

**Philadelphia 2026 Neighborhood Celebration Grants Fund
Questions & Answers related to this Call for Applicants**

Responses are grouped by each individual who submitted questions by the advertised deadline. All identifying information has been removed from the questions. Some questions have been edited for clarity.

1. What is the relationship between this grant and the 2026 Milestone Grant? Any guidance on these two grants and their similarities/difference would be greatly appreciated.

This is a separate grant program from the 2026 Milestone Grant.

If a neighborhood organization planned for a project to occur at the particular location, could that location be the entity that applies as a sponsor for that project?

The entity executing the program/event should apply for the grant.

Also, if one particular project fits both of these grant opportunities, could it receive funding from both?

Yes. The organization could receive a grant from both this program and another program.

2. We have two programs in which we will celebrate America 250. Are we allowed to submit one proposal that covers both projects?

A separate proposal should be submitted for each event.

3. Is this grant specifically for events pertaining to America's 250th, or is it more flexible? Can we apply with annual events that have previously been funded by Corridor Safety Enhancement? If so, what is the difference between the Neighborhood Celebration Grant Fund and the Corridor Safety Enhancement? Is it in name only?

This grant is specifically designed for celebrations related to America's 250th birthday. It is separate and apart from the Corridor Safety Enhancement program.

4. Philadelphia is a melting pot of people and home to many people of Caribbean decent so we would like to apply for this grant. Our organization is registered in Montgomery County but we are hoping to host an event in Philadelphia for the Caribbean community and friends of the Caribbean Community in Fairmount Park. Would we be able to apply for this grant opportunity? If so, how should we answer the initial question on the application?

This grant is only for organizations based in Philadelphia.

5. I'm reaching to see if our organization would be eligible for this grant opportunity. I'm having trouble determining if it's related to a separate grant we received earlier this year from the city for \$100,000 to support our arts and culture programming. Would we be eligible to put in an application for this Celebration Grants Fund?

Having received money from the City from a previous grant does not disqualify you from applying for and receiving money under this grant program.

6. Our organization is developing an eligible Philadelphia-based 2026 project, and our remaining unfunded, eligible project costs are approximately \$21,000. The guidelines state that grant awards are expected to range from \$25,000 to \$100,000. Would the Fund consider an application requesting \$21,000, or should applicants refrain from applying unless their request meets the \$25,000 minimum?

You can apply for funding for under \$25,000 if that is all you need to produce your eligible event.

7. I am working with an organization on a potential project for the Philadelphia 2026 Neighborhood Celebration Grants Fund. We are curious if there is any limit on capital improvements within this grant; specifically, our organization is expecting increased foot traffic associated with the FIFA field being constructed near their location. That field will not have public bathroom locations, and we would like to upgrade our bathroom facilities to accommodate anticipated increased usage.

We are also gathering details on increased cultural program offerings this summer as part of the celebration. Would it be appropriate to include some funding for bathroom upgrades along with the program costs?

The grant funding for this program is not for capital upgrades or improvements to your building location. The funding is for celebrations that people can enjoy as part of America's 250th birthday.

8. The description of eligible projects for the grant includes "beautification projects", seemingly as a separate category. However, the grant application form focuses virtually entirely on events.

Would a beautification project alone qualify for grant, or must it be in connection with an event?

A beautification project such as a sculpture or garden that relates to America's 250th birthday would be eligible.

9. My wife and I have a non-profit organization. Our address is in Montgomery county but the program we are applying for would be to run and operate our second annual giveback weekend, culminating in a FREE dance convention at Philadelphia Youth Basketball. Last year my wife's dance studio welcomed over 100+ dancers from Philadelphia to experience a first class dance convention free of charge.

Essentially my question is if the address of our nonprofit is outside of Philadelphia but our program and participants are in Philadelphia are we still able to apply?

This program is only for Philadelphia based non-profits.

10. I saw that the celebration grants are for non profit organizations and was wondering if there were any other grants or opportunities available for start-ups/black owned vendors? I have a company I'm launching that I think would be a great fit for the festivities. Please let me know.

Please see this link for further information on how to promote your business as it relates to 2026. <https://interestform.getstimulus.ai/city-of-philadelphia/>

11. Would it be possible to include a small administrative line item in the budget to cover grant management tasks like expense tracking and post-event reporting?

Yes. This is an allowable expense.

Can grant funds be used to pre-pay food vendors so attendees can receive food for free through a voucher system, or do vendors need to sell independently and keep their own revenue?

Yes, food can be paid for ahead of time so that guests do not have to buy food.

Would distributing Back-to-School supplies at one of the events be considered an allowable activity under this grant?

All events and celebrations are required to be linked to celebrating America's 250th birthday.

