



Health Forward
FOUNDATION

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT | 2023



CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Health Forward is announcing a new open funding opportunity to support civic engagement. We will award up to \$3 million in grants to be distributed in 2023 and 2024.

This funding opportunity supports and builds community power by advancing civic participation and engagement in democracy. Civic engagement is one of many social factors that influence the health of people and communities given its connection to increasing both health equity and racial equity. Civic engagement is central to Health Forward's purpose of building and amplifying community power. Advancing participation in democracy is one of our core Power strategies, which we are pursuing by supporting and connecting organizations working on civic engagement and community organizing.

This opportunity aligns closely with Health Forward's Advocacy Coalitions funding opportunity. Please visit our [website](#) to learn more.

Health Forward's Purpose

Every day we work to support and build inclusive, powerful, and healthy communities characterized by racial equity and economically just systems.



KEY INFORMATION

Purpose Area: Power with a focus on Policy and Advocacy

Strategy: Increase civic engagement in democracy

Deadlines

- April 7, 2023: Open letter of intent due at noon
- May 1, 2023: Invitation to submit additional information
- May 31, 2023: Additional information due at noon
- July 2023: Grants will be awarded in early July

Grant term: Up to 24 months

Grant type: Health Forward is aiming for most grants to be unrestricted. However, we may make some grants that are restricted to a specific purpose or restricted to a specific budget on a case by case basis.

Our purpose plan: Our work is guided by our purpose plan; our four purpose areas – People, Platform, Place, and Power; and our related strategies and initiatives. This grant opportunity relates to our Power purpose area and specific strategy to increase civic participation in democracy. For more information on our purpose plan, and our Power strategies and initiatives, please visit our [website](#).



CONNECT WITH US!

We strongly encourage you to speak with a Health Forward team member before submitting your letter of intent. Want to discuss this opportunity with us? [Connect](#) with an impact strategist (formerly program officer) or request a [consultation](#).



FUNDING PRIORITIES

Health Forward will fund specific civic engagement and community organizing activities including (but not limited to):

- Voter registration
- Voter engagement and education
- Community organizing aligned with our policy agenda
- Messaging, communications, research, and evaluation on specific policy issues impacting our communities and aligned with our policy agenda

WHY CIVIC ENGAGEMENT?

Health Forward acknowledges civic engagement as one of many social factors that influence the health of people and communities.

Civic engagement has the power to advance health equity, racial equity, and economic inclusion. In 2020, the American Medical Association recognized racism as a significant threat to public health. This was an important step to build awareness around how racism and systemic oppression in the United States have shaped our history and caused severe health injustice in our communities.

In addition, in June 2022, the American Medical Association further acknowledged voting as a social determinant of health due to the positive relationship between civic engagement and health outcomes. Historically, voter suppression has disproportionately impacted communities of color and people who are paid low or no wages, placing barriers between citizens and their right to vote.

Research has demonstrated strong connections between voting and civic engagement and the health of people and communities. Civic engagement is a powerful tool to provide voice to those who are closest to the issues in need of solutions and can shape policies that address community needs.



WHO SHOULD APPLY?

There are many kinds of community-based organizations that may be a fit for this funding opportunity. The work of these organizations should align with Health Forward's policy agenda for [Missouri](#) and [Kansas](#).

Here are some examples:

- Organizations advocating for — or working against — specific legislation in Kansas or Missouri
- Organizations doing voter registration in Missouri or Kansas, especially with a focus on community members who have been disenfranchised in our political process
- Organizations wanting to grow their capacity to do policy and advocacy work
- Organizations rooted in the community who are organizing community members
- Organizations educating and equipping community members to participate in voting and civic engagement
- Organizations working on a white paper or organizing a messaging campaign around specific policy issues or the connections between civic engagement and health
- Organizations seeking to improve the reporting, evaluation, and learning from their policy and advocacy work
- Organizations seeking to improve their policy and advocacy communications

This list is not exhaustive! Please reach out to us to talk about your specific fit.

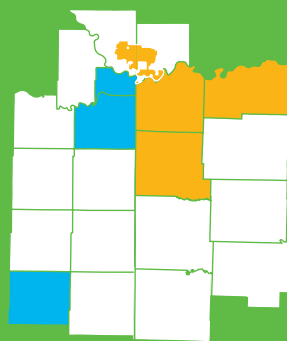
OUTCOMES WE SEEK

Health Forward has identified specific outcomes related to Power, which are relevant to this funding opportunity:

- Increased effectiveness of community organizing and civic participation
 - Increased scale of community organizing and civic participation
 - Increased voter registration and turnout in targeted districts
 - Adoption of policies that promote civic participation

Health Forward anticipates collaborating with funded partners to identify specific ways to understand the impact of our work together.

