating anti-Black racism within their organization and the communities they serve.

Solid waste system alignment*

*The *Solid Waste System Capacity grants* will be judged on the aforementioned criteria, as well as the following criteria:

1. Proposal advances the vision and goals of the Regional Waste Plan.
2. Proposal outlines specific solid waste system elements or decision-making processes to focus capacity building towards.

Applicants must clearly demonstrate the capacity to carry out the specified activities as outlined in their application materials.

2.7 GRANT AGREEMENTS

Grantees, once selected, will work with Program Staff, Office of Metro Attorney, and Metro staff from other relevant departments to create grant agreements that codify expectations around the use of grant funds and establish processes for evaluation and reporting. Program Staff will oversee the revision and renewal of these grant agreements annually through the three-year cycle of the program.

2.8 EVALUATION OF COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING GRANTS

Metro is strongly committed to building public trust through practices of accountability and transparency, ensuring the responsible and effective use of public resources. Metro's community partners share this commitment and already work to advance our mutual equity goals in effective and transparent ways. We recognize that accountability is a dynamic, two-way process, whereby both parties should engage in reflective practice and honest dialogue around their role in advancing an effective partnership. Metro staff also recognize that CBOs have experience creating and optimizing programs and measuring their impact. This program will feature systems of accountability created through collaboration with Grantees. Grantees will work with Metro to define success for that particular partnership, and how best to measure, evaluate and report on impact towards the program's outcomes, building on the evaluation metrics the Grantees proposed in their applications. Impact will be measured both through stories (qualitative) and numeric (quantitative) metrics of success. Metro Council will receive at least annual reports on the impacts of this program co-created by program staff and grantees, and will have additional opportunities to interface with grantees in between annual reports.

3. GOVERNANCE

3.1 DIRECTOR OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Metro's Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion will oversee the implementation of the Community Capacity Building program activities and grants. The director will:

- A. Approve the work plan to set forth the policy, governance and operating framework for the program
- B. Advance the operating budget, as part of the Metro budgeting process
- C. Chair the Community Capacity Building Advisory Group members and appoint its members
- D. Oversee the creation of grant agreements and implementation of the grant program
- E. Other activities consistent with the role and responsibilities of the director

3.2 METRO CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Metro's Chief Operating Officer will consider the recommendations for funding from the Community Capacity Building Advisory Group and make the final decision for which proposals to fund and the size of each grant. The COO will also present to Metro Council annually, with support

from Program Staff and the Advisory Group, on program outcomes and recommendations for continuous improvement.

3.3 METRO COUNCIL

Metro Council has two primary roles in this program: oversight and relationship-building. Metro Council will review annual reports to keep track of Grantee progress on outcomes and act as the ultimate decision-makers on the budget for, and longevity of, the Community Capacity Building Program. Metro Council will also work to build relationships with Grantees and connect them and the communities they serve to Metro decision-making processes.

3.4 COMMUNITY CAPACITY BUILDING ADVISORY GROUP

The Community Capacity Building advisory group will be comprised of seven members. Metro's Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion will chair the Advisory Group and will appoint the additional six members. Advisory group members will be selected to collectively provide a balanced range of expertise in the following areas.

- Civic and community and engagement with Black, Indigenous and other communities of color
- Social justice and anti-racism
- Racial equity, diversity and inclusion
- Non-profit administration
- BIPOC and/or youth leadership development
- Community partnerships with culturally-specific community-based organizations

The advisory group will include four Metro staff, including one representative from each of the following Metro departments:

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)
- Metro Council Office
- Waste Prevention and Environmental Services (WPES)
- Parks and Nature

In addition, the advisory group will include three community representatives, including one person who lives and/or works in each of the following areas: Clackamas County, Washington County and East Multnomah County. Community representatives must exhibit expertise in any of the aforementioned areas, have no direct conflicts of interest (e.g. past or current staff or board member of an Applicant), and meet one or more of the following criteria:

- Must have led, worked with or served on the board of a community-based organization who served Black, Indigenous or other communities of color;
- Must have worked in building community partnerships with or administering grant programs geared towards community-based organizations who serve Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color.
- Must have worked to advance civic engagement in historically disenfranchised communities.

The advisory group will provide guidance through the following activities:

- A. Review Letters of Interest from applicants and recommend which applicants should be invited to submit a grant application.
- B. Review grant applications and make recommendations to Metro's Chief Operating Officer regarding the award of program grants.
- C. Advise staff on policy and criteria changes as the program develops to ensure that the program is consistent with best practices and delivers intended outcomes to the region.

3.5 METRO PROGRAM STAFF

Metro staff administers the Community Capacity Building program under the direction of Metro's Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Staff coordinates program outreach, technical assistance for applicants, and day to day management consistent with established program mission and objectives outlined here. Program staff leads the collection of performance measures, staffs the Advisory Group, and supports the COO in annual reporting to Metro Council.

3.6 INTERAGENCY COLLABORATION

The Community Capacity Building program seeks opportunities to collaborate and share learning with other departments, public agencies and organizations, as well as seek opportunities to leverage resources to stimulate additional public and private investment in civic and community engagement capacity for Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color. Metro may enter into contracts or intergovernmental agreements to do so.

3.7 WORK PLAN AMENDMENTS

The Community Capacity Building program work plan will be updated, as needed, to ensure the program continues to meet the policy, governance, mission, and operating framework for the program. The first three-year cycle of grants will pilot the approach laid out in this work plan. Program staff will evaluate the program itself, including the application process, grant criteria, funding levels and timeline following the pilot round. Refinements will be made based on guidance from Metro Council, the Advisory Group and community partners (including, but not limited to Grantees).

GLOSSARY

Civic engagement. “The active participation of people in the decision-making processes that shape their communities and their lives.” – [Funders’ Committee for Civic Participation](#)

Community engagement. The process by which community members and community leaders are in dialogue with each other and with decision-makers or decision-making processes to influence the ultimate outcomes of decisions.

BIPOC. The acronym stands for Black, Indigenous, and other people of color. Metro uses this term, and focuses on race and ethnicity explicitly, because we approach our work with a *targeted universalist* lens. This approach means we set universal goals (e.g. all greater Portlanders have a high quality of life) but work towards that goal using targeted approaches (e.g. focusing on those with the lowest life outcomes). More information can be found in Metro’s [Strategic Plan to Advance Racial Equity](#).

Frontline communities. “Frontline communities are those that experience “first and worst” the consequences of climate change. These are communities of color and low-income, whose neighborhoods often lack basic infrastructure to support them and who will be increasingly vulnerable as our climate deteriorates. These are Native communities, whose resources have been exploited, and laborers whose daily work or living environments are polluted or toxic.” - [Ecotrust](#).