



Request for Proposals: Small Grants for Building Nonprofit Infrastructure Around Racial Equity in Volunteerism

The Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration (MAVA) is pleased to issue a Request for Proposals for nonprofit organizations located in the Twin Cities East Metro that are culturally-led or primarily serve communities of color to propose projects that will build infrastructure for volunteerism that is inclusive of all racial and ethnic communities and dismantles systems that perpetuate inequity in volunteer engagement.

If your nonprofit is culturally-led: This is an opportunity to build or expand a volunteer program that will allow you to connect with and engage more members of your community and do more work to meet your mission.

If your nonprofit primarily serves communities of color: This is an opportunity to prioritize engaging a racially and ethnically diverse pool of volunteers through system changes and relationship-building.

Staff from selected organizations will make up a cohort group to share challenges, opportunities and successes between March and November of 2019.

This initiative is funded by a grant from the Bigelow Foundation.

Eligibility

- Organizations must be culturally-led and/or primarily serve communities of color.
- Organizations must have a service geography that includes the East Metro area of the Twin Cities (Ramsey, Dakota or Washington County), but office location may be outside this area.
- Organizations with an annual organizational budget of less than \$1 million are eligible to apply.

Benefits of Participating

- Receive a \$5,000 grant.
- Gain peer support from other organizations seeking to build or strengthen a volunteer program that is racially inclusive and equitable.
- Utilize MAVA's expertise in inclusive volunteerism through partnership and consulting services.
- Have opportunity for up to two staff to attend one free MAVA training during the grant period.
- Contribute to developing, implementing, and documenting new and innovative systems-changing strategies for advancing racial equity in volunteerism.
- Gain visibility for your organization for innovations in inclusive engagement of volunteers.

Timeline

- RFP released: January 8, 2019
- **Proposal due: Monday, February 11, 2019**
- Notification of awards: March 1, 2019
- Grants start: March 11, 2019
- Grants wrap up: November 15, 2019
- Grant reports due: December 9, 2019



Initiative Description

The Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration (MAVA) was awarded a Bigelow Foundation grant to partner with nonprofit organizations on building infrastructure for volunteerism that is inclusive of all racial and ethnic backgrounds and dismantles systems that perpetuate inequity in volunteer engagement.

MAVA has been conducting research and offering training on inclusive volunteerism since 2010. In this initiative, we are looking for partners ready to take immediate action steps toward partnering with communities of color to better engage racially diverse volunteers within their organizations. MAVA seeks partners who will allow us to follow their journey, will share their experiences and learning, and will consider MAVA's ideas and research when discussing the best steps forward.

The goal of offering these grants is to provide an incentive to move forward in building culturally-responsive community engagement programs at organizations with limited resources. The \$5,000 grant will allow organizations to create and implement strategies around inclusive volunteerism, partnering with MAVA to build stronger and more equitable systems for engaging community members. Lessons learned from the grant recipients will be documented and shared with nonprofits throughout the state of Minnesota. The grants are not intended to fully fund a new volunteer program or initiative, but rather to assist with taking the first steps toward tackling this long-term work.

Examples of activities that might take place through this initiative include, but are not limited to:

- Planning and implementing a community dialogue around volunteerism that allows community members to share what inspires them about your cause, how they might like to be involved, and what barriers would keep them from doing so.
- Hiring an intern or AmeriCorps VISTA member to create foundational pieces of a volunteer program, such as an application, position descriptions, promotional materials, a volunteer handbook, or a system for tracking volunteers and their involvement.
- Conducting an internal volunteer needs assessment to determine where volunteers from diverse communities could build the capacity of the organization, what the organization needs to do to be ready for a diverse group of volunteers, and what areas are a priority.
- Creating and beginning implementation of a targeted recruitment plan focused on particular neighborhoods, experiences, skills, age demographics, etc.
- Building relationships with community groups and leaders through meetings, meals, or attendance at cultural celebrations.
- Training for staff, leadership, and/or current volunteers in areas such as engaging a diverse volunteer workforce, unconscious bias, cultural competency, etc.
- A volunteer recognition program or effort to increase volunteer visibility through items such as t-shirts or other giveaways.
- Piloting creative recruitment programs, such as "refer a friend" for a prize, specific outreach to youth volunteers, targeted recruitment of interns, or any other ideas you think may be successful.
- **We expect that at least one activity in the work plan is focused on building or strengthening community relationships, as this is an essential part to any volunteer engagement strategy.**

Please note: MAVA is very open to funding the *processes* that will guide your next steps. For example, you do not need to know the findings that will stem from a community dialogue; instead, the grant can fund the dialogue itself along and the process of planning next steps. As another example, if you are not sure how to



best recruit new volunteers, this funding can support both the creation and implementation of a recruitment plan. We will offer more examples and are able to answer questions in the informational webinars offered in January (see dates and times below).

Staff from selected organizations will work independently and will have the opportunity to share experiences, present ideas, share progress and resources with, and gain support from fellow cohort members. Grant recipients will be asked to document the process used to develop inclusive volunteer engagement, i.e., what worked and what did not work. MAVA is looking for insights into the ups, downs and in-betweens of prioritizing inclusive volunteerism and taking steps toward sustainable change. We want to learn what this entails for organizations serving one particular racial or ethnic community along with organizations serving multiple different communities.

