



RACIAL EQUITY ACCOUNTABILITY GRANTS

PURPOSE

In 2022, the Northwest Continuum of Care embarked on a two-year project called the Racial Equity Accountability Project (REAP). Members of the Racial Equity Accountability Team will serve as the decision-making body for the Northwest Continuum of Care's (NWCoC) board of directors. Membership of the Racial Equity Accountability Team is primarily comprised of individuals that identify as Black, Indigenous, or persons of color, as well as individuals that have experienced homelessness or housing insecurity in Northwest Minnesota's regional homeless response system.

Members will work to identify, dismantle, and de-colonize instances of racism within the regional homeless response system. This project is focused on improving the region's current system of coordinated entry. Coordinated Entry is the primary way that individuals can access supportive housing services in the NWCoC. This includes an assessment process to determine a client's needs and prioritization of services to the most vulnerable individuals. This process involves analyzing system-level data to develop an Action Plan for the NWCoC's Coordinated Entry System (CES). At the Northwest Continuum of Care, we believe in building systems designed for continuous, ongoing improvement. Developing a system that fits the social and racial needs of the region's homeless population will be a fluid, complicated, and dynamic process. This process will be finalized in 2023, and the REAP's CES Action Plan will be implemented on an ongoing basis for years to come.

The purpose of this grant is to provide grants out to the community working to improve outcomes for individuals who have experienced homelessness.

These goals include:

- **Increasing cultural competency of NWCoC Staff:**
 - Grant expenses can cover costs associated with providing and organizing training and professional development for staff working with those living through homelessness

- **Developing stronger relations between those living through homelessness and supportive housing staff**
 - This can be accomplished by providing more culturally relevant events and opportunities for the community to express their cultural identity, and provide healing
 - Examples include sweat lodges, traditional ceremonies, drum circles, talking circles, community meals, support groups

- Events related to specific cultural and racial identities
- **Improving outcomes for individuals living through homelessness by increasing stabilization:**
 - Providing job training and acquisition opportunities for individuals leaving homelessness
 - Covering costs needed to maintain stable housing and employment
 - clothing stipends, furniture stipends, food stipends, gas vouchers, professional development training/certifications
 - Covering grant expenses related to educational development, business development, or any other form of professional development/entrepreneurship:
 - scholarship and loan application costs, business development, professional development for individuals living through homelessness, certifications needed to maintain or achieve employment, etc.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS / GEOGRAPHY

501c3 nonprofits, public agencies, and tribal organizations located within the Northwest Continuum of Care's service area that includes the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe, the Red Lake Nation, the White Earth Nation, and 12 counties (Beltrami, Clearwater, Hubbard, Kittson, Lake of the Woods, Mahnommen, Marshall, Norman, Pennington, Polk, Red Lake Falls, and Roseau).

PROJECT SUMMARY

This grant opportunity supports the development and advancement of locally driven diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives in Northwest Minnesota that will improve outcomes for individuals living through homelessness. Grant proposals should demonstrate the local situation or need, identify who is involved in the initiative, and define the greater goals of the effort.

TIMELINE

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis, until all funding has been allocated.

Grant performance period will end by December 2023.

Maximum grant awards are \$5,000

- The average expected grant is estimated to be between \$2,500 and \$5,000

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Eligible applicants include organizations in the non-profit, public, or private sector. Eligible applicants can also include individuals that have lived through homelessness and housing insecurity.

Expenses may include, but are not limited to: professional development, job training and acquisition expenses for individuals living through homelessness, staff and board training, purchasing professional licenses or certificates, travel, community/cultural events, technical assistance, organizational or operational audits, culture diversity education and awareness initiatives, or other efforts that increase stable outcomes for individuals that have lived through homelessness.

Examples of potential projects:

- Job training program for individuals living through homelessness:
 - Expenses could cover clothing stipends, gas vouchers, training costs, or any other costs associated with job acquisition
- Professional development for non-profit agencies working to increase cultural competency
 - Grant expenses could cover costs associated with increasing an agency's internal capacity needed to develop staff training programs
 - Expenses could include costs associated with hiring professionals to provide training and professional development opportunities with a focus on racial justice and cultural competency
- Hosting various culturally relevant events and opportunities for individuals living through homelessness
 - Expenses could cover costs associated with hosting community talking circles, traditional ceremonies/events, or other culturally relevant community events
- Any other creative projects that improve outcomes for individuals experiencing homelessness

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Grants cannot fund political activities, religious activities, discriminatory practices, past operating debts, legal fees, or similar activities. This fund will not consider applications for fundraising planning, feasibility studies, membership or subscription dues, computer license fees, financial audits, building construction, or capital campaigns.

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

Final summary report will be required upon completion of grant.

HOW TO APPLY:

- Step 1: Complete the Intent to Apply pre-screening online form using the link provided here: <https://form.jotform.com/NMF1986/nmf-grants-intent-to-apply>
- Step 2: The Intent to Apply pre-screening form will be reviewed by NMF staff for eligibility and program fit. At that time NMF may request a follow-up call, site visit, or offer guidance on the project, including budget.

- Step 3: For proposals that meet the program goals, NMF will send out e-mails with invitations and materials to submit full applications within 30 days of the initial preproposal submission.
- Step 4: Applications can be submitted via the NMF Web Portal no later than 90 days after receiving an invitation to apply for funding (Step 3).
- Step 5: Full applications will be reviewed and approved or denied based on program fit, available funding and may require board approval. A final determination should take no longer than 60 days from when the full application was received.

CONTACT

If you have any questions about the review process or need assistance, please e-mail or call Margret Treuer, Program Officer, margret@nwmf.org, 218-759-2057