Could the Juneteenth Parade and its associated festival at Malcolm X Park count as one of our three funded events, given our involvement and the shared venue?

All events and celebrations are required to be linked to celebrating America's 250th birthday.

How much flexibility is there to move funds between budget line items or add new ones after the grant has been awarded?

There is flexibility to move items to different lines in the budget. The City Fund must be informed, and may need to approve of the changes.

12. We are interested in applying; however, we noticed that the specific application questions are only accessible once a formal application is started. To ensure we provide the most thorough and well-prepared responses possible, would it be possible to receive a PDF or a list of the application questions prior to our official submission?

No, this only an online application.

13. If a single non-profit organization were to propose multiple 2026 Neighborhood Celebrations on different dates at different sites citywide, could these Celebrations be submitted as a single application?

Each event should have a separate application.

14. We would like to serve as a fiscal sponsor for an organization that hosts 99% of their programs and services in Philadelphia, PA - and they have paid City of Philadelphia taxes for 14 years. However, neither we, as the possible fiscal sponsor, nor the organization have physical addresses in the City of Philadelphia beyond our P.O.Box address. Would we be able to serve as a fiscal sponsor for them? We know that funding can not be used to fund salaries or staffing costs. If we use a subcontractor for portions of the funding opportunity, would it be acceptable if they were to pay their staff?

This grant fund is only for Philadelphia based organizations.

15. We are based in Chattanooga, Tennessee, where we deliver embedded, school-based programming that supports student-athlete wellbeing, coach development, and values-driven team culture. We are currently exploring opportunities to bring this work to Philadelphia, where we have a trained practitioner who lives and would be delivering our programming locally.

Before investing time in a full application, I wanted to reach out directly to ask whether our situation (a nonprofit headquartered outside Philadelphia but with a Philadelphia-based practitioner delivering the work on the ground) would satisfy your eligibility requirement that applicants be located within Philadelphia.

This grant fund is only for Philadelphia based organizations.

16. Could you please clarify whether grant funds may be used to compensate: DJs, Performing artists (e.g., musicians, poets, performers) I see that funds cannot be used for salaries or general operating costs, and I want to ensure I am interpreting that correctly in the context of artist stipends or performance fees tied directly to the event.

Yes, grant funds can be used to pay for artists of DJs as long as they are not employees of the organization receiving the funds.

17. For the budget outline, should the budget be in excel? How much line item description do you need for each budget item? What will be the post-award reporting procedure for submitting expense receipts related to the award.

The budget does not have to be in excel, but excel can be used. All awardees will have to submit a final grant report. It is recommended that receipts be retained.

18. We are exploring improving our gate/bollard system and would be interested in using grant funding for this. The location is near the Washington Lane SEPTA regional rail stop, and serves as an entrance to the arboretum. This is not down on Chew Avenue, but we are curious if this would be eligible. Similarly, we would love to add updated signage to both our farm and Chew entrances to make it more clear to our neighbors and community members that we are open and free to the public. Would these be eligible? Are there any other requirements, such as matching funds, to be eligible for the grant?

The grant funding for this program is not for capital upgrades or improvements to your building location. The funding is for celebrations that people can enjoy as part of America's 250th birthday.

19. I'm wondering if you can give more information about the requirement that applicants should be "located within Philadelphia." Our organization was founded in Philadelphia, we have staff in Philadelphia, and we have been working with Philadelphia communities for a decade, but our legal business address is in Wilmington, DE. I am wondering if we are eligible to apply.

This grant is for non-profit entities with a legal business address in Philadelphia.

20. Would it be possible to share a high-level breakdown or additional guidance on how the budget is typically allocated across line items, such as administrative or overhead costs? In particular, we would appreciate any clarification on : Which types of costs can and cannot be included in the budget line items; Whether there is any flexibility for general operating support; If staff time or salary associated with project implementation is considered an eligible expense

This grant is not to be used for operating support. Staff time is not an eligible expense.

21. I Am wondering if the funds we ask for can cover two events in the year of 2026 or just one? I would also love a little more clarity on what kind of events that would have preference over another? Our organization works through the medium of sports for violence prevention and we are planning our second Juneeteenth combine for youth in Philly. It was a huge success last year with NFL player Jordan Davis joining us would something like this count?

Events under this grant program must be related to celebrating America's 250th birthday.

22. We're reviewing the eligibility requirements and have a quick question about fiscal sponsorship. Our organization, residents, and proposed activation are all based entirely in Philadelphia. However, our fiscal sponsor is a nonprofit arts service organization not headquartered in the city.

Could you confirm if our fiscal sponsor must be physically located in Philadelphia, or if we're eligible since the applicant organization and activities are locally based?

