

2026 Impact Grant for Deaf Organizations

<https://bit.ly/2026ImpactGrant>

Frequently Asked Questions

GENERAL QUESTIONS

1. Is this call for proposals limited to invited organizations, or may any deaf organization apply?

This grant opportunity is not invitation-only, and is open to eligible tax-exempt deaf-centric organizations and programs that primarily work with deaf communities.

2. Are applicants permitted to submit proposals that span both focus areas?

Yes, your proposal can address one or both of our priority areas. The two priority areas are:

- **Immediate, urgent needs (community):** meeting the time-sensitive needs of community members. For example, food, housing, safety, and access to other fundamental aspects of well-being, AND/OR
- **Sustainable, long-term needs (organization):** addressing the capacity building needs of the organization. For example, cost-sharing of resources among partner organizations, development efforts, administrative needs, etc.

3. Which organizations have received grants in the past?

Please check out the [past cohort cycles](#) on our website.

4. Are the CEO and leadership team of applicant organizations required to identify as Deaf, DeafBlind, DeafDisabled, or Hard of Hearing?

Our eligibility criteria this year focus on the communities that your tax-exempt organization or program serves. If your organization or program primarily serves members of deaf communities, you are eligible to apply.

5. Will there be another grant opportunity after the March deadline?

Currently, the 2026 Impact Grant for Deaf Organizations is the only funding opportunity planned for this year.

To stay updated on future funding opportunities, please subscribe to our emails:

<http://deaforganizationsfund.org/#subscribe>

6. How detailed should the proposed use of funds be? Are applicants required to name the specific organization or individual they plan to contract with for capacity-building support?

The more relevant, detailed information you provide, the better the grant review committee will be able to understand your project.

7. Our organization is currently recognized by the IRS under one name, but we are in the process of a legal name change that has not yet been approved. If the name change is not finalized before the application deadline, should we apply under our current IRS-recognized name?

Generally speaking, use the existing organization name unless IRS approves it prior to submission deadline on March 10th. If you wish to discuss, please email us: DOF@DeafOrganizationsFund.org

8. What advice would you give to a small or volunteer-run Deaf organization applying for the first time?

DOF has given past grants to small or volunteer-run deaf organizations. For some, DOF's grant was their first time receiving a grant.

Our [evaluation rubric](#) is a key part of the review process. The success of the evaluation is based on how much specific and relevant information the application organization shares in their proposal as well as the two priority areas that will be given additional weight this year.

9. For small nonprofits with staff fulfilling multiple roles, is it recommended to focus on one primary goal or area of need in the application?

DOF has given past grants to small organizations. It depends on your organization's priorities and their bandwidth to have one goal or multiple goals with this funding opportunity, if awarded. One of

our metrics is "feasibility" (see in the [evaluation rubric](#)) in which we assess the organization's ability to meet the goals outlined in their proposal.

10. Can grant funds be used to cover the cost of ASL interpreting services for Deaf job seekers participating in employment-related activities?

If you meet our current eligibility criteria, you can request funds to cover interpreting costs as long as the interpreters are being used to benefit the deaf communities that your organization primarily serves (also keeping ADA regulations in mind and who is responsible for providing those interpreters, etc.)

11. If an organization is small with a few board members, do you have suggestions for who should serve as the fiscal agent? Would the treasurer be appropriate?

DOF does not have a requirement as to who manages the grant funds. You can include hiring a bookkeeper or independent contractor to manage the grant funds. The board of directors are ultimately fiscally responsible for the grant project.

12. For DOF's "sustainable, long-term needs" priority, are there specific capacity-building deliverables that will get more favorable evaluation?

No, we are not assigning additional weight or consideration to any specific type of deliverables within this priority area.

13. Can the grant support the operating expenses of the organization?

Yes, the Impact Grant for Deaf Organizations is unrestricted funding, which means the funds can be used to support the overall mission and operations of the organization. However, priority will be given to proposals that address one or both of the following areas of focus: the immediate, urgent needs of your community and/or sustainable, long-term needs of your organization.

14. Can my organization receive assistance with filling out the grant?

We are happy to answer questions about our grant application via email at DOF@DeafOrganizationsFund.org.

15. Is this funding limited to one year, or is it for recurring years?

This grant is currently designed as a one-year grant.

16. Are new programs eligible for funding, or are multi-year impact data required for consideration?

We do not ask about years of impact data on the application. If your organization or program is new, you can share the type of impact your entity hopes to make.

17. We are an established 501(c)(3) seeking funding to support a new advocacy program for the Deaf community. Would this be a good fit for this grant? Additionally, would our feeding program be eligible for support?

While we are unable to discuss specific project ideas, please note that this is an unrestricted grant — meaning you can apply for your organization’s area of greatest need. Keep in mind priority will be given to proposals that address our two focus areas.

ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONS

1. Can past and current DOF grantees apply?

Past and current grantees, if they meet the eligibility criteria for the 2026 grant, are welcome to apply again.

2. Can two deaf-centric organizations apply together?

Yes, two deaf-centric organizations that primarily serve deaf communities can apply together. However, only one organization can be the primary applicant to submit the application and receive the award.

3. Can you elaborate on not funding one-time events such as conferences, festivals, and camps?

We have received requests in the past to fund one-time conferences or festivals, which can constitute event sponsorship.

However, if your organization intends to host a series of events in which the purpose aligns with one of our priority areas (for example, meeting the immediate needs of your community through

regular food and clothing drives), then this will be an acceptable deliverable in your proposal. Applicant organizations will need to clearly explain in their proposal how these events address our funding priorities.

