

2025 Grant Application Video Transcript

DIANA MARTINEZ:

Hello and welcome to the 2025 Weitz Family Foundation grant application overview I am Diana Martinez, Program Associate.

ROBIA QASIMYAR:

I am Robia Qasimyar, also a Program Associate.

EMILY NGUYEN:

And I'm Emily Nguyen, Executive Director. Thank you all so much for taking the time to view our video. And I'll turn it back over to Diana.

DIANA MARTINEZ:

So today we're going to spend some time talking through the grant application. This is our agenda for today. First, we'll be talking through the grant application timeline and the virtual information session and office hours. We'll also share an overview of the two types of grants you can apply for and general guidelines. Then we'll spend some time walking through the Beloved Community application and the Capacity Building application. And finally, we'll review key important dates to remember as you're preparing your application. Taking a look at our timeline for the year. We start with grant applications opening on Monday, July 17th and closing on Monday, August 26th at 5pm CST. We will continue to use giving data for application submission, review and management. If you're not familiar with giving data, we strongly encourage you to refer to the 'Giving Data Facts' or 'Giving Data' tutorial video on our website. If you have login questions, you can email our grants administrator Rose Christensen at rose@weitzfamilyfoundation.org with Rose spelled R-O-S-E.

After applications are due, our team will take a few months to review, assess and make final recommendations at our board meeting in mid-November before all applicants are notified of final decisions by Friday, December 13th. We will be hosting virtual application sessions and virtual office hours via zoom throughout the duration of our application period. The virtual application sessions are a live version of this presentation with time for Q&A at the end. You must register for virtual application sessions in advance by filling out the registration form on our website, under the opportunities tab, under the Important Dates section. If you have questions specific to you or your organization, we recommend attending one of our virtual office hours. Attendees are let in from the waiting room one at a time, for some brief one on one time, and to attend a virtual office hour, you can simply

click the links featured on our website. OK, so we have two grant categories, Beloved Community and Capacity Building.

The Beloved Community category grants up to \$20,000. Capacity building grants award \$20,000 or greater. Both grants are distributed as unrestricted general operating dollars. Robia and Emily will go over these applications in more depth, including eligibility for multi-year grants for both of these categories. If you've applied previously, this year's application looks very similar to last year's, with a few language tweaks and additional questions. As usual, the two applications have a lot in common with the application for Capacity Building grants being slightly more comprehensive. Please note that to apply, you have to choose one of the two grants to apply for. You're only eligible to apply for one kind of grant, so either Beloved Community or Capacity Building, not both. In terms of general guidelines, though, the whole application is important. We encourage you to be the most thorough and thoughtful when answering the questions centered on racial equity and accessibility. The due date is Monday, August 26th at 5pm CST.

You'll be notified by Friday, December 13th about the status of your application and if you'd like an alternative application to accommodate any accessibility needs, you can email rose@weitzfamilyfoundation.org. Lastly, when you enter the application text into the portal and as the team goes over the application questions today, you'll see word counts. The word count totals you see are suggestions and not requirements. So, please use the space you need to be thorough and thoughtful. And now I'm gonna hand it over to Robia to talk through the Beloved Community application.

ROBIA QASIMYAR:

Thanks, Diana. Yes. So, let's dive into Beloved Community. Alrighty. So, Beloved Community grants are for Omaha based organizations that complement our mission of prioritizing and supporting systemic change that transforms our community into an equitable place to live. It's a great way for organizations who are new, or at least new to us, to be introduced to our foundation. So, if you have never formally received a grant by the Weitz Family Foundation before, this is the only grant you are eligible to apply for. And that being said, there are many organizations we have funded for quite some time that continue to apply for and stay in Beloved Community with requests up to \$20,000, so returning grantees don't let that deter you. Additionally, if your budget is at or less than \$100,000, we recommend applying for Beloved Community, given that we're unlikely to fund requests more than 20% of overall budgets. And when are applications due? That's right, Monday, August 26th at 5pm CST. So, we start off with some basic information.

