



Partners for Places Grants Program Round 22 Invitation to Apply

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Table 1. Process and Timeline.

| Date | Action |
|--|---|
| December 5, 2024 | Invitation to Apply is released |
| January 22, 2025, at 3 pm EDT | Opportunity overview session, register here |
| February 28, 2025, by 11:59 pm., any time zone | Applications due |
| May 21, 2025 | Awards announced |

Opportunity Overview. *Partners for Places* enhances local capacity to build equitable¹ and sustainable communities in the United States and Canada. It does this through trust-based grantmaking that supports equitable collaborative partnerships.² *Partners for Places* is hosted by *The Funders Network* (TFN).

Since 2012, this fund has supported 208 local projects. Lessons from completed work are posted on the *Partners for Places Idea Bank*. Successful applications can be shared with permission from the grantee. Contact [Ashley Quintana](#) if you are interested in any one community’s work.

Funds support the: (1) spreading of local Equitable Climate Action (ECA)³ and / or Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI)⁴ practices; and (2) advancing of opportunities for local government,⁵ frontline communities,⁶ and place-based funders⁷ to build trusting partnerships and develop projects together. Each community partnership must signal its collective priorities and collaborative approaches in the application.

Round 22 Funding Description. This opportunity requires partnerships between (1) a local government sustainability and / or water department, (2) a frontline community partner, and (3) a place-based funder.

- One-year grants (\$45,000 - \$100,000):
 - Use a strong, existing partnership to plan or implement an ECA and / or GSI project that addresses frontline community priorities.
- Two-year grants (\$75,000 - \$150,000):

¹ **Equity.** Correcting systems to eliminate identity-based disparate outcomes. (*Adapted from: Race Forward and the Government Alliance for Race and Equity*).

² **Collaborative partnership.** A mutually agreed upon partnership between at least 1 local government sustainability director or water department / utility director, at least one or more frontline community partners, and at least one or more place-based funders to agree on priority problems and possible solutions to try together. (*Adapted from: Movement Strategy Center*).

³ **Equitable Climate Action.** The practice of examining systemic inequalities so that the root causes of climate change can be addressed instead of only its symptoms. Equitable climate action influences and informs the development of a just, fair, prosperous society. The goal is to equitably meet the needs of all people groups - without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (*Adapted from: Brundtland*).

⁴ **Green Stormwater Infrastructure.** Community infrastructure that filters and absorbs stormwater where it falls. (*Adapted from: the U.S. EPA*)

⁵ **Local government.** Typically, a city or county sustainability / climate officer (ECA work), or a water director / utility representative (GSI).

⁶ **Frontline communities.** Communities most impacted by systems of oppression and injustice, economic disadvantage, and environmental harm. The frontline community can be represented by individual organizations, groups of organizations, or individual community members.

⁷ **Place-based funder.** Locally or regionally based philanthropic organizations with a history of repeated investment in the area.



- Create or improve collaborative partnerships between a local government sustainability and / or water department, frontline community partner, and place-based funder.
 - The budget must either allocate or indicate matching funds for partnership building in year 1 and include the engagement of a facilitator to integrate equity principles.
- Are for planning and / or implementing an ECA and / or GSI project that addresses community priorities.

Award Budget. There is \$863,834 USD available to award in Round 22 to support ~6-8 projects.

- A local foundation match of at least 50% is required. A local funder matching grant letter or grant agreement showing proof of the match must be received within 3 months of award notification.
- The grantee cannot regrant any portion of the award without written permission from TFN.⁸

Partners for Places funds can be used for:

- Personnel costs related to the work, like supporting new local government interns or staff, new or existing staff supporting frontline communities, or consultant fees.⁹
- Other project costs, like community stipends, supplies, administrative expenses, or small capital / equipment expenses directly related to the work.

