

CFTEH Housing Justice Fund Request for Proposals—July 2022

Chicago Funders Together to End Homelessness (CFTEH) is a collaborative of 30+ philanthropic partners working to align and leverage their grantmaking efforts to end homelessness. As part of the group’s strategic planning process, CFTEH engaged people with lived expertise, service providers, advocates, elected officials, and government partners to share their perspectives on where CFTEH should focus its collective efforts. Partners urged CFTEH to fund long-term efforts to improve housing policy, build public and political will to end homelessness, and shift power from predominantly white systems and institutions to communities of color most impacted by homelessness.

In response to this community input, CFTEH is launching the **Housing Justice Fund** to support **advocacy and community organizing that advances housing justice**. To CFTEH, *housing justice* means: centering people most impacted by homelessness in decision-making; addressing the role that racism and white supremacy¹ play in perpetuating homelessness and unjust housing policy; eliminating the disproportionate experience of homelessness within Black and African American communities; and ensuring that everyone has a safe, stable, dignified, affordable home.

Through the Housing Justice Fund, CFTEH will direct at least \$2 million over the next two years to support campaigns, coalitions, alliances, partnerships, and other coordinated tables that are leading advocacy and organizing efforts to end homelessness. The fund will prioritize Black-led and lived expertise-led initiatives. The fund will primarily provide **flexible, unrestricted grants of up to \$50,000 per year for at least two years** though the fund retains the flexibility to make larger or smaller grants if responsive to an initiative’s needs.

The funding is designed to be **maximally flexible and fully unrestricted**, meaning that costs for staff salaries, administration, operations, and other project infrastructure are fully eligible. The fund is not intended to support direct services or capital campaigns.

CFTEH’s Housing Justice Fund seeks to:

- Eliminate racial disparities in who experiences homelessness and why
- Shift decision-making power from predominantly white institutions and systems to Black and African American communities most impacted by homelessness
- Reframe narratives about homelessness from those focused on personal responsibility to those focused on systemic causes and exclusionary housing practices
- Secure increased, dedicated public and private resources to end homelessness
- Build public and political will to end homelessness

Below are a few examples of efforts the fund would consider:

- Grassroots organizing efforts related to ending homelessness
- Participatory, action-oriented research that drives toward a specific change in policy or practice
- Storytelling, narrative change, public awareness, or other media campaigns
- Leadership development and compensation for people with lived expertise
- Planning efforts to better coordinate systems and sectors specifically tied to policy change

¹ [National Racial Equity Working Group](#): “White supremacy is a system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations, and people of color by white peoples for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power, and privilege.”

Prioritized initiatives:

- Black-led initiatives and initiatives led by communities with lived expertise of homelessness, housing instability, or related experiences
 - *Defined by CFTEH as project leads or leadership bodies that reflect the intersectional identities and lived experiences of the issues the work seeks to address.*
- Initiatives that employ a housing justice lens
 - *Defined by CFTEH as efforts that help address the historical impact of racism and white supremacy systems on homelessness and that center people with lived expertise in project design and decision-making.*
- Partnerships, alliances, campaigns, coalitions, planning bodies, regional planning tables, and community advisory councils rather than individual organizations
- Efforts focused on Chicago and Cook County will be prioritized, though broader regional and state-wide initiatives may also be considered.
- Organizations with 501c3 status or a fiscal sponsor are eligible to apply.

Process to request funding:

<i>OPTIONAL</i>	To ask questions and learn more about the fund, join CFTEH for a virtual information session on Thursday, August 4 from 11-12 CST . Attendance is optional and the session will be recorded and made publicly available. RSVP for the info session .
<i>Step 1</i>	Initiatives seeking funding should email a very brief overview (1-2 paragraphs) of the proposed effort to CFTEH@wearemicroreese.org by Friday, August 26 . This email should describe the proposed advocacy or organizing initiative at a high level and explain how it advances CFTEH’s definition of housing justice.
<i>Step 2</i>	<p>Initiatives that are aligned with the priorities of the fund will be invited to make a full request via virtual site visit OR written narrative. The initiative can choose which format is preferred. Invitations to make a full request will be sent in early September.</p> <p>For initiatives wishing to make their request via virtual site visit, CFTEH staff will help coordinate a time during the month of September. For initiatives wishing to make their request in writing, a document addressing the topics below should be submitted to CFTEH@wearemicroreese.org by Friday, September 30.</p> <p><u>Regardless of format, the full request should include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A detailed description of the initiative • Goals of the initiative • Key partners, with a focus on communities most impacted by homelessness • How the initiative centers racial equity and housing justice • How people with lived expertise are leading and shaping the work • Short-term and long-term community change the initiative hopes to affect • A high-level project budget outlining how funds would be used <p>Please note: Because the fund will primarily make grants of \$50,000 a year for two years, initiatives do not need to request a specific grant amount. Initiatives do not need to submit any additional attachments beyond a project budget.</p>

Step 3	<p>Grant decisions will be made by late October. Decisions will be made by a committee of CFTEH funders. Payments will be processed by late November by Michael Reese Health Trust, CFTEH’s fiscal sponsor.</p> <p><u>The CFTEH Housing Justice Fund Committee members are:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tameeka Christian, JB + MK Pritzker Family Foundation • Laura Jansen, Pierce Family Foundation + Cuore e Mani Foundation • Julián Lazalde, Healthy Communities Foundation • Jawanza Malone, Wieboldt Foundation • Joanne Otte, The Chicago Community Trust • Katie Mulcahy Owens, The Owens Foundation • Christy Prah, Crown Family Philanthropies • Rachel Reichlin, Michael Reese Health Trust <p><u>The CFTEH Housing Justice Fund Committee is staffed by:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emily Krisciunas, Director, CFTEH • Kathy Niedorowski, Program Coordinator, CFTEH
Step 4	<p>Partners receiving funding will choose their desired format of annual reporting (written, video, phone call, in-person visit).</p>

Questions? Need help?

- Join us for a virtual info session about the Housing Justice Fund and the process to request funding on Thursday, August 4 from 11-12 CST.
 - The info session is optional.
 - The session will be recorded and made publicly available.
 - [RSVP for the info session.](#)
- Reach out to CFTEH@wearemicrose.org with any questions about the fund or the process.