

2023 Weitz Family Foundation Grant Application Video Transcript

Emily Nguyen:

Hello and welcome. My name is Emily Nguyen, and I am the deputy director here with the Weitz Family Foundation.

Robia Qasimyar:

Hi everyone. I'm Robia Qasimyar, and I'm one of the program associates.

Alexzia:

And I'm Alexzia Plummer and I'm the other program associate. So let's get started and dig in to this year's Grant cycle. So we're gonna start with an agenda to see now what's gonna happen. We're gonna start with going over our upcoming virtual information sessions and office hours. Then we're gonna talk about the grants timeline, application timeline, so you know what you're getting into. Then the types of grants. Then general guidelines, just some tips to remember when doing the applications. Then we're gonna go step by step through the Beloved Community Grant application, and then the Capacity Building Grant application. And then we're going to end with important dates to remember about this year's grant cycle. So first up, we're gonna have virtual application sessions and office hours in the month of August. The virtual application sessions are essentially just like this where we go through the application questions, but you also have the opportunity to ask any specific follow up questions that you may have. And then the virtual office hours, those are for... You come with a specific question or issue and you drop in for a few minutes and you get to talk with us one on one, and then you go away and then the next person comes in. We just wanna give people that opportunity to ask those questions if they want a more private setting. The Grant Application Timeline. So the application goes live, August 1st. It's a Monday. Both our Beloved Community and Building Capacity applications go live the same day. All applications are due on Monday, September 12th at 5pm, and then we start the review process. So we read, we assess, we make recommendations through the end of

September and October and the beginning of November. And then around mid-November, we have a board meeting where our board votes and makes final decisions, and then we start notifying all of the applicants. And every applicant will be notified by December 16th. So there are two types of grants. The first, the Beloved Community Grant. These are operating grants for small organizations, or organizations that are new to the Weitz Family Foundation. And you can request up to \$20,000. Secondly, we have the Capacity Building Grants. These are larger operating grants to support organizations effectiveness in achieving their missions. And again, both applications are due September 12. Some general guidelines to remember. Please focus your applications on creating racial equity and accessibility. Those are two pillars that are very important to us. All applications are due on September 12. We will contact you by December 16th regarding our decisions. And if you need an alternative application due to accessibility needs, please email Emily at weitzfamilyfoundation.org. And then remember that the word counts are suggestions and not requirements. We don't want people to stress out about having the exact number of words, they're just guidelines for you. So let's get started with the Beloved Community Grant and see what the application is about. So again, this might sound repetitive, but you know, just like in school, the teachers have to say things a few times or just want to hit home so everybody goes away with the right information. So again, the Beloved Community Grants are operating grants for smaller organizations, organizations that are new to us, who should apply any innovative Omaha-based organization that promotes and brings together our communities through programs and cultural initiatives that make Omaha a more equitable a place to live. What's the grant for? Again, it's an operating grant to address belief, recovery and reimagining life in Omaha. Why was this grant created? It was a way for the organizations to be introduced to the family. How much can you request? Up to \$20,000. And when are the applications due? Monday, September 12th, 2022. Now let's dig in to the questions. So the beginning of the Beloved Community Grant Application starts like this. You're gonna give us your organization name, and then state your mission. And then describe your organization and provide a brief history. What are your current activities? This is to give us a general idea of what your

organization is all about. And now I'll turn it over to Robia.

Robia Qasimyar:

Yes. Thanks, Alexzia. So these next few questions center on things that we as a foundation really value, which are equity and accessibility. We're interested to know how your organization addresses racial justice in the greater community, which could be, but isn't limited to, policy research practices or resource distribution. And we'd also like to learn what changes you've made in the last year as a result of your diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility efforts. And we appreciate specificity here, so please name the effort and changes. Additionally, we ask that you upload your organization's DEI policies and procedures. And we seek to understand what organizations understanding is of one another and how people are collaborating. So we ask that you list what other organizations are in your space, particularly those led by people of color, and then describe how you're working with them for mutual success. Next, we are curious to know what forms of diversity does your organization believe strengthen the quality of your work and why, as well as if your staff and board reflect this diversity.

