

HIGHLIGHTS

The Basic Needs Giving Partnership (BNGP) envisions thriving, equitable communities across Northeast Wisconsin. Throughout a 10-county area, we invest in local and regional solutions that address root causes of poverty.

The 2026 single-year grants will provide **up to \$75,000 for planning and/or capacity building support for efforts that are exploring or building innovative, collaborative, and equitable systems change initiatives**. Please read these guidelines carefully to see if your work may be a good fit for funding in this cycle.

We will fund efforts that align with one or more of the following priorities:

- Early Care and Education (ages birth to 5)
- Housing Access
- Mental Health
- Substance Use

Single-year Award Amount: Up to \$75,000

Grant Duration: 1 year

To Apply: Submit your proposal through the [grant portal](#) by the end of day on June 12, 2026.

BNGP will be investing \$1,000,000 into grants for this cycle. Depending on the range of requests, we anticipate awarding 18-20 organizations across our 10-county region.

[Visit our website](#) to preview the grant application.

ELIGIBILITY

We invite proposals from organizations that meet the following criteria:

- You are an organization with a 501(c)(3) status, a governmental body, or you have a fiscal sponsor that is an eligible organization.
- Your initiative is in one or more of these areas: Brown, Calumet, Green Lake, Kewaunee, Oconto, Outagamie, Shawano, Waupaca, Waushara, and Winnebago counties and the Oneida Nation.
- Your systems change initiative focuses on at least one of our grant priorities: early care and education, housing access, mental health and substance use.
- Your organization does not currently have a BNGP multi-year grant. If awarded a single-year grant in this cycle, organizations may not also receive a multi-year grant in 2026.

GRANT PRIORITIES

The 2026 single-year grants will support initiatives focusing their efforts in at least one of these areas:

Early Care and Education (ages birth to 5): All families have access to timely, affordable, and quality child care. This includes care that supports healthy early development and sustainable systems that meet the needs of families and providers.

Housing Access: People can find safe, stable, and affordable housing that fits their needs. Communities have a range of housing options and use a Housing First approach to help people access stable and dignified housing.

Mental Health: All individuals and families have access to timely, affordable, and quality mental health services that reflect their needs and goals. Communities have coordinated systems that include peer, community-based, and clinical care, with funding models that support these services.

Substance Use: All individuals and families have access to timely, affordable, and quality substance use services that reflect their needs and goals. Communities have coordinated systems that include peer, community-based, and clinical care with funding models that support these services.

PLANNING & CAPACITY BUILDING SUPPORT FOR SYSTEMS CHANGE

BNGP prioritizes efforts that address root causes of poverty through a systems change approach, strengthened by innovation, grounded in collaboration, and centered in equity.

This cycle is a good fit for organizations working toward long-term solutions and building the foundation for that work. This may include deepening understanding of an issue and its root causes, strengthening partnerships, engaging with impacted communities, or exploring the feasibility of a solution with potential partners. This work can serve as an onramp to longer-term efforts that may be supported by BNGP multi-year grants..

Examples of planning and capacity building activities.

Funding is intended to support planning and capacity building activities such as (but not limited to):

- Deepening understanding of root causes and who is most impacted
- Building relationships, expanding partnerships, and mobilizing community
- Listening to and centering people with lived experience
- Identifying, testing, and adapting models; analyzing policy solutions
- Exploring the feasibility of policies, pilots, or creative solutions
- Establishing shared goals and alignment
- Coordinating partners, coalition building, and shared decision-making
- Developing, testing, and refining strategies and action plans

How can funds be used?

We will consider requests up to \$75,000. Funding can be used to support a number of needs, including (but not limited to): staffing, subgrants to partner organizations, stipends, project costs, working with a technical assistance provider or consultant, coalition building, convening costs, etc. We encourage organizations to include the full costs aligned with their planning and/or capacity building request.

Proposals should outline a clear request to address your initiative's planning and/or capacity building needs, which should be completed within the grant timeframe (one year or less).

What do we mean by systems change?

We define systems change as efforts that address the root causes of the most pressing needs in our community by transforming policies, practices, mindsets, and decision-making processes.

This approach calls organizations to work together, examine the deeper causes of poverty, build relationships and trust, and foster shared leadership to reimagine equitable, long-lasting solutions to complex community problems.

Examples of this work include (but aren't limited to):

- Developing and piloting creative models and approaches to address root causes
- Reimagining how services are delivered, disparities are addressed, and/or programs are sustained across organizations and sectors
- Educating, advocating, and mobilizing for policy change

Check out the [systems change overview](#) to learn more, understand the difference between direct services and systems-approach, and see some examples of this work.

