



Northwest
Minnesota
FOUNDATION



VIRTUAL WEBINAR

Building Better Lives Grants

Fiscal Year 2026

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Agenda

- Welcome & Introductions
- Overview of the Building Better Lives Grant
- Eligibility & Funding Priorities
- Application Process & Key Dates
- Evaluation Criteria & Tips for Strong Proposals
- Resources & Support Available
- Live Q&A and Closing Remarks

This meeting will be recorded and may utilize AI-powered tools for notetaking and transcription



Why?

- **Open, transparent, accessible**
- **Can't capture everything on paper**
- **Connect, listen, provide clarity**
- **Build trust, strengthen relationships, useful for YOU**



Building Better Lives Grants

This is a new initiative of NMF that is reflective of our new strategic framework and 10-year horizon.

- Typical Award Period — 1 year
- Average Grant Amount — \$5,000 up to \$15,000
- Current Available Funding — \$65,000
- Application cycle — Applications accepted 3 times per fiscal year
 - November, March, and July



Eligibility

Eligible applicants include 501(c)(3) nonprofits, tribal organizations, and public entities serving any of the 12 counties and/or either of the Tribal reservations within our northwest region.

Fiscal hosts considered with a signed agreement.

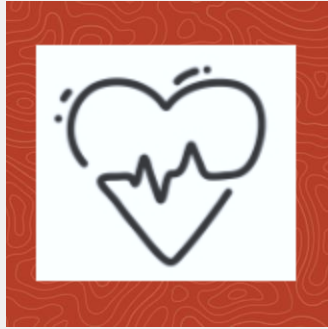
For-profits are not eligible.



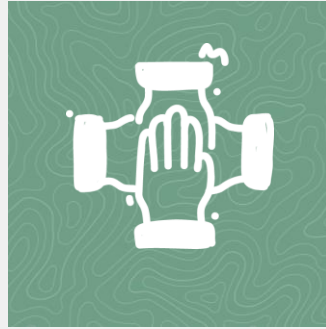
Funding Priorities



**Strengthening
Families**



**Mental Health
and Physical
Wellness**



**Cultivating
Welcoming
Communities**



**Economic
Mobility and
Workforce
Development**



**Nonprofit
Capacity
Building**



Application Process + Key Dates

- Must submit application online via the NMF Web Portal
- Opens 8am on Monday November 3rd
- Closes 11:59pm on Monday December 1st
- Decisions announced by December 31st
- Funds disbursed in January 2026



Evaluation Criteria

Applications are scored based on six key areas:

- Purpose Statement
- Community Context
- Activities & Partnerships
- Participation & Access
- Outcomes & Impact
- Budget Narrative

Purpose Statement (5 points)

Criteria for Review:

- The purpose statement is clear and concise.
- The request is directly connected to the proposed project or program.

Community Context (15 points)

Criteria for Review:

- The applicant explains why the project is needed.
- The description shows an understanding of local conditions, needs, and service gaps.
- Information is provided on how the need was identified (e.g., data, feedback, assessment).

Activities + Partnerships (25 points)

Criteria for Review:

- Partnerships are clearly identified and documented (e.g., MOUs, agreements).
- Collaboration roles and responsibilities are defined.



Tools + **Assistance**



Applicant Resource Folder

Grant guidelines, templates, evaluation criteria, etc.

grants@nwmf.org

Email for technical assistance if you have any trouble as you navigate the NMF Web Portal.

chloek@nwmf.org

Questions specific to the Building Better Lives grants



Q+A



Thank you!



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