In the last few years, organizations have had to get really creative, right? The pandemic induced this need to think outside the box in order to continue to serve clients and ensure staff could still fulfill their responsibilities. So with respect to, and even beyond what the pandemic inspired, what accessibility, innovation are you most proud of? And what accommodations would your organization like to make for increased accessibility in the future? And for this next question, we want to understand the connection between your organization and our mission, which is to prioritize and support systemic change that transforms our community into an equitable place to live. How would a grant from us fulfill that mission? And then you would enter the amount you're requesting from our foundation up to \$20,000 before uploading your current 2022 budget, and you're welcome to share whatever working budget you have in whatever format you're using currently. Just be assured that it explicitly includes revenue and expenses.

Then after that, you'll enter your projected annual budget for 2023. And we want to know how you heard about us. So please share that here. And also mention if someone in the Weitz family has had any board or service history at your organization. We then

ask you to attach a list of your board of directors and includes things like their positions, affiliations and contact information. So wrapping up Beloved Community, are some optional questions that we're curious about but will not impact grant review. First, what are your biggest needs outside of direct funding? And this could be anything from contractors, technology, transportation, CRMs, office equipment, things like that. We're interested in getting an understanding of what organizations needs are, so we can potentially identify trends and ways to connect people to one another. And we would also like to know what your advocacy interests are. Do you currently engage in advocacy work or have been curious about it? We're thinking about ways our foundation can help amplify organizations advocacy efforts. So if you answer yes or that you're curious, we may follow up with you in the next few months about the best ways to do so. But if you answer no, that is absolutely OK. Again, answers to this question will not impact the outcome of your application review. Lastly, we end with some information about how to contact you and where to send correspondence at your organization. If a grant writer wrote your application, please include their name and email in the appropriate boxes here. So let's transition over to discussing our Capacity Building Grant, shall we? And this application again, is for those innovative Omaha-based orgs that have a previous relationship with our foundation. This grant is to fund capacity building in ways that support an agency's ability to be faithful to their mission, increase racial equity and lead to greater organizational effectiveness. And this grant was created because the Weitz's Family sees capacity building as work that improves the effectiveness of the organization in achieving its mission. And so requests for capacity building start at \$21,000. And again, they're due on Monday, September 12, at 5pm Central Time. So this application starts off with asking you for your organization's name, mission and vision statements. Then we ask how a grant from us will contribute to your pursuit of systemic change in our community, and how it would help enable you to build your organization's capacity or develop leadership. So, similar to a question asked in the Beloved Community application, we want to know what you believe the connection is between your organization and our mission. What you plan to do with these operating dollars should your grant be approved, and how it would help build your organization's capacity or develop leadership. Next, we are keen to understand how you currently

measure success and how you will know if whatever project you are submitting a funding request for is successful. And for those organizations whose budget is over \$1,000,000, we would like to know what metrics you currently collect and what your evaluation strategies are. Additionally, we're curious how you ensure that your data isn't racist. So that is how are you making sure your data collection and evaluation are equitable. So what perspective are you choosing? Who is doing the data collection? How are those being studied involved in the results or check ins? There is a blog post on our website that explains this a little bit further, and it includes some resources that you can reference to embed equity into data collection. So please be sure to check that out for some added clarity. And with that, I'll turn it over to Emily.

