



**Cone Health
FOUNDATION**

Health Equity Advocacy Grant Request for Proposals (RFP)

Overview

Cone Health Foundation is pleased to announce this year's Health Equity Advocacy Grant opportunity to support advocacy and systems-change efforts that address the root causes of health inequities. Recognizing that many health disparities are rooted in social, economic, and structural inequities, the Foundation seeks to support organizations working to influence the policies, systems, and institutional practices that shape health outcomes.

As part of our strategy to address the root causes of health inequities, CHF prioritizes work that increases community participation in decision-making, elevates leadership among people with lived experience, and strengthens cross-sector collaboration.

This funding opportunity seeks to support organizations that are building community power, promoting equitable policies, and creating sustainable change that improves health outcomes for historically marginalized populations. Specifically, we are seeking to support organizations working to promote equity in one or more of our priority areas: access to healthy food, access to quality healthcare, economic mobility, education, and safe and healthy housing.

DEFINING ADVOCACY

Adapted from Alliance for Justice (For more information see the following factsheet: [What is Advocacy 2.0](#))

The Foundation is interested in supporting advocacy efforts which focus on system-level change: policies, practices, and the flow of resources. Advocacy actions work toward impacting the lives of a broader group of people (compared to direct service or social service actions that provide specific goods or services to individuals). Advocacy actions seek to improve the context in which we live.

Advocacy includes a wide range of activities intended to influence decision makers to improve policies that impact health, including:

Community Organizing: like community engagement and mobilization, volunteer recruitment, or leadership development

Civic Engagement: like voter education, engagement, or registration

Research and Analysis: like policy analysis, data collection, report development, or needs assessment

Education: like sharing facts and stories with legislators and the public, or conducting informational campaigns

Coalition Building: like convenings, partnership coordination, or stakeholder engagement

Communications: like public awareness campaigns, educational materials, or digital engagement strategies

Lobbying: like speaking to elected officials about issues or attending lobby days

For this grant opportunity, the Foundation generally **will not fund** projects focused on:

- Direct service delivery
- Clinical or healthcare services
- Emergency financial assistance
- Individual case management
- Scholarships or tuition assistance unrelated to advocacy
- Charitable programs or activities lacking a system-change component
- Hiring new staff positions
- Organizations without an established presence in, or a demonstrated track record of serving the Greensboro community

Direct-service elements may be included only when they support a broader advocacy or systems-change strategy.



FUNDING PRIORITIES

The Foundation seeks to support proposals that:

- Address structural barriers contributing to health inequities
- Increase community participation in decision-making processes
- Elevate leadership among residents with lived experience
- Promote equitable local or state policies
- Strengthen collaboration across sectors
- Build long-term community power, civic health, and civic engagement
- Create sustainable systems or policy change
- Address historical or contemporary practices that enable the equitable distribution of resources

Projects should address upstream factors (such as laws, policies, or regulations) influencing health and prioritize long-term systems and policy solutions rather than direct service delivery alone.

ELIGIBLE AND COMPETITIVE PROPOSALS COULD:

- Increase access to nutritious food through shifting systems policies
- Improve transportation equity, especially as it relates to access to food sources or economic mobility
- Support economic mobility and workforce readiness policies
- Promote environmental justice, especially as it relates to healthy housing
- Increase civic participation and voter engagement
- Affect community safety and justice reform
- Improve education equity, especially as it relates to changing conditions (policies, rules, practices, and/or the flow of resources) that hold inequitable problems in place. Problems such as, children experiencing a lack of readiness for entering school, chronic absenteeism, patterns of disproportionate disciplinary reports, academic achievement gaps, readiness for economic mobility after high school
- Increase health care access and shift institutional accountability to community and/or people with lived experiences

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must demonstrate experience in community engagement, advocacy, organizing, policy work, or systems-change efforts.

To ensure organizations maintain sustainable and diversified funding streams, our grant awards **will not exceed 25% of an organization's total annual budget.**

Additionally, applicants must:

- Be a nonprofit, community-based organization, coalition, government entity, or other community group in Greensboro. Organizations without a 501(c)(3) status must have an eligible fiscal sponsor. (Learn more about fiscal sponsors on this website: [Fiscal Sponsorship for Nonprofits | National Council of Nonprofits](#))
- Serve residents within the greater Greensboro area
- Align with at least one of the Foundation's priority areas using advocacy strategies and tactics that influence one of the Foundation's priority areas

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Preference will be given to proposals that:

- Center community voice and lived experience
- Address root causes of health inequities
- Strengthen civic participation
- Build community leadership
- Demonstrate strong partnerships
- Have the potential to create lasting systems or policy change in the greater Greensboro area

Priority will be given to organizations serving or representing the following groups in Greensboro:

- Black communities
- Former foster youth
- Hispanic/Latino communities
- Individuals experiencing homelessness
- LGBTQIA communities
- Low-income families with a child, a senior, or an adult with a disability

- Refugees, asylees, and immigrants
- Veterans
- Note: Organizations serving other racial and ethnic groups are also invited to apply for grants

Applications will be evaluated using the following criteria:

Criteria	Weight
Systems Change Focus	20%
Community Leadership & Equity	20%
Strategy & Feasibility	15%
Potential for Impact	15%
Collaboration & Partnerships	10%
Organizational Capacity	10%
Budget & Use of Funds	10%

FUNDING INFORMATION

This one-time funding opportunity is intended for organizations doing impactful advocacy work in our community.

