

WEITZ FAMILY FOUNDATION 2026 GRANT APPLICATION VIDEO TRANSCRIPT

DIANA MARTINEZ:

Hello and welcome to the 2026 Weitz Family Foundation Grant Application Overview. I'm Diana Martinez, Program Associate.

EMILY NGUYEN:

I'm Emily Nguyen, Executive Director.

ROBIA QASIMYAR:

I'm Robia Qasimyar, also Program Associate.

ROSE CHRISTIANSEN:

And I'm Rose Christiansen, Grants Administrator.

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 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 for the application. Taking a look at the timeline for the year, we start with grant applications opening on Monday, July 14th, and closing on Monday, August 25th at 5pm Central Standard Time. After applications are due, our team will take a few months to review, assess, and make final recommendations at our board meeting at the end of November, before all applicants are notified of final decisions by Friday, December 12th. We will be hosting virtual application sessions and virtual office hours via Zoom throughout the duration of our open application period.

The virtual application sessions are a live version of this presentation, with time for Q&A at the end. You have to register for these virtual application sessions in advance by filling out the registration form on our website, which is 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 a brief one-on-one. To attend a virtual office hour, you can simply click the link featured on our website. So we have two grant categories, Beloved Community and Capacity Building. The Beloved Community category grants up to \$20,000. Capacity Building grants award \$21,000 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 multiyear grants for both of these categories. We fund

501(c)3 organizations based in Omaha, Nebraska, across a range of focus areas, but we are primarily looking to fund organizations doing systems change work, advocacy work, or uniquely providing culturally competent and accessible direct services.

We do not fund organizations centered on religion, sports, animals, and the environment. We are also not accepting new requests related to pantries, early childhood, and after-school programs. Also, note that we rarely fund organizations outside of the Omaha area. If you have questions about your organization's eligibility, we encourage you to attend a virtual office hour. If you've applied previously, this year's applications look a little bit different than last year's with some new questions, so please allow extra time to review these questions. As usual, the two applications, Beloved Community and Capacity Building, have a lot in common, with the application for Capacity Building Grants being slightly more comprehensive. Please note that to apply, you'll 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 equity and accessibility.

The due date, as I said, is Monday, August 25th at 5pm Central Time. You'll be notified by Friday, December 12th about the status of your application. Lastly, when you enter the application text into the portal and as the team goes over the application questions, 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 going to hand it over to Rose to talk a bit about our submission platform, GivingData.

ROSE CHRISTIANSEN:

Thanks, Diana. Yeah. So, GivingData is our grant application and management system. So this is what you will use to submit your application. I have recorded a separate video that walks you through how to log in and navigate the portal. That video is also on the tutorial page of our website. However, if you have any accessibility needs or have any questions about giving data, I am happy to help. Also, if you are a returning applicant and have had some staff changes since you last submitted it, please reach out to me, and I can help you gain access to your existing account. My email address is rose@weitzfamilyfoundation.org. Feel free to reach out to me at any time. Now, I will turn it over to Robia to talk about the beloved community application.

ROBIA QASIMYAR:

Thanks, Diana and Rose. Alright, let's jump into our Beloved Community application. 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. 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 if you're a returning grantee, don't let that deter you. Additionally, if your budget is at or less than \$100,000, we recommend applying for a Beloved Community, given that we are unlikely to fund requests more than 20% of overall budgets. And when are applications due? That is right, my friends, Monday, August 25th 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 we're also interested to know how your organization addresses racial justice in the greater community, which could be, but isn't limited to, things like policy, research, practices, or resource distribution. And here we want to learn more about what organization's understanding is of one another and how people are collaborating. So we ask that you write 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 for all of us to live.

So how would a grant from us fulfill that mission? What would the grant be going toward? So these next set of questions center on what we as a foundation really value, which is equity. 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, shifts you've made, challenges you've faced, or approaches that helped your team grow over the last year. Therefore, it's imperative that you describe yourselves honestly and how you are or would like to grow related to what we'll cover in the next few slides. And again, if you would prefer to share your responses to these specific questions and conversation, you're welcome to reach out to myself or Diana if you're a current grantee or Emily for all other applicants. With consideration to both board membership and senior leadership, how are you working to ensure these two teams, respectively, are reflective of the community your organization serves?