Your organization's name, tax ID, mailing address, website, and contact information. For those who applied last year. This information should automatically populate in the system.

So, you can simply review and edit where needed. The request section begins by asking for your mission, as well as a brief description and history of your organization. And the next step here, we're interested to know how your organization addresses racial justice and the greater community, which could be, but isn't limited to, things like policy, research practices or resource distribution. 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 have a similar mission, particularly those led by people of color, and then describe how you're working with them for mutual success. And for this next question, we want to understand the connection between your organization and our mission, which, again, 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 these next set of questions center on what we as a foundation really value, which is equity. Last year, through our work with Mynasha Spencer, All of Us Together company, we began to deepen our understanding and practice of what it means to be engaged in equity and relate that to specific performance standards. This is something previous applicants should recognize, and that Emily discussed on her 'Equity Journey' blog post on our website back in April 2023, featuring three matrices Mynasha created. So, if you've checked that out, this should be familiar to you. Now, please keep in mind that we are seeking progress and not perfection here. We don't expect organizations to be at a certain threshold across the board. Instead, we want to see how you're making active progress and what steps you're taking from where you are. Therefore, it's imperative that you describe yourselves honestly in your ratings and how you are or would like to grow in the following four areas.

So, Board Membership is the first category. Where does your organization fall? How many members of your board are of the global majority? Select and reflect in the past year, what measures have been taken to either make progress here or maintain your current membership? Next, we have senior leadership, which could include directors, program managers, operations managers. Really anyone who helps guide the organization in an oversight role. You'll select and reflect from the past year again. And then comes professional development. We want to know where you're at with cultural competency and DEIA education specifically. Select and reflect once more. We would like you to offer a brief blurb about the trainings your team has engaged in within the last year, and the progress in continuing to provide them. And finally, we have policies and procedures. How have they been reviewed for bias, offensive and or exclusive language, and how will they be regularly reviewed? Select and reflect from the past year here as well.

So, for these in all other sections of the application, of course, please check to make sure your response directly answers all parts of what is being asked. Now we realize that organizations can and have built equity and accessibility in areas beyond the four that we just reviewed. So, here we offer applicants the chance to highlight work they're excited about when it comes to recruiting, interviewing, talent management performance, employee satisfaction, compensation transparency, and supplier diversity. We ask that you describe 1 to 3 of these areas. If you're not necessarily taking action in any of these, we'd like you to speak to how you might in the future. And as a second part to this, we want to hear which of those equity work areas have been most challenging for you. And we really ask this because we want to understand what obstacles people are experiencing, so we can support and address those barriers to progress. Moving on to some financial information, we start with entering your organization's fiscal year end year 2024 budget information and anticipated 2025 budget before uploading a copy of the current year's budget document.

Now, you're welcome to share your working budget in whatever format you're using by the way. Just be sure that it explicitly includes revenue and expenses. You'll then have the opportunity to share context behind major changes that are more than 20%, or anything else that you would like us to know about it. So exciting news. The multi-year funding opportunity that we started formally last year for Capacity Building applications have expanded to Beloved Community. Eligible organizations are ones that have received funding for at least five years, does not have to be consecutive, or engaged in advocacy, community organizing, or supportive collective action to address root problems of poverty, racism, or other inequities, or meet a unique need to provide culturally competent and accessible direct services and actively work to improve the organization's racial equity and accessibility. You would select yes or no regarding multi-year funding up to three years, depending on your eligibility and interest.

And following that up, we'll have you enter the amounts you are requesting each year for up to three years. If you're applying for multi-year funds. If you're applying for just 2025, you can type your amount in that corresponding box and leave the remaining blank. The last question here then asks for the grand total amount you are requesting from us this cycle. So, you would simply add up the numbers above and put them here. If you're applying for just 2025, you can copy that number again in this box. Wrapping up Beloved Community, are these additional information questions. Firstly, 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. And this last spring, we decided to begin hosting forums or grantee driven conversations about a particular subject that permeates

the work of many, if not all, nonprofits. Our team just hosted our first one in May that centered board development as the topic.

