

# Applicant Guidance

Spring 2026 Empower Grant Cycle



# Our Goals

Through the Empower pillar, Huey and Angelina Wilson Foundation serves as a catalyst for **place-based collaboration** focused on improving outcomes for children and families.

The goal is to support nonprofit partners that help residents and communities get the support they need to achieve **long-term, sustainable, and measurable change**.

To achieve this goal, this grant opportunity focuses on intentional place-based investments using the proven **Purpose Built Communities (PBC) model**.

# Our Approach

Place-based philanthropy describes an approach that targets a specific location—be it a block, neighborhood, or community—upon which to focus resources and make a transformative impact.

Huey and Angelina Wilson will work with nonprofit partners to focus grantmaking efforts within the following ZIP codes: 70802, 70805, 70806, 70807, 70811, and 70812, with priority being given to projects and programs being implemented directly in the neighborhoods and schools located in our **70802 NBR place-based focus area.**

# Our Approach

## Four types of investments:

- 1. Direct Service (Program Support)**
  - *New or existing programs that make positive gains for participants.*
- 2. Partnerships & Collaborations**
  - *Formal partnerships, coalition building efforts and/or continuums that strengthen collaboration, data sharing, and impact.*
- 3. Systems Change**
  - *Awareness, research and advocacy efforts addressing community issues of concern that result in changes to policy or practice.*
- 4. Capital**
  - *Building purchase, construction, expansion, renovation, and/or land acquisition.*



# Grant Guidelines

# Prospective Partners

## Successful applicants for this pillar will:

- Be physically located in and/or **have programming that directly benefits individuals and families in the areas of impact.** Proposals that indirectly serve individuals as part of your overall clientele will not be considered.
- **Value community engagement.** Organizations must demonstrate they are prioritizing resident voice and doing projects “*with*” rather than “*to*” the community.
- **Demonstrate effectiveness.** Be a registered 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that has the capacity to carry out the proposed work and have the appropriate evaluation measures in place.
- Address one or more of the Empower focus areas of **housing, education, community wellness, and economic vitality.**

# Housing

**Safe, secure and affordable housing leads to better education, employment and health outcomes and increases generational wealth building opportunities for families.**

**Examples of programming the Foundation will support include:**

- Homeowner education/down payment assistance
- Housing development
- Critical repairs
- Energy efficiency initiatives
- Landlord engagement and education
- Heir property initiatives

# Education

**Access to quality education from birth to college, career, and beyond reduces economic inequalities and powers prosperous communities.**

**Examples of programming the Foundation will support include:**

- Quality out of school time (OST) opportunities
- Literacy supports/Tutoring
- Youth mentoring
- Teacher trainings and certifications
- Internships/apprenticeships
- College preparation

# Community Wellness

**Families cannot thrive if they lack access to essential services, recreation, or are persistently exposed to unsafe living conditions.**

**Examples of programming the Foundation will support include:**

- Food insecurity
- Blight reduction
- Access to physical and mental health services
- Parenting Resources and case management
- Re-entry supports
- Healthy lifestyle programming

# Economic Vitality

**A vital economy is one that includes strategies to increase workforce pathways, build assets, and stimulate opportunities for economic growth.**

**Examples of programming the Foundation will support include:**

- Entrepreneurship
- Adult literacy and education
- Job training and placement
- Small business development
- Attracting neighborhood-serving restaurant and retail
- Financial education and planning



# Operating Principles

# Considerations

**The Foundation reviews each proposal with respect to available funds and responses to three overarching questions:**

1. What will be the results from this project and how will we know when those results have been achieved?
2. How likely is it that this applicant can achieve the results they are proposing?
3. Is this the best possible use of Foundation funds given other opportunities before us?

# Investments

1. Empower investments will be made in **one-year** increments, unless multi-year funding is specifically requested.
2. The average Empower grant amount is approx. **\$50,000**. This is not a cap but can provide guidance.
3. Partners will be expected to submit **interim** (September 2026) and **final** (March 2027) reports.
4. Opportunities for additional support will be provided to partners who make (and communicate) **meaningful progress** toward Empower goals.

# Application Process

Components

Timeline

Assistance

# Letter of Intent Overview

## 1. Organizational Information

- Key Contacts
- Mission and Vision

## 2. Project Details

- Project Title
- Total Amount Requested
- Brief Description of Project
- Project Start/End Date
- Number Participants Expected to Serve
- Empower Focus Area
- Type of Support
- History of working in the community

# Full Grant Application Overview

## 1. Organizational Information

- Key Contacts
- Organizational Budget
- Mission and Vision

## 2. Overview and Financing

- Project Details
- Total Amount Requested
- Area of Focus
- Project Start/End Dates
- Type of Support
- Sustainability

## 3. Project Details

- Challenge Addressed
- History of Work
- Participant Demographics
- Clients Served

## 4. Implementation & Outcomes

- Community Engagement
- Key staff
- Partners and Collaborators
- Define and Measure Success

# Required Attachments

## 1. Budget Information

- Project Budget
- Budget Narrative

## 2. Board List

- This should include first and last name, occupation, role, and term.

## 3. Financial Statements

- Operating budget (this is different than your project budget), balance sheet, and most recent audit (if available).

## 4. IRS Determination Letter

- The letter stating that the organization or its fiscal agent is tax-exempt under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code.

# Required Attachments

## 5. Board Authorization Letter

- Statement from organization's Board authorizing the grant request and agreeing to implement the program if funded
- This can also be the portion of the minutes that reflect approval, or a formal resolution.

## 6. IRS Form 990

- Copy of the organization's most recently submitted 990 or Form 990-N, Electronic Notice (e-Postcard) for organizations not required to file Form 990 or 990-EZ.

**Please submit all required attachments in .pdf form**

# Helpful Hints



- **Healthy Board:**
  - More than 5 members, limited familial relationships, represents a cross-section of professional expertise
  - Meets regularly, takes minutes, familiar with organization's bylaws
- **Sustainable Fundraising Model:**
  - It is recommended that no more than 20% of your overall income come from any one source/funder
- **Transparent Finances:**
  - File required IRS documents in a timely manner (by a third-party tax preparer)
  - Share regular financial statements with Board
  - Have a clear to understand financial management system (Quickbooks, etc.)

# Contact Information

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