

**GRANT TIMELINE**

March 2	Grants portal opened for applicants
March 30	Concept papers due in <a href="#">grants portal</a> by 5:00 p.m. ET (required)
June 1	Application due in <a href="#">grants portal</a> by 5:00 p.m. ET
September 15	Awards announced
October 1	Earliest start date for funded projects

**A. PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

This one-time funding initiative supports efforts that seek to expand access and utilization of mental health and/or substance use disorder services for Michigan residents. This funding provides an avenue to ensure continuity of critical services, respond to persistent needs, and support improvements that reach broader populations across the state.

As we continue integrating behavioral health into our Healthy Kids and Healthy Aging Initiatives — which serve children and older adults — this opportunity is designed to address gaps and emerging needs not limited to those focus populations. Behavioral health projects designed exclusively or primarily for children or older adults should be submitted through our [Healthy Kids](#) or [Healthy Aging](#) initiatives.

**PRIORITY AREAS**

All proposals should seek to expand access and utilization of mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) services. We've identified three priority areas within this overarching goal:

- Efforts that **advance behavioral health equity** by expanding access, increasing support, or improving outcomes for communities experiencing gaps in behavioral health care. Initiatives should improve access to effective and culturally responsive behavioral health services, reduce disparities, and ensure care aligns with the needs and experiences of the communities they serve.
- Efforts that aim to **reduce substance-related harm**, increase access to and utilization of substance use disorder treatment, improve outcomes through prevention, and strengthen recovery supports. Projects should consider integration of other health and social services to address related challenges or co-occurring conditions impacting a person's recovery.
- Efforts that **improve coordination, integration, and overall effectiveness of behavioral health services** at the local, regional, or statewide level. Investments through this priority area will enhance how organizations and broader behavioral health systems work together to meet community needs. Projects should enhance service delivery models through cross-sector collaboration and strive to serve multiple population groups.

A competitive proposal will identify a target population and use data specific to that population to demonstrate the need for the intervention. The Health Fund prioritizes evidence-informed approaches that expand access to behavioral health services and strengthen the behavioral health system. Solutions should address community needs in alignment with efforts to strengthen or improve broader systems.

We will consider workforce-related projects that seek to ensure we have enough ready, willing, and able professionals to help improve the health of current and future Michigan residents. We are focused on retaining current professionals and the role of employers, and will consider career pathways, recruitment, care team roles, and policy, since they are also required for lasting impact.

Proposals for technology enhancements should seek to refine tools and how they are used to help improve the health of Michigan residents. Competitive technology-related projects will explain where the need for change originated, elaborate on how the work fits within a broader organizational or community context, and share the project team's experience implementing similar projects.

### **ADDRESSING DISPARITIES AND PROMOTING HEALTH EQUITY**

Across all priority areas, the Health Fund seeks proposals that address disparities and promote health equity. What does that look like? Equitable programs:

1. Benefit or increase access for populations most affected by a health issue;
2. Remove barriers to health;
3. Empower communities; and
4. Engage community leaders and members in decision-making

## **B. ELIGIBILITY AND GRANT AMOUNT**

### **ELIGIBILITY**

Nonprofits, federally recognized Tribes, local units of government, and the State of Michigan are eligible for grants. Organizations do not need to be based in Michigan, but all project activities must occur in Michigan. To be eligible to apply for a grant under this initiative, applicants must:

- Be recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a tax-exempt organization;
- Have a current audit or independently reviewed financial statements (preferred) or 990 (accepted); and
- Have at least one paid FTE (e.g., one full-time employee or two half-time employees)

### **EXCLUDED FROM FUNDING CONSIDERATION**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clinical research   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Lobbying activities  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Loans   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tuition costs and related fees   |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health-related emergencies*                                 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Organizations that discriminate because of age, race, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or gender |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Capital projects  |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Litigation  |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Existing operations and staffing costs for ongoing programs |  |

\*The Health Fund might in some situations consider support to address longer-term rebuilding or other needs following emergency situations.

## GRANT AMOUNT

Organizations may apply for up to \$750,000. Generally, projects that receive the maximum grant size often have large, regional or statewide impact and have detailed, measurable strategies aimed at improving health outcomes and/or quality of life for the population served.

We welcome proposals of any size and scope from all types of eligible organizations if it will make progress toward our identified program priorities.

Applicants may apply for a one or two-year grant, but the total request is limited to \$750,000. Please be sure to clearly identify your funding requests per year in your proposal, along with any other associated program revenue.