HEALTH FORWARD SERVICE AREA



KANSAS

Allen County
Johnson County
Wyandotte County

MISSOURI

Cass County
Jackson County
Lafayette County
Kansas City, Missouri
(including portions of
Clay and Platte counties)

Note: Health Forward will not fund organizations, projects, or advocacy focused on electing or opposing candidates for elected office.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Health Forward Foundation has generally applicable eligibility criteria that must be met by all applicants for all our funding opportunities. These criteria are available on our [website](#). We also encourage you to review our list of [frequently asked questions](#).

To be eligible for this grant opportunity, the applicant must:

- Work within communities that align with Health Forward's communities of focus, such as:
 - People or groups who have been historically marginalized and excluded from power and political processes
 - Organizations that are led by and/or serve people of color
 - Organizations that are located in and/or serve rural communities
- Work in parts of Health Forward's Service Area – Wyandotte, Johnson and Allen counties in Kansas and Cass, Jackson, and Lafayette counties in Missouri, as well as all of Kansas City, Missouri, including portions of Clay and Platte counties

APPLICATION PROCESS

The first step in the process is to submit a letter of intent by noon on **April 7**. This is meant to give a brief overview of your organization's work and alignment with this funding opportunity. Based on this information, some applicants will be selected to move forward in our funding process. **We strongly encourage you to consult with us before submitting your letter of intent.** You can also submit a request for a [consultation online](#).

Begin a letter of intent by accessing our [grantee portal](#). A Word document template is included with this funding announcement, which you can use to prepare your letter of intent. New applicants will need to set up an account through our [grantee portal](#). If you need assistance, contact our grants administration team at grantsadmin@healthforward.org or 816-241-7006.

NEXT STEPS

Following the letter of intent submission, our impact strategists (formerly program officers) will begin to review letters of intent. During this period, we may follow up with you for additional information to better understand your letter of intent.

We will invite some applicants to move forward in our process and submit additional information. Unfortunately, due to limitations in our funding and our desire to be respectful of applicants' time and resources, not all applicants will be invited to continue in our process. If we move your letter of intent to the next phase of our process, some additional information will be requested by noon on **May 31**. Shortly after this period, we will undergo a final review phase, and we may follow up with any remaining questions to help deepen our understanding of your work.

Health Forward will award these grants in **early July 2023**.

SUPPORT BEYOND THE CHECK

In addition to grant dollars, funded partners will have access to learning opportunities and additional support. Once partners are selected, Health Forward will collaborate with them to identify needs and co-design opportunities that may include training, shared tools or technologies, contracted services, learning cohorts, etc.

OTHER FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

1.

ADVOCACY COALITIONS

Concurrent with this funding opportunity is another opportunity focused more specifically on coalition support. You can find additional information on our [website](#). The timeline is identical to this opportunity, and interested organizations will complete the same letter of intent to express interest in one or both funding opportunities.

2.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Health Forward will release information about capacity building funding for organizations doing Power work later this spring. Check back with your impact strategist later this year.

3.

RESPONSIVE GRANTMAKING

We will be funding some individual responsive grant requests, including for technical assistance and other organizational needs. An inquiry form will be available on our [website](#) later this spring. Check back on our website to learn more.

Keep up to date on our Power work and never miss a funding opportunity by subscribing to our [email newsletter](#).



DEFINITIONS

Here's what we mean when we say...

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Civic engagement encompasses a broad range of activities related to democracy, from donating to a charity to voting. It's a strategy and an outcome that fosters social cohesion and amplifies the power of citizens by aggregating individual voices. Community members are most effective in solving problems and holding institutions accountable when they act collectively.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ PARTICIPATION

Promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes. It requires the active participation of people in the decision-making processes that shape their communities and their lives. Civic engagement leverages knowledge, skills, values, and motivation to achieve the desired impact.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZING

Community organizing is a process of building power through collective action in order to advance shared interests. It is a method of engaging and empowering people with the purpose of increasing the influence of groups historically underrepresented in policies and decision-making that affect their lives and achieve desired goals in their social, political, economic, and physical environment.

HEALTH EQUITY

Health equity means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be healthy. It requires actively removing obstacles to health that drive health disparities – barriers that are rooted in structural racism and economic inequity, such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences. It means actively building the conditions for health including good jobs with fair pay, high-quality education and housing, safe environments, health care, and equal access to power.

POWER SHARING

Power sharing refers to inclusive decision-making which redistributes power, money, and resources to people and communities (e.g., people of color and specific socio-economic groups) that have historically been excluded from power. Sharing power requires nurturing transparent, trusting relationships and co-creating strategies and solutions with people closest to the challenges to advance health equity.

ABOUT HEALTH FORWARD

Health Forward Foundation is a nonprofit conversion foundation formed in 2005. Every day we work to support and build inclusive, powerful, and healthy communities characterized by racial equity and economically just systems.

Healthy people need healthy communities. We recognize that racial equity and economic inclusion overlap. We cannot have one without the other. We also recognize that our effort to build racial equity and economically just systems commits us to changing the education, health, and political systems that make up our society. These changes mean healthier people, an increase in community power, and creating equitable and just places.

We invite you to learn more about Health Forward Foundation by visiting our [website](https://healthforward.org).