

**Roosevelt Island Public Purpose Fund  
Call for Proposals  
February 2022 (updated 3/4/2022)**

The Roosevelt Island Public Purpose Fund (The Fund) in The New York Community Trust is now accepting proposals from Roosevelt Island nonprofits that provide direct services or benefits to Roosevelt Island residents.

### **Background**

The New York Community Trust (The Trust) is a public charity founded in 1924. As a grantmaking foundation, The Trust connects past, present, and future generous New Yorkers with vital nonprofits working to make a healthy, equitable, and thriving community for all.

The Roosevelt Island Operating Corporation (RIOC) was created in 1984 by the State of New York as a public benefit corporation with a mission to plan, design, develop, operate, and maintain Roosevelt Island. After the construction of Manhattan Park, a public purpose fund was established in lieu of the developers paying sales tax on construction materials. In 1989, RIOC began providing public purpose funding to local nonprofits to benefit Roosevelt Island residents and enhance their quality of life. In January 2022, RIOC asked The Trust to administer the public purpose grants and created the Roosevelt Island Public Purpose Fund in The New York Community Trust.

Now, The Trust is issuing this request for proposals from Roosevelt Island nonprofits. The Trust also will provide a series of management workshops from [Community Resource Exchange \(CRE\)](#) to strengthen Roosevelt Island nonprofits.

### **The Opportunity**

The Fund expects to award up to \$150,000 through one-year grants of up to \$20,000 to nonprofits currently operating regular, ongoing programming on Roosevelt Island. Grant funds will support programs or projects that provide important services—including, but not limited to, educational opportunity, artistic and cultural enrichment, improved health, or a better environment—for the Roosevelt Island community. Priority will be given to projects that reach underresourced communities on the Island and that have plans for long-term engagement and intervention with project beneficiaries.

### **Eligibility**

To be eligible, nonprofits must:

- ✓ Be a public charity incorporated in the State of New York that is tax-exempt under IRS section 501(c)3 or a fiscally-sponsored program of such an agency;

- ✓ Demonstrate adherence to good financial practices (e.g., no negative net assets, balanced budgets); and
- ✓ Have a board of directors with at least three unrelated members, with no more than one paid staff person as a voting member of the board. (A specific exemption to this rule applies to hospitals and medical associations.) Grantee organizations will need to add a fourth board member by the end of the yearlong grant period in order to meet The Trust’s standard board requirement in future funding years.

Ineligible for funding are:

- Requests from government-related entities;
- General operating support requests;
- Capital project support requests;
- Efforts that solely benefit one individual or family;
- Projects that fail to provide sufficient benefits to the Roosevelt Island community at large;
- Sponsored fundraising events.

**Grant requests cannot exceed 30 percent of annual expenses in the most recently completed fiscal year.**

### **Application Deadline**

Proposals must be submitted electronically no later than **12 pm EST on Monday, March 14, 2022** on The New York Community Trust’s Grants Portal, which is accessible online at <https://proposals.nycommunitytrust.org/>.

### **Proposal Materials**

A complete proposal will include a proposal narrative, project budget, annual operating budgets and financials, and a board list. All materials should be combined and saved as **a single PDF less than 25 MB in size**.

#### ***Proposal narrative***

Prepare a narrative of up to five pages using 12-point font with 1” margins, responding to the following questions:

1. What is your agency’s background (history, mission, major activities, and credentials for carrying out the project for which you are requesting funding)?
2. What is the problem or service gap on Roosevelt Island that you plan to address?
3. What is your proposed project to benefit Roosevelt Island residents? Include:
  - a. Goals and objectives—what do you aim to accomplish?
  - b. Planned activities—what activities will you undertake to accomplish your goals? Be specific and describe concrete actions.
  - c. Population served—what communities will you serve through this project? Be specific and include any demographic information or other characteristics.

- d. Expected results—what change do you expect to see as a result of your project, and how will you measure it?
  - e. How will you sustain the project or program in the long term and after the grant period ends?
4. If you are a previous recipient of RIOC Public Purpose funds, please tell us about your most recent grant. Describe the project(s) supported by the grant, progress made toward fulfilling goals, and any challenges encountered.

□ ***Project budget***

Include an itemized project budget that reflects the full expenses for carrying out the project (as opposed to just the amount requested), and income. Include any other funding sources (received and anticipated) under income. You may include in-kind income and expense.

□ ***Annual operating budgets and financials***

Provide your organizational operating budget—including income, expenses, and net assets—for the last year and the current year. If net assets are negative, please provide an explanation for how the situation will improve. Fiscally sponsored organizations should provide the operating budgets for both their own organization and the funds administrator.

□ ***List of board of directors, including affiliations***

Provide a list of your board of directors with their affiliations. The Trust generally requires that a board should have at least 4 members; all board members should be unrelated; and no more than one board member should be a paid staff member. Fiscally sponsored organizations should provide the board list for only the funds administrator.

## **How to Submit**

Please gather all proposal materials and be ready to upload and submit them before applying online, as the application must be completed in one session and the system will time out after one hour of inactivity. We recommend looking at the electronic application form and preparing your answers for the cover sheet prior to beginning the submission process.

1. Go to The Trust’s Grant Portal at <https://proposals.nycommunitytrust.org/>.
2. Click on the “Apply Here” button at the bottom of the page.
3. Under “Available LOIs,” find “**Roosevelt Island Public Purpose Fund,**” and click on the “Apply” button.
4. Complete the cover sheet questions and upload your proposal materials, which should be saved as **a single PDF no more than 25 MB**. Click “Submit” to submit your application materials.