4. What types of fundraising efforts are considered eligible under the “sustainable, long-term needs” priority, given that fundraising events are excluded?

If your organization intends to host a series of fundraising events for the purpose of aligning with our “sustainable, long-term needs” priority area, then this will be an acceptable deliverable in your proposal. Applicant organizations will need to clearly explain in their proposal how these events address our funding priorities. There are other aspects of fundraising that may also be considered, such as: hiring or contracting a fundraising-related position or consultant, or purchasing a software subscription to support your organization’s fundraising or donor management needs.

5. You stated that companies or corporations are not eligible for funding. If I am a Hard of Hearing startup founder developing a Deaf safety device and have a fiscal sponsor, am I eligible to apply?

If your deaf-centric entity does not have 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status but has a tax-exempt fiscal sponsor, then you are eligible to apply.

6. Are community colleges with ASL programs eligible to apply?

Tax-exempt organizations, including those with deaf-centric programs, are eligible to apply. Some schools and colleges have 501(c)(3) tax exempt status.

7. Are State Associations for the Deaf eligible to apply, and if so, are there any limits tied to an organization’s annual operating budget?

If your State Association for the Deaf meets our current eligibility criteria, then you can apply for the grant. There is no restriction tied to the organization’s annual budget.

8. Are deaf international organizations eligible to apply for funding?

You can apply as long as you meet our eligibility criteria, which includes your organization having tax-exempt status or a tax-exempt fiscal sponsor AND primarily serving deaf communities.

9. Are organizations that file Form 990-N considered in good standing for eligibility purposes, and is there a minimum operating history required?

When awarded, DOF requires your organization, or your fiscal sponsor, to have tax-exempt status in good standing with the IRS. One important aspect of remaining in good standing with the IRS is ensuring your organization has filed the necessary federal tax form annually (Form 990 series).

DOF does not require you to submit your most recent Form 990 to us when awarded.

10. How do you define “deaf-centric”? Would a nonprofit that serves the general community but operates a deaf/hard of hearing (DHH)-focused program qualify?

Programs, housed within larger mainstream nonprofits, that primarily serve members of deaf communities are eligible to apply. The proposal needs to be tied to the needs of the program.

11. Will capital projects, such as renovations or facility expansion, be considered for this year’s grant?

We will not accept proposals that focus on capital projects—which include renovations, construction, and physical expansion of your building, etc.

12. I am in the process of establishing a nonprofit organization. Once my organization receives its 501(c)(3) status, will it be eligible to apply for this grant?

Once you are a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization, you are eligible to apply, though you may have to wait until our next funding cycle.

13. As a U.S.-based international nonprofit supporting a Deaf community in Nepal, should the organizational information in the proposal reflect the U.S.-based organization or the Nepal-based partner?

If your organization has a dedicated deaf-centric program that primarily serves deaf communities in Nepal, then that program needs to respond to the application questions. If your organization is partnering with another organization in Nepal, both organizations must be deaf-centric. As the primary applicant, your organizational information needs to be shared in the application.

14. Are organizations that serve the broader disability community, but include a substantial Deaf and Hard of Hearing population, eligible to apply?

Organizations that serve the broader disabled community are eligible to apply if they have a dedicated deaf-centric program that primarily serves members of deaf communities.

BUDGET QUESTIONS

1. What is the process for receiving the funding, if awarded?

Selected grantees will receive their grant funds upfront in May 2026 either via ACH or check.

2. Do grantees need to submit invoices or an itemized budget breakdown of how the grant funds were used?

While DOF does not require grantees to submit invoices or proof of expenditures, we do ask them to provide a high-level summary of how funds were used in their interim and final reports. We encourage organizations to record all grant expenses and retain financial documentation for audit purposes.

3. If the grant funds are not used by May 2027 when the project is supposed to be completed, can grantees ask for a no cost extension?

While we aim to have grantees complete their projects within the 12-month period, we understand that circumstances can affect the deliverables and grant project timeline. If your organization needs more time to spend down your project, just let us know. The midterm and final reports are also great ways to communicate spending progress on your grant.

FISCAL SPONSORSHIP QUESTIONS

1. Does the fiscal sponsor organization have to be deaf-centric even if the applicant organization is deaf-centric?

The fiscal sponsor organization does not need to be deaf-centric.

2. Do we answer the application questions about the applicant organization, the fiscal sponsor, or both?

The applicant needs to answer questions about their organization or program. There is one set of questions in the Organization Profile section that asks if you are using a fiscal sponsor, and if yes then the applicant must provide the fiscal sponsor's organization name, Employer Identification Number (EIN), and upload the fiscal sponsorship agreement between the applicant organization and fiscal sponsor.

SUBMITTABLE QUESTIONS

1. Who may serve as collaborators in the application process?

Collaborators might be other people who can assist with your application, such as: your team/staff, people from your board of directors, or a grantwriter.

2. If we logged onto Submittable in the past, can we use the same login and password, or do we need to create a new login for this year?

If you have an existing account with Submittable, you should be able to use the same login credentials. If you run into any trouble, please email us at DOF@DeafOrganizationsFund.org

3. When I apply, can I print out the draft copy and have it reviewed by our organization's board before submitting?

If you want people such as board members to review or otherwise edit your draft application on Submittable, you can use the "Manage Collaborator" feature on Submittable to give them access. They will not be able to submit the application, only the account holder can.

Alternatively, you can use the [PDF copy](#) of our application if you want to draft it in a separate word processor beforehand. You would be able to print draft copies to share with your board. When the final version is ready, copy and paste all responses into the Submittable portal.