

GRANT TIMELINE

March 2	Grants portal opened for applicants
March 30	Concept papers due in grants portal by 5:00 p.m. ET (strongly encouraged)
June 4	Application due in grants portal by 5:00 p.m. ET
November 5	Awards announced
December 1	Earliest start date for funded projects

A. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Every child deserves the opportunity to grow up healthy. The Healthy Kids Initiative invests in community driven solutions that improve health from before birth through young adulthood.

We seek proposals that demonstrate the potential to improve children’s health while informing policy, influencing systems, or offering models that can be adapted or replicated across Michigan. All proposals should advance equity while reducing health disparities and demonstrate how the lived experience of children, youth, caregivers, families and/or communities will be incorporated in the design, development, and delivery of the proposed project.

We are interested in projects that take place in all the settings that shape children's health, from pediatricians’ offices to gymnasiums to childcare centers.

PRIORITY AREAS

Access to Care and Support

We will invest in projects that ensure that children, youth, families — and other people who care for them — can equitably access care. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Pediatric care and preventative services, including immunizations
- Access to effective mental health and substance use disorder services
- Efforts to address the specific, unique health care needs of foster and adopted children, youth, and young adults
- Health education and navigation supports that help children and their caregivers access and effectively use care

Maternal & Infant Health

We will prioritize investments that strengthen health and wellbeing before and during pregnancy, birth, and the postpartum period. Strategies may include, but are not limited to:

- Prenatal and postpartum care
- Maternal behavioral health
- Infant health and attachment
- Breastfeeding and lactation support
- Promoting continuity of care throughout community and clinical settings

Nutrition and Physical Activity

We will support projects that provide opportunities for children to access healthy food and be physically active. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Expanding access to nutritious foods and integrating them across settings and developmental stages
- Supporting healthy, lifelong eating habits through education and supports grounded in culture, family practices, and daily routines that shape children's experience of food
- Embedding inclusive, age and ability appropriate physical activity into the settings where children spend their days
- Advancing cross-sector partnerships and building policy capacity that supports efforts to increase children's access to physical activity

Integrated Models

We will invest in projects that intentionally link two or more Healthy Kids priorities to strengthen children's health. Projects may take different approaches to integration.

Some may design a model that works across the full span of childhood and integrates multiple systems. Others may focus on a specific stage of childhood, intentionally connecting multiple systems or supports to address several facets and influencers of health.

These integrated models should represent the way children and families interact with clinical, community, educational, and home environments providing coordinated and practical solutions to real-world challenges.

Competitive integrated models will:

- Clearly articulate how strategies are connected
- Demonstrate shared goals, accountability, and coordination across partners, sectors, or systems
- Show potential for scale, adaptation, or policy and systems influence beyond a single site or community

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

- X Clinical research
- X Loans
- X Health-related emergencies*
- X Capital projects
- X Litigation
- X Existing operations and staffing costs for ongoing programs
- X Lobbying activities
- X Tuition costs and related fees
- X Organizations that discriminate because of age, race, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or gender

*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) June 4.**
4. Applications are reviewed by program staff and subject matter experts. Clarifying questions may be sent.
5. Awards are announced.

CONCEPT PAPERS

Applicants are **strongly encouraged** to submit a concept paper for feedback prior to working on a full proposal. 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).

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 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 **May 28** 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 June 4. Proposals submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

E. 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.

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