You'll answer these questions within the context of the last one year. Regarding professional development, we'd like people to share what learning or training your team has done to deepen your all's understanding of the various and often intersectional diversity within the communities you work with. Describe what those opportunities were in the last year, and go further. Share what your team took away from them and how they enriched your work. Next, we are curious to know how you've taken time over the past year to review internal policies by looking at language or practices that might unintentionally exclude or make it challenging for individuals on your team to feel supported. And we'd like you to share who was involved and how you plan to keep moving that work forward, or how you would like to grow in this area. So, finishing up this section, 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 you all are really excited about.

We ask that you describe one to three of these areas. And if you're not necessarily taking action right now, 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 parts of equity work have been most challenging to navigate. 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, your 2025 budget information, and anticipated 2026 budget before uploading a copy of the current year's budget document. And you're welcome to share your working budget in whatever format you're currently using, by the way. Just be sure that it explicitly includes revenue and expenses. That's really important. You'll then have the opportunity to share context behind major changes that are more than 20%, or really anything else that you would like us to know about. So we are indeed continuing to offer multiyear funding opportunities for both of our applications, which we are really happy to be able to do.

So, for Beloved Community, eligible organizations are ones that have received funding for at least five years. Doesn't have to be consecutive. They are engaged in advocacy, community organizing, or 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. So here you would select yes or no regarding multiyear funding up to three years, depending on your eligibility and interest. So, 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 multiyear funds. If you're applying for just 2026, you can type your amount in that corresponding box and leave the remaining blank. And that 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 then put them here.

Again, if you're applying for just 2026, you can copy that number again in this box. So 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 anyone in the Weitz Family has had any board or service history at your organization. And secondly, our team is curious to know what subjects you would be interested in learning from and discussing with other organizations we support at future forums, which are grantee-driven conversations about a particular topic that permeates the work of many, if not all, nonprofits. We hosted our first one last year, and we'd like to do something similar again in the future, so please share your thoughts here. And alrighty, well, thanks for coming along for the ride as we reviewed Beloved Community application questions. I'll pass it over to Emily, who will share all about Capacity Building.

EMILY NGUYEN:

Thanks, Robia. So we will jump here into our Capacity Building Application. You will see some similarities to many of the questions, with some additional questions to go a little bit deeper. So, Capacity Grants are general operating grants that start above \$21,000. We're really looking at funding Omaha-based organizations that really share our mission, which is really around prioritizing and supporting systemic change that makes our community a more equitable place to live. We also, as part of Capacity Building, will look at capital requests that we'll talk about here in a little bit. There is no maximum amount that an organization can request. And again, applications are due August 25th at 5pm Central Time. So, to kick us off, first off is just basic organizational information. All of this information will be populated. You just want to go in and make sure that it is up to date including any contacts. And just like Rose said earlier, if you have any staff changes, please reach out to her to make sure that we have the right contacts listed in our system, or if you're having any trouble logging in.

Then, of course, your mission, and then also just overall, how is your work promoting racial justice and accessibility externally? So thinking about this for clients that you're serving or within the broader community. Then we want to know what other partnerships you have. So please talk about other organizations, particularly those led by people of color that you're partnering with, and how you're working with those organizations for success. And then also, as you think big picture, how would a grant from us support systemic change? How would a grant help us really meet that mission of ours to make our community a more equitable place to live? Also thinking about this as a Capacity Building Grant, how will this request enable your organization to build its capacity or leadership? This is really your

chance to talk overall how the grant will impact your organization and your mission. Then some new questions for Capacity Building. We want to know how does your organization currently measure success?

How will you know if a project maybe that you're asking for specifically or your organization overall will be successful? This is a great opportunity to really talk in specifics, talk about the metrics that you use to really measure success, whether that's at a program level or at an organizational level. And then share a little bit with us about those successes. That really is helpful for us to have some additional context. If your organization has a budget of over \$1 million, we want to know... In addition to knowing more metrics, we want to know your evaluation strategy. So how are you thinking about evaluation across all of your programs? And then also how are you ensuring that your data isn't racist? This question we actually have a blog post on our website that you can feel free to go and visit for more information. And then finally, we want to know how does your organization engage in advocacy? And by advocacy, we really mean that as outreach, lifting the voices of people that you're serving, informing decision makers of the needs of the community, in addition to what folks typically think with advocacy, community organizing, working with policymakers, etc.