## **Review Criteria & Process**

Proposals will be evaluated on a competitive basis by an independent review committee of Roosevelt Island community members. Priority will be given to organizations that:

- ✓ Currently operate on Roosevelt Island;

- ✓ Have been in existence for at least two years;
- ✓ Have an annual operating budget that is under \$10 million;
- ✓ Demonstrate a history of commitment and proven track record of serving Roosevelt Island residents;
- ✓ Fill a critical gap in services to underresourced communities on the Island;
- ✓ Clearly articulate outcomes, activities, and timeline, as well as plans to measure the project outcomes in their proposals; and
- ✓ Aim for long-term engagement and intervention, and have concrete plans to sustain project activities over time.

Applicants are not guaranteed an award and may not receive the full amount requested in their proposal. Grant recipients may be asked to provide a revised budget reflecting any reduction in awarded funds from the initial request.

Trust staff may request follow-up meetings with nonprofit applicants after all proposals have been received to learn more about the organization and the proposed project.

### **Award Notification**

Notification of award status will be made by email in May 2022. Grant recipients will provide ACH (electronic banking) information via a secure DocuSign process.

Grant awards will be paid in full once the signed grant letter and ACH information are received. Final narrative and financial reports will be required from grantees at the end of the grant period.

Please add [noreply@nycommunitytrust.org](mailto:noreply@nycommunitytrust.org) and [docusign@nyct-cfi.org](mailto:docusign@nyct-cfi.org) to your address book so that our communications do not get caught in your spam filters.

### **Nonprofit Management Workshops**

All applicants to the fund will be invited to participate in a series of interactive nonprofit management workshops and peer-learning sessions provided by Community Resource Exchange (CRE) at no cost to the nonprofit. CRE is one of the city's most distinguished nonprofit consultant agencies, serving hundreds of nonprofit clients each year. **Participation in the workshop series is a requirement of the grant** if awarded, and slots will be reserved for all grantees of the fund. All other applicants will be invited to apply to this rare opportunity on a first-come, first-serve basis subject to capacity. Workshops will take place on Zoom starting in June 2022. Participating agencies must be nonprofits based on and operating on Roosevelt Island. Workshops will offer participants training in management practices such as theory of change models, budgets and financial reporting, fundraising, and good board and governance practices.

### **Questions**

All prospective applicants should direct any and all inquiries about grants in 2022 to The New York Community Trust. Please do not contact staff at RIOC about this opportunity.

Julia Chang, Philanthropic Initiatives Officer at The New York Community Trust, is your primary contact and will be happy to answer any questions. She also can address any technical issues that may arise during your submission process on the grants portal. Reach her at [jtc@nyct-cfi.org](mailto:jtc@nyct-cfi.org).

## Schedule

February 7	Grants portal is open for applications.
February 17, 2:00 pm ET	An informational webinar will be held via Zoom for interested applicants.  To RSVP, please email <a href="mailto:jtc@nyct-cfi.org">jtc@nyct-cfi.org</a> with your name and the name of your organization, letting us know that you would like to attend. Your participant link will be sent to you.
March 14, 12:00 pm ET	Proposals are due in The Trust’s grants portal.
March	Trust staff may contact applicants for clarifying information.  Applicants are invited to participate in nonprofit management workshops.
April	Review committee conducts review and evaluation, and makes grant recommendations.
May	Grant awards and decline notices sent to all applicants.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What materials do I need in my application?**

The application should include:

- Proposal narrative (up to 5 pages)
- Project budget
- Annual operating budgets and financials for both the last year and the current year (if you are fiscally sponsored, provide these for both your own organization and your funds administrator)
- List of board of directors, with their affiliations (if you are fiscally sponsored, provide this for only your funds administrator)

### **Do my financials and board list count toward the five-page limit?**

No, they do not. The 5-page limit applies only to your proposal narrative.

### **What period should my project budget cover?**

This one-year grant will begin in May 2022. Your project budget should thus cover the period May 2022-April 2023.

### **Can I include administrative costs in my project budget?**

Yes. We expect and encourage every project budget to include staff time and overhead costs. Overhead costs in your project budget can be included at a percentage commensurate with your project's relationship to your total organizational budget.

### **What are capital project costs? Can equipment purchases be included in my project budget?**

Brick and mortar capital projects will not be funded, as these grants are generally small. However, equipment purchases are an allowable project expense if they ensure a group can deliver its service.

### **Can I apply for funding for an existing program?**

Yes. This program will make project grants to both existing and new programs. Nonprofits can submit applications for existing programs that they have run in prior years.

### **What is the board requirement? What if I don't meet the board requirement?**

For this year only, nonprofits must have at minimum three independent board members, only one of whom should be a paid staff member. An earlier version of this RFP included The New York Community Trust's standard due diligence requirement that grantee organizations have, at minimum, four independent board members. This is based on our assessment of best practices regarding board governance. Based on community feedback on timeline and understanding that this program was

launched quickly with the goal in mind to distribute grants to organizations as soon as we could, we are extending the date by which organizations must add a fourth board member. If awarded, organizations will have until the end of the yearlong grant period to expand their board membership to reach four board members. We have additionally brought in Community Resource Exchange to provide nonprofit management and technical assistance workshops that will help nonprofits implement best practices during the grant year.

**What if I'm not yet a 501(c)3, but my organization serves Roosevelt Island? Can I still apply?**

Organizations that provide direct services or benefits to Roosevelt Island but are not yet incorporated as a 501(c)3 can apply under a funds administrator (e.g., fiscal sponsor) who meets eligibility requirements.