If the organization being sponsored is based in Philadelphia, the fiscal sponsor does not have to be based in Philadelphia.

23. What is the maximum and typical award amount for funded proposals, and are partial awards common?

The amount of the award depends on the celebration's expenses. Grant awards are expected to range from \$25,000 to \$100,000.

Are there any additional restrictions on allowable expenses beyond those already outlined on the website (e.g., hospitality, entertainment, or honoraria) that applicants should be aware of?

No. Please note that the funds are not for capital expenses or enhancements to existing programs.

Are leveraged resources (cash or in-kind) required or viewed favorably during the review process?

Yes, as this will allow for dollars to be distributed widely.

What is the timeline for funding disbursement, and are funds provided upfront or on a reimbursement basis?

Funding is provided when the grant agreement is fully executed.

What are the primary goals and intended outcomes of the celebration events funded through this initiative?

See the application and call for applications.

Are there preferred or priority populations, neighborhoods, or themes that proposals should align with?

No. There are no preferred or priority populations or neighborhoods.

What are the expectations regarding community engagement and neighborhood involvement in program design and implementation?

See the applications and call for applications for further details.

Is it permissible for an event to take place over multiple days, or is priority or preference given to single-day events?

Yes it is permissible for an event to take place over multiple days. There is no preference for single day events.

What level of partnership or collaboration is expected to strengthen an application?

See the application and call for applications.

What specific criteria will be used to evaluate and score submitted proposals?

See the application and call for applications.

Will grantees be required to report outcomes following the event, and if so, what metrics or documentation will be expected?

Yes, reporting will be required and a report template will be sent with the grant agreement.

Are there specific requirements for branding, acknowledgment, or use of City or America250 materials in funded events?

Acknowledgement should be given to the City of Philadelphia's Neighborhood Celebration Grant Program.

Will technical assistance or guidance be provided to applicants during the planning or implementation phases?

No, there will be no technical assistance for the projects themselves. The Philadelphia City Fund will be available to answer questions related to the administration of dollars.

Are organizations permitted to apply for more than 1 event? If so, should they submit an application/budget for each event or can they combine events onto one application?

Yes, organizations can apply for more than one event. A separate application should be filed for each event.

24. I previously emailed to ask whether an organization could apply for a 250th celebration grant for an enhancement project, without the enhancement also being a part of a scheduled event or celebration. It seemed that way from the guidelines, but not from the online application. Also, would it be worthwhile for an organization apply for a grant of less than \$25,000 for a smaller celebration or series of celebrations? We were confused by the statement that most grants will be \$25,000 to \$100,000, out of the \$1,000,000 available for the grant. Can an acceptable project cover a series of celebrations vs. one larger event? Can we assume that, while some community 250 events and celebrations might also attract visitors who have come to the City for the 250 celebrations, other 250 community

events and celebrations that are solely neighborhood-focused, without a tourist element, are within the purview of the grant purposes?

Awards are not for capital projects or enhancements to existing programs. The program must be to celebrate the 250th birthday of the United States. Each event should have a separate application. Awards can be made for less than \$25,000 if the event costs less.

25. Would it be permissible to submit two separate applications for two distinct events? Given the breadth of our work across a range of themes and program areas, we believe we have two strong and unique proposals to put forward. We would appreciate your guidance on whether multiple submissions from a single organization are allowed under this funding opportunity. I want to make sure that doing so would not weaken or affect the competitiveness of our submissions in any way as well.

Yes, it is permissible to submit two applications.

26. Are grants or funding distributed for student-led activities/projects as part of the celebration event an eligible expense under this fund?

Student-led projects are eligible for funding under this grant program. The applicant must be a non-profit.

27. I'm inquiring if any of Philadelphia's 15 Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) that are municipal authority organizations are eligible to apply for the Philadelphia 2026 Neighborhood Celebration Grants Fund. As municipal authorities, they function very similarly to 501(c)3s and perform the same functions as Philadelphia's 10 501(c)3 BIDs.

No, only 501(c)(3) organizations are eligible. BIDs may apply through a non-profit fiscal sponsor.

28. We are considering a proposal that builds on existing student-centered programming (e.g., a swim meet and art showcase) and expands it into a broader community celebration involving families and partner organizations. Would this type of event be considered sufficiently community-centered for this opportunity? To what extent does the strength or number of community partners factor into competitiveness? For example, would a smaller number of deeply engaged partners be viewed more favorably than a broader but more lightly engaged group?

For proposals at the higher end of the funding range, what distinguishes stronger applications: scale of attendance, depth of engagement, or longer-term impact beyond the event itself?

All applications will be judged individually according to the criteria in the RFP. Without seeing the specific application, it is difficult to opine on the question.