Now, we would like to continue having these in the future and are curious to know what subjects you would be interested in learning from and discussing with other organizations we support. And then any final tidbits that you'd like to share with us that hasn't been previously addressed in the application, you'd be welcome to do so here. We'll share these directly with our Board of Directors. Alrighty. Well, thanks for coming along for the ride as we reviewed Beloved Community application questions, I will pass it over to Emily, who will share all about Capacity Building.

EMILY NGUYEN:

Thanks, Robia. So, we are going to wrap up today talking about Capacity Building. So, Capacity Building grants are general operating grants that start at 21,000 and above. These are for organizations based in Omaha that share our mission in prioritizing and supporting systemic change that makes our community and equitable place to live. Also, organizations do need to have received at least one year of funding from the foundation in order to be eligible for Capacity Building. The unique thing about Capacity Building is that capital requests can be included in your overall request. Again, applications are due August 26th at 5pm CST. So, similar to Beloved Community, we ask for basic information about your organization. All of this information is populated. If you have applied for funding from us last year, you'll just be able to edit or make changes. The one new piece of information is your website. We are wanting to spend time getting to know your organization better through your website, so please put that link in the application.

Also, mission statement if you applied last year that will be included in your application. But again, if you have any edits or changes, you can make that in the application itself. And then we wanna know, how is your work promoting racial equity and accessibility externally? So, for any people that you are serving or within the broader community. Similar to the Beloved Community application, we wanna understand other similar organizations that have a similar mission, particularly those led by people of color. And we wanna understand how you're working with each of those organizations for mutual success. And then we wanna know, how would a grant from us support systemic change that really transforms our community into a more equitable place to live and how will the request help your organization build its capacity or leadership? New for Capacity Building is, or that you won't see in the Beloved Community is really trying to understand how your organization measures success. How will you know if your work or specific project will be successful?

For organizations that have a budget of over \$1 million, we really want to understand what metrics you're currently collecting and what your overall evaluation strategy is. And then we

also wanna know how do you ensure your data isn't racist? How do you ensure equity is built into the data that you collect? If you wanna learn more about that, our website has a great blog post, or feel free to reach out to any of us with questions. And then we also want to understand how your organization engages in advocacy. We really define advocacy in broad terms so that can include outreach, lifting the voices of the people that you are serving, informing decision makers in addition to any type of community organizing or policy making as well. Then we have our equity questions. These are going to be the same as the questions that Robia spoke about earlier in our Beloved Community application. So, first we wanna ask about board membership. Again, we wanna have you reflect on what action you've taken in the past year to make progress, and then also to continue that work going forward.

Then again, with senior leadership, we wanna know in the past year, how have you taken action to make progress in the diversity of your senior leadership? And then how you're continuing to maintain that progress. And then, of course, professional development. Same thing, we want you to reflect and provide a brief description of the trainings that your staff has engaged in in the past year, and how you're making progress to continue this work going forward. And then finally, policies and procedures. Again, we wanna have you reflect and then describe how your policies have been reviewed in the past year and who conducted the review, and then also how you plan to maintain that work going forward. And then finally, we recognize that there are many other areas that organizations may be taking action to grow in their racial equity work. And so, we want you to choose 1 to 3. You don't have to talk about all of these areas. And to really talk about what your organization is excited about and making progress in.

And then if your organization is not taking any action, please describe how your organization might or plans to take action in the future. And then again, we wanna understand what areas of equity work have been most challenging for you. We understand and recognize and have our own challenges, and so we better wanna understand how we can help support. And then we're moving over into financial information. We're gonna ask for your organization's fiscal year end. We're also gonna have you enter your 2024 budget information and your anticipated 2025 budget. We recognize that for many organizations that don't start their 2025 fiscal year until January, that this may be hard. So, it is okay to have estimates. Then we want you to upload a copy of your 2024 budget. This can be in whatever form you choose, but please make sure that you do include both income and expenses. And then we'll also have a section where you can describe any major changes to your budget. We define major changes as a 20% change in your budget, or if there's anything else that you think would be important for us to understand.