Award Amount: \$15,000 – \$30,000

Grant Term: January 1, 2027 – December 31, 2027

TIMELINE

Milestone	Date
RFP Release	September 1, 2026
Application Deadline	September 30, 2026 at 5:00 PM
Review Period	October & November 2026
Award Notifications	First week in December 2026
Grant Period Begins	January 1, 2027

SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

Applications must be submitted electronically through the designated application portal by **September 30, 2026 at 5:00 PM**.

Late, incomplete, or ineligible applications will not be reviewed.

Application portal and additional submission details will be available at Cone Health Foundation website: www.conehealthfoundation.com

If you have any questions, then please reach out to Luke Wallace, Finance and Grants Manager, Foundation@conehealth.com.

Grant Application Questions

Application questions are listed below, but you **must** create a Blackbaud account to complete the questions.

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Name of person making the request

First Name:

Last Name:

Pronouns:

Title/Position:

E-mail:

Contact Phone Number:

Information about the organization applying

Organization Name:

Legal Name of Organization:

Mailing Address:

Executive Director:

Doing Business As (DBA):

EIN Number:

501(c)(3) Status: Yes No

If NOT a 501(c)(3), complete below:

Fiscal Sponsor Name:

Fiscal Sponsor EIN:

Mailing Address:

City:

State:

Zipcode:

Website:

Phone:

Funding Request Amount

Project Duration:

1. Which Priority Area does your project most closely align with? (Choose one)

- ☐ **Access to Health Care**
- ☐ **Access to Healthy Food**
- ☐ **Economic Mobility**
- ☐ **Education**
- ☐ **Safe and Healthy Housing**

2. Provide a brief description of the proposed advocacy initiative, including: [250 words maximum]

- **The health equity issue being addressed**
- **Populations most impacted (including a socioeconomic description)**
- **Systems, policies, or practices to be influenced**
- **Key advocacy activities**

3. What system, policy, practice, or structural barrier are you seeking to influence or change? [300 words maximum]

Describe:

- **Root causes of the issue**
- **Need for policy or systems change**
- **How the work addresses upstream drivers (laws, policies, or practices) of inequity**

4. Community Leadership & Equity: How will community members who are most impacted by this issue be involved in identifying priorities, designing strategies, and leading advocacy efforts? How will this project strengthen civic participation and community power? [400 words maximum]

Describe:

- **Community engagement strategies**
- **Resident leadership opportunities**
- **Use of lived experience in decision-making**
- **Equity-centered practices**

5. Advocacy Strategy. Describe your advocacy tactics strategy. (400 words maximum)

Include (if applicable):

- Major activities, tactics, and roles of leaders or partners
- Policy or institutional practice targets
- Organizing efforts
- Public education activities
- Civic engagement work
- Timeline and milestones

6. Impact & Outcomes. What change do you hope to achieve? (300 words maximum)

Identify:

- Short-term outcomes
- Intermediate outcomes (if applicable)
- Long-term systems or policy outcomes
- **Note: Please explain how your efforts in this 1-year funding cycle will build into a longer-term vision**

Proposed Measures of Success		
Short-term outcomes	Measure of Success	Long-term impact (Beyond 1-year)

7. Collaboration & Partnerships. Describe the partnerships and collaborations that support this work. (250 words maximum)

Describe:

- **Key partner organizations (and contributions of each partner toward systems change in your proposed activities)**
- **Coalition or network involvement**
- **Cross-sector collaborations**

8. Organizational Capacity. Describe your organization's capacity to carry out this work. (300 words maximum)

Provide information about:

- **Relevant experience or community engagement experience**
- **Staff and leadership involved**
- **Existing relationships with community members and other individuals of influence (if not listed in your description of partnerships above)**
- **Previous policy change, systems change, and/or advocacy accomplishments**

9. Budget & Use of Funds. Describe how grant funds will be used. (250 words maximum)

Funds may support expenses such as:

- **Community organizing or other personnel contributions**
- **Advocacy campaign activities**
- **Resident leadership development**
- **Research and policy analysis**
- **Communications and public education**
- **Coalition coordination**
- **Community engagement events**
- **Voter engagement activities (nonpartisan)**

Budget Summary Example		
Category	Rationale or Description	Amount
Personnel		
Community Engagement		
Research/Policy Analysis		
Communications		
Advocacy Campaign Activities		
Leadership Development		
Other		
Total Request		

10. Sustainability. How will this work continue beyond the grant period? (200 words maximum)

- Ongoing advocacy work
- Coalition sustainability
- Leadership development
- Future funding opportunities

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Funded organizations may be required to submit:

Mid-Year Progress Report (one-on-one conversation)

Including:

- Activities completed
- Milestones achieved
- Challenges and lessons learned
- Progress toward outcomes

Final Report (written)

Including:

- “Pivots” experienced
- Outcomes achieved
- Policy or systems changes influenced
- Community engagement results
- Civic participation outcomes
- Sustainability plans

Grantees may also be invited to participate in learning sessions, convenings, and peer-sharing opportunities organized by the Foundation.