



NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY

THE FORWARD FUND PURPOSE AND GOALS

The Cambridge Redevelopment Authority (CRA) Forward Fund is a grant program intended to make targeted investments throughout the City of Cambridge's non-profit community. The purpose is to provide financial assistance to capital projects that will improve or maintain the quality, efficiency, and accessibility of organizations that provide direct services for the benefit of all the City's residents, workers, or visitors.

The CRA anticipates offering awards to a diverse set of organizations whose proposals are both feasible and, once completed, foster innovative approaches to address how to create a more livable and caring City. Examples include improving access to greater educational and employment opportunities, and how best to provide the resources so all Cambridge residents can achieve economic vitality.

The Forward Fund's goals are to:

- **Advance the CRA's mission to implement creative initiatives that promote social equity and a balanced economic system.**
- **Support organizations whose mission and work consists of providing services, resources, and support to Cambridge residents while addressing the overarching needs detailed in the City's Reports: [Envision Cambridge](#) and the [Community Needs Assessment](#).**

AVAILABLE FUNDING

The CRA will distribute up to **\$300,000** for 2019 projects. Grant award maximums will vary between two types of grants. The CRA reserves the right to allocate funding amounts depending on the quality of the proposals.

2019 FORWARD FUND GRANT REALIGNMENT

In the past, the Forward Fund has awarded financial assistance to various non-profits, artists, and small businesses whose proposed projects lead to a community innovation or created a new partnership while developing an innovative project. Recently, the majority of proposals submitted have been to support major physical improvement projects for various non-profits. The CRA staff acknowledges that a large portion of the financial resources for non-profits are directed to programs servicing their clients, creating a significant gap in the budget for infrastructure improvements project their facilities. This has led to a realignment of the 2019 Forward Fund to focus primarily on assisting non-profits with this much needed financial support. Additionally, lessons learned from the past four years have led to a set of program improvements that will simplify the Forward Fund. Two of the most notable refinements to the program are the yearlong application period and an increase in grant award maximums have increased from \$25,000 to \$100,000.

TWO TYPES OF GRANTS

Applicants may apply for **one** of the two award types.

[TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS](#) (Funding Level Requests Up To \$10,000)

Awards will be offered to applicants seeking to fund a feasibility analysis, architectural design, or engineering study for pursuing preconstruction information and relevant data related to a facility improvement project. The CRA believes this analysis can be important to the organization prior to committing their staff resources and financial reserves to an extensive construction project.

COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS (Funding Level Requests Up To \$100,000)

Awards will be offered to applicants seeking assistance with the construction, repair, renovation, and/or other capital improvements, such as open space and landscape improvements associated with a civic mission that touches a significant portion of the public population. If the grant is to be part of a much larger project, the applicant will need to demonstrate how the CRA investment is filling a critical gap in the viability of that project and show specifically how that money will be used.

WHO SHOULD APPLY

Eligibility is open to all Cambridge-based non-profit organizations that own and/or operate community facilities. The organizations mission should provide support, social services, and resources with the goal of closing the gaps reported in [Envision Cambridge](#) and the [Community Needs Assessment](#). Applicants will be asked to provide a clear narrative on how their proposed project and organization's mission is aligned with improving the overarching needs.

Projects must meet all of the following yes/no criteria in order to be eligible:

1. Project is located within Cambridge.
2. Project facilitates a physical improvement that does not require any additional ongoing funding from the CRA or the City to operate or maintain.
3. Fund request does not exceed award maximum.
4. Applicant is a Cambridge-based nonprofit organization.
5. Can the applicant clearly explain how the proposed project is feasible.
6. Will the project craft innovative approaches to closing the gaps reported in City's Reports: [Envision Cambridge](#) and the [Community Needs Assessment](#).
7. The applicant must have control over the proposed project site or have a letter or support from the property owner detailing a long-term lease agreement upon submission of their proposal.

APPLICATION AND AWARDING PROCEDURE

All submissions will utilize an online application portal. The portal is capable of saving incomplete applications which allow applicants the ability to return and complete the application at a later date, if necessary, before submitting the final version.

The process for applying and awarding funds is summarized below:

- Submit online application form and attachments
- Forward Fund Advisory Group assesses proposals on a quarterly basis
- Finalist meets with CRA staff
- Applicants and awardees are notified
- Applicants seek and obtain permits necessary for project implementation, and submit finalized budget proposals
- Initial 50% of award is granted to awardees who have successfully obtained the necessary permits and documentation of outside funding source(s) or in-kind/volunteer matching resources
- Provide CRA staff verification of project completion
- Outcome reporting within two months of completion date
- Final 50% of the funds are granted after completion of the project, awardees are expected to present a completed project, no later than two-years from the date of the initial 50% grant having been awarded

For additional information please contact Carlos Peralta, Program Manager at ForwardFund@cambridgeredevelopment.org or 617-492-6800