

Responsive Grants 2026 Call for Ideas: Helpful Tips – Writing Your Proposal

Getting Started:

- Review the [Call for Ideas](#) document in full and reach out to Health Foundation staff with any questions.
 - Log-in or create an account in [Submittable](#), our grants management portal.
 - If the Submittable account holder is no longer with your organization, you *will* need to create a new account
- Once in Submittable, you'll input your organization, contact, and other relevant information as well as upload your proposal.
- Format: Up to five (5) pages single-spaced, or ten (10) pages double-spaced
 - Grant duration & size: Requests can range from \$25,000 - \$175,000 annually, up to three (3) years.

Telling Your Story:

- Write your proposal as if you are having a conversation with Health Foundation staff– *tell your story!*
- Double-check your proposal to ensure all questions are answered, and that you have not exceeded the page limit.
 - It may be helpful to think of your proposal as a recipe, to include all the 'ingredients' for your work and what's being asked.
- Focus on answering the questions, not so much on the format or structure.
- Ask someone unfamiliar with your work to review it for clarity.

Your Proposal Should:

- Align with one of the Call for Ideas 2026 priorities; sustaining community services, harm mitigation, or collective strength and security;
- Address a need in communities that have historically experienced health inequities and are currently facing heightened risk and systemic harm, approached through an intersectional lens;
- Clearly outline how efforts will contribute to advancing health equity;
- Center community voice and partnership in the work;
- Leverage partnerships to advance the work (this will strengthen your proposal).

Responsive Grants 2026 Call for Ideas: Helpful Tips – Writing Your Proposal

Incorporating Community Engagement Into Your Proposal:

- Show that your project is *community-informed*, not just community-facing (i.e., describe listening sessions, surveys, town halls, or focus groups)
- Use community voice to strengthen the proposal (i.e., include themes from community feedback, quotes of need or impact, etc.)
- Demonstrate trust and credibility within the community
- Include quantitative and qualitative data and how these insights shaped the program design
- Highlight community partnerships and shared ownership
- Connect engagement directly to outcomes; help describe your ‘why’

When in the pursuit of health equity, nothing about us without us is not just a slogan, but the guidepost to change. With limited time, capacity, and funds, it can be difficult to include community engagement opportunities in project design and implementation. Community engagement is a process – engage early and often. Keep in mind that numerous efforts are needed to center community voice and create space for shared power.

More information and tools can be found on the 2026 Call for Ideas ‘Additional Resources’ document.