



## \$35MM 2026 COMMUNITY FINANCE INITIATIVE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS SUMMARY AND FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

*Last Updated: 1.28.26*

### **BACKGROUND:**

Despite major gains in access to financial services, households across the United States continue to face increasing financial instability driven by rising housing costs, higher prices for essential goods and services and greater exposure to financial risk. The financial strain on many American families is significant. Surveys from the [Pew Research Center](#) note that only 20% of low-income Americans say their personal finances are in excellent or good shape. Research from the [Financial Health Network](#) reveals that less than half of low-income Americans have enough savings to cover three months of expenses, and less than a third are confident they are on track to meet long-term financial goals.

Additionally, [U.S. Census Bureau](#) data shows that housing costs rose for both renters and homeowners in 2024, and that trend looks likely to continue.

With this Request for Proposals (RFP), Citi Foundation (“the Foundation”) seeks to provide financial support to community organizations implementing programs that empower low-income households to better manage their financial lives to build greater financial stability and resilience across the United States.

### **FOCUS AREAS:**

The Foundation seeks to support organizations advancing low-income household financial resilience in the United States across three focus areas:

- **Stabilize:** Programs that help low-income households to build financial skills and confidence to manage daily finances and navigate financial stress.
  - Financial coaching on budgeting, credit, debt reduction and savings strategies.
  - Digital tools offering personalized financial guidance and product navigation.
  - Assistance with public benefits and social safety net programs.
- **Strengthen:** Programs that help low-income households build and repair credit, as well as short- and long-term financial assets.
  - Financial products or services for credit building and credit repair.
  - Initiatives to increase savings, including emergency funds.
  - Support for homeownership, including readiness, preservation and long-term stability (e.g., first-time buyer assistance, preventing displacement and support systems for aging in place resources).
- **Safeguard:** Programs that protect low-income household financial security by preventing and addressing financial losses.
  - Education and support for the safe and confident use of digital financial tools.
  - Fraud and scam awareness, prevention and recovery initiatives, including protection from identity theft.



- Interventions to help households recover from major financial shocks (e.g., healthcare costs, extended family care, job transitions or natural disasters).

## **FUNDING OPPORTUNITY:**

- The Foundation plans to award 70 \$500,000 (USD) grants (to be disbursed over two years) totaling \$35 million to community organizations working in select communities where Citi has a presence.
- The grants will be restricted and are anticipated to be disbursed in two annual payments in 2026 and 2027. Proposed projects should be for a term of 24 months, starting no sooner than August 1, 2026 and ending no later than December 31, 2028.

## **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:**

- Organizations must be able to demonstrate that their mission and strategic priorities have a specific focus on serving low-income individuals and/or communities.
- The project must impact one or more of the Foundation's target geographies and support at least one of the identified focus areas listed above. See Q3 for more details.
- Organizations must be tax-exempt public charities as per Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Please note that projects that require the use of fiscal sponsorship are not eligible for this funding opportunity.
- Organizations must be able to submit externally audited financial statements covering some part of calendar year 2024 or a subsequent year if invited to the full application stage no later than May 2026. See Q13 for more information.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS:**

The 2026 Community Finance Initiative RFP will follow a competitive process in two rounds:

### **Round 1: Letter of Inquiry (LOI)**

Interested organizations are invited to submit a Letter of Inquiry (LOI) through the Foundation's grant portal. The deadline to submit an LOI is 12 p.m. (noon) New York Time (Eastern Time) on February 18, 2026. To submit an LOI [click here](#).

The Foundation will review all LOIs submitted by the deadline based on strategic alignment, feasibility and potential for impact.

### **Round 2: Grant Application**

The Foundation aims to notify all organizations that submitted an LOI whether they will be invited to submit a grant application no later than May 2026. Organizations invited to the grant application phase will receive further instructions on next steps and timelines for their application submission. For organizations invited to participate in the application phase of the RFP, please note that an invitation to submit an application does not constitute an offer, promise or guarantee of funding. Final funding decisions are anticipated to be announced no later than September 2026.



*Please note that application and announcement timelines are subject to change.*

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

### 1. How do I submit an LOI?

Submit your LOI by [clicking here](#). Note that you will not be able to save the online form, so please download the editable PDF version available at the top of the online form and work offline. When you are ready to submit your LOI, you can copy and paste your responses into the online form for submission. Once you submit your LOI, you will not be able to access the content you submitted. Please save the PDF document version of your submission for your records.

### 2. What is the size and structure of the grant award?

Grantees will each receive a restricted grant of \$500,000. The anticipated disbursement schedule, subject to change, is as follows: \$250,000 in Year 1 (2026) and \$250,000 in Year 2 (2027).

### 3. Does my project have to impact one or more of the Foundation's target geographies to be eligible? What are the target geographies?

Yes, your project should impact one or more of the target geographies listed below to be eligible. The Foundation focuses on funding programs and solutions in select communities where Citi has a presence.