The Health Fund recognizes the importance of supporting indirect expenses and encourages organizations to request the maximum amount to support those costs. All applicant organizations may request up to 30% of the total grant budget for indirect costs. All indirect costs, including those charged by project partners, subcontractors or consultants, count toward the indirect cost limit.

## C. REVIEW CRITERIA AND EVALUATION

### REVIEW CRITERIA

We consider the following criteria when reviewing proposals:

- **Strategic alignment.** The project aligns with the Health Fund's mission, strategies, and goals centering on children and older adults. We seek proposals that address disparities and promote health equity and support interconnected solutions that address community needs in alignment with broader systems change efforts. Proposals should demonstrate how the work fits within the Health Fund's [strategic framework](#) and aligns with the priorities outlined in this RFP.
- **Impact.** The Health Fund supports projects that have clear, attainable outcomes that will improve the health or quality of life for Michigan residents locally, regionally, or statewide. Strong proposals clearly articulate both the short-term outcomes that will be achieved during the grant period and any potential long-term outcomes that may occur after the grant concludes (e.g., replicability).
- **Collaboration.** The project demonstrates deep collaboration beginning with community or participant involvement in planning and implementation. We seek proposals that leverage multi-sector partnerships with defined roles, responsibilities, and expertise and that build upon trusted relationships to maximize impact.
- **Feasibility.** We consider whether the project can realistically be completed as outlined in the work plan and has a high likelihood of achieving the proposed outcomes. In addition, whether the organization or partnership has or can quickly build an experienced, committed team to accomplish the work. The timeline and budget must be realistic and align with the proposed impact. We look for thoughtful use of funds with a clear plan for implementation.

## D. APPLICATION PROCESS

### KEY STEPS

1. Submit a concept paper via [our grants portal](#) by 5:00 p.m. (ET) on March 30.
2. Applicant receives initial feedback, including whether the concept is likely to be competitive.
3. Apply using Health Fund grants portal by 5:00 p.m. (ET) on June 1.
4. Applications are reviewed by program staff and subject matter experts. Clarifying questions may be sent.
5. Awards are announced.

### CONCEPT PAPERS

Applicants are **required** to submit a concept paper for feedback. Concept papers must be submitted through the form in [our grants portal](#) and should be no more than two pages (10,000 characters, including spaces). Concepts that are competitive will receive an invitation to submit a full proposal. Non-competitive concepts will not be invited to apply.

**NEW FOR 2026:** All concepts will be managed through the Health Fund's grants portal, so you will need an account in order to submit a concept paper. **New users must request an account by Monday, March 23** using the "Create an account now" button on [our grants portal](#) login page. We cannot guarantee timely access to the portal for requests received after that date.

Applicants should prepare to address the following in their concept paper:

- Project title
- Estimated request amount
- Geographic reach of your project
- Project narrative, including:
  - Problem statement or key issue you aim to address
  - Brief overview of the project
  - Potential impact (short- and long-term)
  - Timeline / duration
  - Key collaborative partners and responsibilities of each partner
  - Brief description of how the estimated request amount would be spent

### APPLICATIONS

Applications must be submitted through the Health Fund's [grants portal](#).

**NOTE:** Applicants who submit a concept paper should **not** create an application in the portal. Their concept paper will be automatically converted to an application form after the concept review is complete. Applicants can view our [application worksheet](#) to preview the list of questions and required documents. Applicants may also add other staff to the application as needed.

If additional staff need access and do not have credentials for the grants portal, please have each new user request an account by **Tuesday, May 26** using the "Create an account now" button on [our grants portal](#) login page. We cannot guarantee timely access to the portal for requests received after that date.

While the application does not have a page limit function, please limit the total narrative to the equivalent of 8 single-spaced pages using standard 12-point type and one-inch margins.

Attachments do not count towards the 8-page limit. The Health Fund also reserves the right to confidentially share proposals with external reviewers and other foundation partners.

**Full proposals must be received by 5 p.m. on Monday, June 1. Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be considered.**

## **E. OTHER RESOURCES**

- [Behavioral Health Access in Michigan](#) — Produced by Altarum with Health Fund support, this report tracks Michiganders' need for and access to behavioral health services.

## **F. MORE INFORMATION AND FURTHER QUESTIONS**

The Michigan Health Endowment Fund works to improve the health and wellness of Michigan residents and reduce the cost of healthcare, with a special focus on children and seniors.

For helpful tips and additional information, please visit the initiative page on our website. For more information on our grantmaking, view our [Frequently Asked Questions](#).

If you have further questions, please contact [grants@mihealthfund.org](mailto:grants@mihealthfund.org).

**The Health Fund Board of Directors has sole responsibility for all grant decisions.**