Eligibility. To be eligible, all applications must:

- **Include at least these 3 partners:** 1 Local Government Sustainability or Water Director, 1 Frontline Community Group, and 1 Place-Based Funder.
- **Identify a source for the at least 50% cash match of the requested amount.**¹⁰
 - A funding match of at least 50% of the Partners for Places request from at least 1 place-based funder is required for the implementation phase.
 - Place-based funders must provide evidence of this match, by including either: (1) a signed grant letter or grant agreement; or (2) a signed letter showing a strong intention to approve the matching grant within three months, should Partners for Places approve the application for funding.
 - It is fine to use a foundation that is already funding General Operations as a match. The foundation providing the match will need to provide a letter stating that they are fine with part of their funds going towards this match.
 - In-kind support will not be counted toward the cash match. The local match may not be provided by a national funder that currently invests in Partners for Places.
- **Be submitted by a City, County or a Frontline Community Group designated as a primary partner by the City or County via email.** If the Frontline Community Group submits the application, the partnering City or County representative named in the application must be copied.
- **Have no open general grants with Partners for Places.** It is fine to have an open federal funding assistance grant, however.

⁸ If the applying team decides they want to regrant any TFN funds, put as much detail as possible in application about the goal of the regranting, the selection process that will be used, and who the potential organizations are that will receive the funds. If awarded, TFN must know the potential grantees to be able to approve prior to the grantee launching the regranting program.

⁹ Partners for Places will not support salaries for existing local government staff, major capital projects, or endowments.

¹⁰ While Partners for Places requires a match from place-based funders, applicants should also be aware of and are encouraged to leverage emerging [federal funding opportunities](#) for additional support of local sustainability initiatives.

- **Submit only one application from any given community.** Partners for Places wants to spread resources around as much as possible. This means that an applying city should check with its county to make sure that they are not also applying, and vice versa.¹¹
- **The application is submitted by one of the partners, with a grant recipient identified.**
 - A 501c3 non-profit must be identified as the grant recipient, willing to accept and manage grant funds on behalf of the partners post-award. Grant funding can be used to cover the costs of administering and managing the grant.

Review the [Partners for Places Application and Award Guidance](#) for answers to frequent questions.

Submission Instructions. Applications are submitted via email to [Ashley Quintana](#) by **February 28, 2025**. If a submission confirmation is not received within 24 hours of the due date, please reach out to [Ashley Quintana](#) to ensure the application was processed. **When ready to apply, download the application form and associated budget form directly from the Partners for Places website.**

Selection Process. All applications are reviewed by The Funders Network for eligibility. Those who meet all eligibility criteria are shared with the Partners for Places Selection Committee. Committee members use the Selection Criteria [here](#) to consider investments. The Committee meets to discuss and vote on awards.

Proposal Technical Assistance. Partners for Places wants all applications to be as strong and successful as possible. To that end, technical assistance (TA) is available to those who are considering an application submission. To request TA, first read the [Partners for Places Application and Award Guidance](#) document. If questions remain, contact:

- [Ashley Quintana](#) with any eligibility or submission questions, or if additional support is needed while navigating this application.
- [Susanna Sutherland](#) for help with application development, like troubleshooting or testing the applicability of a proposed planning process or project implementation design.

Awarded Technical Assistance. All new grantees are required to attend:¹²

- **An individual Team Kick-Off:** Each grant team schedules an initial 2-hour meeting with a Partners for Places equity coach to complete two levels of self-assessment. The first is an individual self-assessment and the second is a team self-assessment. These assessments are required for the activities that take place during the whole Cohort kick-off and are the entry point for coaching calls.
- **Full Cohort Kick-Off:** All grantee teams join a 3-hour cohort-wide meeting with equity coaches to create a shared understanding of what equitable collaboration looks like for each team. This is an opportunity for each team to reflect on where they are on their journey, to review assessments done in individual kick-offs, and to identify and create action steps for addressing any gaps they see.
- **Bi-monthly 1-hour peer learning meetings following the full cohort kick-off gathering** to continue sharing updates on project work and challenges with other grantee teams.
 - **IMPORTANT:** Please take into consideration your frontline community budget allocation to adequately compensate your partners for their time during peer learning calls.

¹¹ Members of the Partners for Places Selection Committee are eligible to apply. However, they are recused from review, scoring, and commenting on their own applications. They may not discuss their own application with other committee members.

¹² Coaching by appointment will be available to all grantee teams or individual members to help work through challenges with partnerships or projects. Should any scheduling and/or attendance hardships arise, please contact [Ashley Quintana](#).