Markets	Counties
California	Alameda, Contra Costa, Fresno, Kern, Kings, Los Angeles, Marin, Merced, Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, San Joaquin, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Stanislaus, Ventura
Connecticut	Greater Bridgeport Planning Region Western Connecticut Planning Region
Florida	Broward, Miami-Dade, Palm Beach
Illinois	Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, Will
Maryland	Montgomery, Prince George's
Nevada	Clark
New Jersey	Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Passaic
New York	Bronx, Kings, Nassau, New York, Queens, Richmond, Rockland, Suffolk, Westchester
Puerto Rico	Territory-wide
South Dakota	State-wide
Virginia	Alexandria City, Arlington, Fairfax, Fairfax City, Falls Church City
Washington, D.C.	District of Columbia



**4. Does my organization have to be headquartered in one of the geographies listed above (Q3) to be eligible to apply?**

No, but your organization's proposed project needs to impact one or more of the target geographies identified in Q3 to be eligible.

**5. What does the Foundation define as local, regional and national projects?**

For the purpose of this RFP, the Foundation is using the following definitions:

- Local: serving a single neighborhood or city
- Regional: multi-city or statewide (up to three states)
- National: four or more states

**6. What types of expenses are eligible for this funding opportunity?**

The grants awarded through this RFP will be restricted to the specific program and expenses for which funding is sought. Eligible programs may seek funding to cover a range of items, including but not limited to, salaries, technology, program materials, trainings, events, research, communications, marketing, evaluation, convenings and overhead. Further guidance will be provided in the grant application.

**7. Can my organization regrant funding through this grant? Are there specific requirements or parameters around regranting?**

Yes, regranting is permitted. Regranting to organizations pertains to cases in which Foundation funds are redistributed as grants to another organization, including local affiliates. Vendor payments for specific goods or services are not considered regrants. Organizations that regrant funds to other nonprofits are required to complete screenings on each organization receiving the funds and the managing or controlling persons.

**8. Can any portion of the funds be used for political or lobbying purposes?**

The grants awarded through this RFP will be restricted. All organizations invited to submit full applications (Round 2) should read carefully all the terms in the application form, including that grant funds cannot be used for political or lobbying purposes, including, without limitation: participating or intervening in any political campaign on behalf of, or in opposition to, any candidate for elective public office; voter registration or get-out-the-vote activities (unless conducted in a non-partisan manner); making independent expenditures in support of, or in opposition to, any political party or candidate for elective public office; or attempting to influence legislation or any act of a legislative body at the federal, state or local levels.

**9. Can we submit an LOI in partnership with another organization?**

Organizations are welcome to work with partners. However, a single organization should submit an LOI on behalf of all the partners. Please note that if your project advances to the grant application phase (Round 2) and is ultimately selected for funding, the lead organization would be awarded the grant and would be responsible for the full grant award, deliverables and ensuring the partners' compliance with the Foundation's terms of award.

**10. Can my organization apply through a fiscal sponsor?**

No. For this specific grant program, organizations working with fiscal sponsors are not eligible to apply.

**11. Can my organization submit more than one LOI?**

No. Eligible nonprofit organizations should only submit one LOI. Note that separate organizations should not submit LOIs for the same program.

**12. Is there a minimum or maximum organizational budget size that is required for an organization to apply?**

No. However, before applying, organizations should consider how a \$500,000 grant, payable over two calendar years, will impact their legal and/or operational status.

**13. My organization does not have audited financial statements. May we still submit an LOI?**

No. As part of the eligibility criteria for this opportunity, organizations must be able to submit externally audited financial statements and attest to this in the LOI submission form. If your organization's LOI advances to the grant application stage (Round 2) no later than May 2026, at that time, you will be required to submit a copy of your audited financial statements covering some part of calendar year 2024 or a subsequent year.

**14. Are current or former Foundation grantees eligible to submit an LOI?**

Yes, current and former Foundation grantees are eligible to submit an LOI. If you are a current grantee of the Foundation, please be sure to address how this proposed project differs from or advances the previously funded project.

**15. What type of organizations will not be considered?**

The types of organizations and projects that will not be considered for funding include, but are not limited to:

- Private foundations, including operating and nonoperating foundations
- Organizations that unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, sex, gender identity or expression, color, religion, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, veteran's status or other legally protected personal characteristic or status
- Lobbying, political causes, campaigns or candidates
- Memorials
- Gift matching
- Organizations that require the use of a fiscal sponsor
- Organizations that do not meet the eligibility criteria noted in this document
- Individuals or sole proprietorships

**16. How will LOI submissions be reviewed?**

The Foundation will review all eligible LOI submissions utilizing the eligibility criteria and selection priorities noted in this document.



**17. Will every organization that submits an LOI be contacted?**

Upon submission of your LOI, you will receive an automated email confirmation. Additionally, we may contact your organization for more information at any point during the LOI Review process. The Foundation aims to notify all organizations that submitted an LOI whether they will be invited to advance to the grant application phase (Round 2) by no later than May 2026.

**18. If my organization is not invited to submit a grant application (Round 2) will the Foundation provide us with individual feedback on our LOI upon request?**

Given the volume of LOIs likely to be submitted, the Foundation will not be in the position to provide individualized feedback to organizations that do not advance in the process.

**19. Where can I find more information about this opportunity?**

If you have questions not addressed in this document, please email [CitiFoundationRFP@citi.com](mailto:CitiFoundationRFP@citi.com).