Emily Nguyen:

Thanks, Robia. So continuing on for the Capacity Building Grant application, the next question is really asking about what forms of diversity are important for strengthening the quality of the work that you and your organization are doing and also asking the why. The why is really important. So make sure you spend time on talking about why that particular form of diversity is an important part of your organization. And then answering the question of does your organization staff and board reflect this diversity? Then we're gonna ask you to spend some time reflecting on changes that you've made internally in the last year as a result of your diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility efforts. Here again, as we talked about earlier, we want you to be specific. Name the effort and changes that are actually happening within your organization. It could be things like policy, education, research, advocacy practices or research resource distribution. Don't hesitate, though, if there's something else that you're doing to include that. We wanna hear about that. And then also we would ask that you upload your internal diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility policies and procedures. And then we want you to take a moment to pause and talk about how your work is promoting racial justice and accessibility externally. This could be for the individuals that your organization is serving, or even for the broader community. Again, there are lots of ways that you can talk about this, but make sure you spend the time talking about what is most relevant for you and your organization. And then we want you to list other

organizations that are working in similar spaces that you are, and particularly list those led by people of color. And then we'll ask that you describe how you're working with those organizations for mutual success. And then we want you to reflect a little bit on the last year, and answer the question around what accessibility innovations are you really proud of? So think about those successes over the last year.

But then also we want you to reflect on what are some additional accommodations your organization would like to make? We understand that accessibility is not a destination, it truly is a journey. So we want you to be thoughtful about ways that you see that your organization can continue to improve, because we know that we all can. And then we want to know the total dollar amount that you are requesting from the foundation. We ask that you split this up into requests for program dollars, operating dollars and event dollars, and then you'll see an option to then put those in total. If you would like to request support to underwrite or sponsor an event, you must include that in this budget. We will not be able to accept additional applications beyond this application period. And then we wanna better understand what your current budget is. So we ask that you upload your working budget for this current year, and it can be in whatever format you currently use. Just make sure that you have your revenue and expenses included as part of that working budget. And then finally, we'll ask you for your projected 2023 annual budget. Then we wanna understand a little bit more about your board of directors. So we'll ask you to attach a list of your board of directors or positions, affiliations and contact information. And then we want you to upload an organizational chart. This is really an opportunity for us to understand, at a high level, how your organization operates. We're not looking for you to provide a list of every single person's job responsibilities, but rather an organizational chart that describes information about what each team or department actually does within your organization. If you don't currently have an organizational chart or have any questions about this, please don't hesitate to reach out to one of us, and we're happy to give you more information and answer any questions. Also, if your organization is currently embarking on a capital campaign, you can also include a budget that includes income, expenses, and sources of support for that particular capital campaign. Then, if your organization does want to request capital campaign support from the foundation, you do need to include a number

of additional items. So, capital campaign requests are really designated for construction, renovation or improvement of a property. And it has to be explicit that the capital campaigns are using minority owned businesses for some of that work. So when you are submitting your request, you wanna include the following information. First is a case statement which really talks about the feasibility of your project. Then you wanna talk about the cost of the capital campaign. Also, think about not just the cost of the campaign itself, but implications for your budget going forward. And also include all fundraising requests, both pending in pledges to date for your capital campaign. And then finally, as we talked about earlier, we really wanna understand your organization's interest, if any, in advocacy work. So we do have another optional question related to advocacy. Again, really important for you to know that this does not impact the request that you're currently making, but is rather for informational purposes for us. And then we also wanna know, outside of funding, what are some of your biggest needs? The more specific you can get in this question, the better, because we're always interested in better understanding how we can be supportive of nonprofits and ensure they have access and connection to other resources. And then finally, if there's anything else that you wanna show us, it could be any marketing in your reports, evaluations that you've currently prepared, feel free to upload those. We do suggest that you don't create anything brand new, but rather upload anything that you've already created. And then finally, of course, all of the organizational details. Be sure to include a contact person within your organization that we can easily connect to for any questions or follow up. And then finally, just a reminder, important dates. The application opens on Monday, August 1st at 8am. It will close on Monday, September 12th at 5pm. We'll begin reviews the week after, and then all organizations will receive notifications by December 16th. So, on behalf of the team, I wanna just thank you all for taking the time to listen in. Please reach out if you have any questions or drop into one of our upcoming office hours. Thank you so much.