What do we mean by Innovation?

Innovation is testing new, creative, or more effective approaches to address the root causes of poverty so that lasting, equitable solutions are possible.

At BNGP, systems change focuses on transforming the practices, systems, and mindsets that hold poverty in place. Innovation strengthens this work by encouraging new thinking, experimentation, adaptation, challenging existing assumptions, and being nimble to adjust while learning. Together, they ensure efforts are bold in scope, thoughtful in approach, and have a measurable impact.

Innovation is not limited to new ideas or technology. It can include:

- Piloting or adapting new models and practices to fit local needs
- Removing barriers that limit access and opportunity
- Learning from what works and adjusting what doesn't
- Forming new partnerships and rethinking roles, decision-making, and influence
- Improving coordination across organizations
- Scaling effective approaches or applying them in new contexts

Innovation does not need to be entirely new or high-risk. We welcome practical, thoughtful improvements that increase impact, equity, and long-term sustainability.

What are we looking for in collaboration?

Complex community issues can't be solved by one organization alone. BNGP supports initiatives that take a collaborative approach to addressing root causes while working across organizations and sectors.

We recognize that nonprofits already collaborate in many ways. We are looking for collaboration that is intentional, relational, and supports shared leadership. This includes engaging partners and people with lived experience in ways that build trust and support inclusive decision-making.

How do we define equity?

Achieving our vision of thriving, equitable communities requires addressing disparities as we work toward economic well-being for everyone in Northeast Wisconsin. Equity is about fair and just access to opportunity, participation, and belonging—where all people have what they need to thrive.

We support efforts that work closely with communities who have been historically under-resourced and excluded based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and/or geography.

Advancing equity may include:

- Understanding who is most impacted by the issues being addressed
- Building authentic relationships with people who have lived experience
- Changing how work is done based on that learning
- Shifting resources, funding, and decision-making to historically under-resourced communities
- Partnering with communities that have been systemically denied access to economic, political, and cultural participation

APPLICATION INFORMATION

To Apply: Please [sign in to the grant portal](#) and select Single-Year Application to get started on your proposal. You can preview the application questions and supporting documents [in this folder](#).

Important Dates:

- The cycle will close for submissions on June 12, 2026 at 5:00pm (CST)
- Applications received by June 12, 2026 at 5:00pm (CST) will be reviewed by the end of August with awards issued soon after.

Questions? Please reach out to Amanda Loudon (amanda@bngpwi.org) if you have any questions or would like to discuss your proposal.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

My organization plans to apply for a 2026 single-year grant. Can we also apply for a technical assistance grant?

Yes. This year, eligible organizations that receive a technical assistance grant with BNGP may also apply for a single year grant.

My organization has a BNGP single-year grant that was awarded at the end of 2025. Can we apply for a single year grant in this cycle?

Yes, organizations awarded a grant in the 2025 single-year cycle may apply for a single-year grant in 2026 if they meet all of the eligibility requirements for this cycle.

My organization currently has a multi-year grant with BNGP, can we also apply for a single-year grant?

No. To support a greater number of organizations and communities across the 10-county region, we are limiting organizations to one single-year or multi-year grant per organization at this time.

My 501(c)(3) nonprofit serves as a fiscal sponsor to another organization. Can my organization submit an application and serve as a fiscal sponsor to another organization applying in this cycle?

Yes. Eligible organizations who serve as fiscal sponsors may also apply for a grant in this cycle. Appearing on a separate proposal as a fiscal sponsor will not affect an organization's likelihood of receiving a grant.

My initiative only focuses on a small portion of the BNGP region. Am I eligible? What if my organization serves a large region or the whole state?

Your work must take place in at least one geographic area within the BNGP region. Organizations working in a specific community or smaller portion of the region are encouraged to apply, as are those working at a regional level.

If your initiative serves a broader area beyond BNGP's region, we will look for clear, place-based work within the region. This includes established relationships and partnerships with local communities and organizations and may also include dedicated staff and a demonstrated track record of work within the region.

I'm part of a systems change project along with several other organizations. Can each of us apply for a grant to support this same project?

No. Each initiative is eligible to submit one application to the BNGP in this current funding cycle.

My organization applied for a grant through the U.S. Venture/Schmidt Family Foundation. Can we also apply for a Basic Needs Giving Partnership Grant?

Absolutely! The Basic Needs Giving Partnership and the U.S. Venture/Schmidt Family Foundation are separate entities that make granting decisions independent of one another.