The organizations accepted will be expected to:

- Connect with MAVA on a monthly basis from March through November of 2019.
- Participate in three phone meetings with other cohort sites to share progress and learn from each other.
- Contribute to and/or attend a community training event on inclusive volunteerism infrastructure on a TBD date in the fall of 2019.
- Submit a brief grant end report by December 9, 2019. MAVA will provide a template for this report.
- Do a brief pre and post assessment of inclusive volunteer engagement.

Application Process

Prior to submitting a project application, we recommend participation in one informational webinar about partnering with MAVA on this initiative and the application process. Register for one of the below dates [online](#) or contact Lisa Joyslin for a recorded version.

- Thursday, January 17
3:00 – 4:00 PM
- Tuesday, January 22
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Submit by **February 8, 2019 at 4pm:**

- a. Complete a two to three page proposal addressing the questions listed on Page 5 of this document.
- b. Complete the workplan listed on Page 6 of this document.
- c. Include a brief letter of support from the organization's leader (if this person is not the one completing the application.)

The preferred form of submission is to combine the documents into one pdf that is e-mailed to ljoyslin@mavanetwork.org. We may request additional documents and/or may conduct phone interviews with finalists.

Address questions to Lisa Joyslin, MAVA Inclusive Volunteerism Program Manager, at ljoyslin@mavanetwork.org.

More information is available at: www.mavanetwork.org/inclusive



Criteria for selection

1. The proposal is submitted by either 1. A nonprofit organization that is culturally-led and serves Ramsey, Dakota and/or Washington Counties in Minnesota; or 2. A nonprofit organization whose participants are 70% or more from communities of color and serves Ramsey, Dakota, and/or Washington Counties in MN.
2. The proposal is submitted by an organization whose budget is less than \$1 million annually.
3. Proposal submission has support from appropriate organizational leadership to work together on grant activities.
4. Alignment of the proposal with the RFP goal of building nonprofit infrastructure around racial equity in volunteerism.
5. The organization's readiness to build new infrastructure around volunteer engagement that is inclusive of communities of color.
6. The potential for success of your proposal.
7. Clear work plan that fits with RFP, is well thought-out and realistic.
8. Clear, realistic budget that fits with RFP.
9. Agreement to participate in trainings, sharing sessions with other cohort sites and to share lessons learned with MAVA.

About the Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration

The Minnesota Association for Volunteer Administration (MAVA) was founded as a 501(c)3 in 2001. MAVA is an alliance of individuals and networks dedicated to providing support and resources to those who lead volunteers. MAVA (www.mavanetwork.org) unites administrators of structured volunteer programs and informal volunteer initiatives, as well as those who have an interest in promoting volunteerism across the state. MAVA members represent all sectors of society including faith communities, health care, social service, education, government, grassroots organizations and more. MAVA's mission is to connect, educate, strengthen and advocate for volunteer engagement leaders and their organizations to positively impact communities.



Proposal

Date:

Name of Organization:

Address:

Name and title of person filling out proposal:

E-mail address:

Phone:

Name and job title of person who would be leader of grant:

Does your organization currently involve volunteers? Please include any unpaid community members who work on behalf of your organization, whether they would self-identify as a “volunteer” or simply as a “friend” or “supporter” of the cause.

If yes, briefly describe how volunteers are involved:

- a. Approximate number of active volunteers in 2018:
- b. Examples of roles volunteers are involved in:
- c. Briefly, what successes and challenges has the organization had in engaging volunteers?
- d. Do you have dedicated staff time for the volunteer program?

Please describe why you are interested in being part of this project and why it would be beneficial to the organization to participate. Please limit your answer to 150 words.

Indicate your work plan for the proposal in the format provided on Page 6 of this document.

What steps have you taken to prepare your organization for work around inclusive volunteerism? In other words, tell us why you are ready to take on this project. Please limit your answer to 150 words.

What are your plans to continue your work around racial equity in volunteerism after the grant period? Please limit your answer to 150 words.

What is your budget for the \$5,000 grant? Please indicate the line item expenditures for the grant. The funding can be used for staff time or other expenses necessary for your plans for volunteer engagement.

Do you agree to:

Check in monthly with MAVA over the duration of the grant: __yes __no

Participate in 3 sharing phone calls with grant cohort (1 to 1.5 hrs. in length): __yes __no

Do pre and post assessment of volunteer engagement: __yes __no

Contribute to or attend community event in fall 2019: __yes __no

If applicable: Is letter of support from appropriate leadership attached? __yes __no



Workplan

Please complete the following workplan for your project. Only one goal is required; however, if your proposal includes more than one goal please complete a plan for each.

Goal: This is the outcome you plan to achieve. The goal may be a tangible result (i.e. hosting a community dialogue) or the development of a process (i.e. creating a volunteer recruitment plan).

Activity: This is a task you will undertake in your work to accomplish the goal.

Collaboration needed: A list of internal and external partners who will be collaborators on the activity.

Resources needed: Any new training, expertise, or materials needed to complete this activity.

Timeline: Expected completion date for the activity.

Goal #1:

| Activity | Collaboration Needed | Resources Needed | Timeline |
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Goal #2:

| Activity | Collaboration Needed | Resources Needed | Timeline |
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