And then, similar to last year, any organization that has received at least five years of funding and met the qualifications can apply for up to three years of funding. This is for organizations that are engaged in some type of advocacy, organizing or supporting collective action to address those root problems of poverty, racism, or other inequalities. Or they're meeting a unique need to provide culturally competent direct services here in Omaha. And then we also ask that the organization be actively working to improve their racial equity and accessibility. So, you'll have the chance to say yes or no if you're interested in applying for multi-year support. If you have any questions or unsure if you're eligible, feel free to reach out to one of us. So, if you indicate yes that you are interested, you'll be able to then for each year, break out your request in terms of general operating, if you are requesting any capital and then requesting any event support, and then a total for each year.

Then new this year, we are interested in better understanding organizations interest in requesting event support. So, we'll have a yes or no question asking if you did request event support. If you did, then we'll ask a few questions. First, asking you to tell us a little bit about the event that you're requesting support for. We really wanna make sure that we are bringing folks that you're interested in meeting and connecting with to events. So, we wanna know what other community partners would you want us to invite. And then we're also interested in going to other events that your organization may be putting on. So, we wanna know what those events are, and if you have dates for those events, please share those with us. And then finally, you wanna add up the total amount that you're requesting, whether that's one year of support or all three years of support and enter that total number. And then we also have the option of organizations can request capital support. Wanna be super clear that this capital support is for construction, renovation or improvement of a property that your organization either owns or currently works on.

We do ask that any capital requests be explicit in their use of minority owned or small and emerging businesses, where you're looking for at least 10% of the project budget to go towards minority owned or small and emerging businesses. So, there's two key documents that we'll ask. First is a case statement, which really talks about the feasibility and cost of the capital campaign. Please feel free to upload any documents that you already have created for any other capital requests. And then we also ask you to upload a specific budget that includes income, expenses and then any pending support. And then finally, similar to the Beloved Community application, we wanna know how you heard about us. So, indicate any board service or volunteer from any member of the Weitz family. And then also, as Robia spoke about earlier, we're really interested in understanding what topics you would be interested in learning from other organizations. So please include those here. And

then finally, we wanna know if there's anything else that you would want the Board of Directors to know.

And this will be information that we share directly with the board. So, I'm gonna turn it back over to Diana to finish us out for the day.

DIANA MARTINEZ:

Alright. Thank you, Emily. So here are some reminders and some other miscellaneous things to keep in mind. Organizations who have not previously received funding from us are only eligible to apply for the Beloved Community Grant. Any organization must choose between applying for the Beloved Community grant or the Capacity Building grant. You cannot apply for both. Only Omaha area organizations in Nebraska are eligible for consideration. You must have a 501(c)3 designation or a fiscal sponsor in order to apply. Areas of work that we do not currently fund include organizations centered on religion, sports, animals, and the environment, as well as requests related to pantries. Be sure to review the criteria for multi-year eligibility before you apply. Current multi-year grantees are not eligible to request additional funding for the duration of their multi-year grant, except in the case of emergency. We are unlikely to fund more than 20% of total operating budgets and or more than 50% of an individual salary, and for capital requests, we expect either 10% or the entirety of your grant, whichever is less, to go towards contracts with minority owned or small and emerging businesses.

Please contact Rose, our grants administrator, for application related accessibility at rose@weitzfamilyfoundation.org. And lastly, a few key dates to remember. Our grant application opens on Monday, July 15th. It will close on Monday, August 26th at 5pm CST. We will notify all applicants of our final decisions by Friday, December 13th. Thank you all so much for joining us. Please reach out with any questions. We hope to see you in a virtual application session or in one of our office hours. Have a great day!