

Community Development Champions Program

Request For Proposal Summary and Frequently Asked Questions

Summer 2026

Background

What are the goals of the Community Development Grants?

The Community Development Grants program aims to address critical funding gaps in low- and moderate-income (LMI) communities across New York City, New Jersey, and Salt Lake City. The program provides financial support to high-impact organizations dedicated to advancing economic opportunity and community stability.

What are the different grant types available?

For the 2026 cycle, the program features two initiatives:

- **The Change Makers Initiative:** Provides organizations with a one-time, general operating grant (e.g., for programmatic or staffing needs). Organizations can focus on affordable housing, small business development, neighborhood revitalization, and community services.
- **The Equity Builders Initiative:** This initiative provides **multi-year, general operating funding over three years**. It is designed to help organizations build capacity and sustainably deepen their impact. Awardees typically share a mission of creating upward mobility through quality affordable housing, small business development, neighborhood revitalization, and community services.

What are the focus areas for these grants?

Applications should align with one or more of the following pillars:

- **Affordable housing for LMI communities**, such as development/preservation of units, homeownership counseling, rental assistance, and eviction prevention
- **Community services**, such as workforce development, job training, financial health programs, and access to healthcare or early childhood education.
- **Meeting the needs of small businesses**, such as technical assistance for businesses, access to capital, and business incubation
- **Revitalizing or stabilizing LMI geographies**, such as community improvements, community hubs, transit-oriented infrastructure, and disaster resilience

Programmatic Exclusions:

Standalone initiatives focused on arts, fashion, sports, theater, or general cultural activities are not typically eligible for funding through this program. To be considered, any cultural or recreational component must serve as a direct vehicle for achieving measurable outcomes aligned with the program's core community development focus areas.

Eligibility and Selection Criteria

Who can apply?

All registered 501(c)(3) public charities that address community needs for low- and moderate-income (LMI) areas or households are eligible. Organizations must have a material presence in:

- **New York:** The five boroughs of New York City (New York County, Bronx County, Kings County, Richmond County, Queens County).
- **New Jersey:** Essex or Hudson counties.
- **Utah:** Salt Lake, Summit, or Tooele counties.

Are international organizations eligible?

No, only U.S.-based public charities are eligible to apply that have an office or have a material presence in: New York (five boroughs of NYC), New Jersey (Hudson County, Essex County), and Utah (Salt Lake County, Summit County, Tooele County)

How are applications evaluated?

Applications are reviewed by our internal panel of judges and are evaluated based on the equally weighted criteria below:

- *Impact:* Applications should offer measurable deliverables aimed at improving the state of wellbeing in low to moderate income communities, with a clear evaluation model and measurable outcomes.
- *Community Engagement:* Applications should demonstrate meaningful and authentic engagement with LMI communities throughout the design and implementation and promote solutions that are truly community-driven and responsive to emerging needs.
- *Innovation:* Applications should demonstrate a differentiated approach and articulate how the model advances beyond existing solutions to deliver measurable impact for LMI communities.

Application Details

When does the application period open?

The application period opens on Wednesday, June 24, 2026, and closes on Friday, July 24, 2026

What are the key dates for the program?

- June 24: Application opens
- July 24: Application deadline
- Fourth Quarter of 2026: Winners are announced.

Timeline:

- Phase 1: All eligible applicants must submit their application by July 24, 2026, at 11:59 EST.
- Phase 2: Award decisions will be finalized in Q4 2026, and awardees will be notified ahead of a public announcement.
- Phase 3: Funding will be disbursed to awarded nonprofits by year-end 2026 for implementation throughout 2027.

If I applied for this program in previous years, can I apply again?

Yes, past applicants are welcome to apply again. You are encouraged to review the selection criteria and questions listed on our application form and prepare your new proposal accordingly.

How many applications can each organization submit?

Each organization can submit **one** application for both initiatives

How are applications reviewed? Do I need to provide any further information?

Applications are reviewed by an internal panel of judges based on the selection criteria stated above.

When will I hear back about my application?

We will notify all applicants of their status in the fourth quarter of 2026.

Benefits of the Program

What are the potential benefits for winning organizations?

Winners receive grants to scale their innovative work. Additionally, organizations may benefit from:

- **Employee Volunteerism:** Opportunities for additional partnerships through Goldman Sachs employee volunteer activities.
- **Increased Connectivity:** Increased visibility and powerful connections within the community development sector.

Commonly Asked RFP Questions

Does the program prioritize specific focus areas?

Yes. While we welcome applications across all four pillars (Affordable Housing, Community Services, Small Business Development, and Neighborhood Revitalization), our primary focus is on supporting organizations dedicated to Affordable Housing. **Applications that demonstrate a strong impact in providing access to safe, stable, and affordable housing will be given priority consideration.**

Can I apply for both the Change Makers and Equity Builders initiatives?

Organizations submit one comprehensive application. The internal review committee will determine which initiative (one-time vs. multi-year) best aligns with the organization's capacity and proposed impact.

What defines a "material presence" in the eligible regions?

A material presence typically means the organization has a physical office, dedicated staff, or a significant portion of its programming and service delivery occurring within the specified counties.

Can the grant be used for indirect or overhead costs?

Yes. Both initiatives provide general operating support, which allows organizations the flexibility to use funds for staffing, administrative overhead, and other core programmatic needs.

What documentation is required for the application?

Applicants should be prepared to provide their 501(c)(3) determination letter, recent audited financial statements, an organizational budget, and a list of Board of Directors.

How do you define "Low- and Moderate-Income (LMI)"?

LMI refers to individuals or geographies with a median family income of less than 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI).

Contact Us

For any additional questions regarding the Community Development Awards or the RFP process, please reach out to gs-cd-grants@gs.com.