So we really take a broader view of what it means to be engaged in advocacy. And so I want to hear about how your organization is currently engaging in advocacy. And then, like Robia had said earlier, we really are wanting to understand how organizations are working to create inclusive environments. And we really, truly are looking at this as progress and not perfection. So we encourage folks to take time to really reflect on where their organization is at, where do they want to be, and what are they really proud of. And again, like Robia said earlier, if for some reason you want to discuss any responses to these questions, please reach out to Robia or Diana. And then for new organizations in the Beloved Community, feel free to reach out to myself. So again, we want to know about board membership and senior leadership, and really understanding how you're working to ensure both your board and your senior leadership represents the clients that you serve. We also want to understand what types of professional development are offered internally to staff to really deepen that knowledge of diverse identities, experiences and creating that inclusive, equitable workplace.

And then wanting to understand what did your team learn from these experiences? What did they take away? What are they applying to their work now? And then policies and procedures. How in the last year has your organization reviewed those internal policies and procedures to ensure that no practices or policies actually exclude anyone or make it difficult for employees to feel supported? We really want to know both who was in the

process of the review and how you plan to keep moving this review forward. If you're not doing this, please talk about maybe how you would like to grow in this area. And then again, we understand there's many ways that organizations are working to ensure that their organization is equitable and accessible. So we want you to think about one to three areas where your organization has taken additional steps to support employees. And we're really interested in what you've been learning, if you're trying something new or something you're really proud of because you've made a lot of progress.

We also want to know what's difficult. We know this work is hard. We as an organization also struggle with this work. So we want to understand places where folks are feeling stuck in this work. Then we're going to move into the financial information. So we want to know your organization's fiscal year end. We're going to have you enter in your 2025 budget information and your anticipated 2026 budget. Really important we understand this time of year, not everyone knows that number. So we completely understand that this might be an estimate. And then upload a copy of your current 2025 budget and make sure that your budget includes both revenue and expenses. And then we know that a lot of organizations right now are having to do a lot of financial planning, and there might be changes, especially from a budget from last year. So if there's any major changes, please feel free to use this section to really talk to us about maybe some of the changes that you're making. And then, of course, just like in Beloved Community, we do offer the multi-year grant opportunity for organizations that have received at least five years of funding prior and they're engaging in systems change or meeting a unique need to provide culturally competent services and they're actively working to improve their equity and accessibility.

So if you are requesting a multi-year, you will want to go in and for each year, note any operating that you're requesting, any capital that you're requesting, and then any event support. If you're just requesting one year, you just have to complete it for 2026. Then as it relates to events, if you did request event support, you want to indicate on that question yes. And then tell us a little bit more about the event that you're asking for sponsorship and a brief description of it. We also want to know who else would you like us to invite. We really see events as an opportunity to connect folks. And so we want to know who you might want us to invite to an event. And then also, if there are other non-fundraising events that you would like us to attend in 2026, please note those here, especially if you already have dates. And then finally, at the very end, you'll want to list the grand total amount if you're requesting multi-year, it's the total for all three years, at the bottom. And then we'll move into capital requests.

So this is optional. And when we talk about capital, it's really about construction, renovation, or improvement of a property. We also really believe in using small and

emerging businesses. So you want to be explicit about using at least 10% of your budget for those smaller businesses. And there's really just two documents that we're going to ask you to upload. First is a case statement, which really talks about the feasibility and cost of the campaign, and then also uploading a specific budget that includes income, expenses, and pending sources of support. And then finally, we just want to know, how did you hear about us, talking about any board, service of any Weitz Family member within your organization? And then also what other topics you would be interested in learning from and discussing with other organizations. So with that, I'm going to turn it back over to Diana to close us out.

DIANA MARTINEZ:

Thanks, Emily. Here are some reminders and final things to keep in mind. You must have a 501(c)3 designation or a fiscal sponsor that does in order to apply. You must be based in Omaha, Nebraska. We do not fund organizations centered on religion, sports, animals, and the environment. We are not considering new requests related to pantries, early childhood, and after-school programs. Organizations who have not previously received funding from us are only eligible to apply for Beloved Community, and organizations can only apply for Beloved Community or Capacity Building, not both. More reminders. Be sure to review the criteria for multiyear eligibility before applying. Current multiyear grantees are not eligible to request additional funding for the duration of their contract, 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 do keep in mind that for capital requests, we expect either 10% or the entirety of our grant, whichever one is less, to go toward contracts with small and emerging businesses.

And please contact Rose, our grants administrator, for giving data help or application-related accessibility questions at rose@weitzfamilyfoundation.org. And lastly, a few key dates to remember. Our grant application opens Monday, July 14th. It will close on Monday, August 25th at 5pm Central Standard Time. We will notify all applicants of our final decisions by Friday, December 12th. If you have any questions, consider attending a virtual information session or office hours. We are also available by email. We look forward to reading your application, and thank you for watching.