



St. Louis Community Foundation Charless Foundation 2026 Request for Proposal

The St. Louis Community Foundation (Community Foundation) is dedicated to inspiring purposeful philanthropy that connects community and donors to build and preserve a more equitable and vibrant region.

The Charless Foundation, today a component fund of the St. Louis Community Foundation, was formed with the sale of the Charless Home for Seniors in South St. Louis City to Bethesda Health Group in 2006. Founded in 1853 as the "Home of the Friendless," in its latter years the Charless Home provided independent living, assisted living, and skilled nursing for as many as 116 residents. The Charless Home closed in 2012.

The purpose of the Charless Foundation is "to provide support to other charitable organizations providing services and assistance to promote the health, welfare, and wellness of Missouri Senior Citizens, with an emphasis, where possible, in the South St. Louis City neighborhoods." The Charless Home for Seniors was located in zip code 63111.

A [2023 study by the University of Missouri St. Louis' Community Innovation and Action Center](#) identified home repair and preservation as a key need for older adults in the City of St. Louis. Their survey of 583 older homeowners in St. Louis found that the average cost of needed repairs was \$13,023. Housing deterioration can damage older adults' physical and mental health, financial well-being, social connections, and ability to age in place, all key concerns of the Charless Foundation.

Grant Purpose

As part of its 2024-2028 strategic framework, the Community Foundation established two strategic priority areas: Economic Mobility and Youth Connections. The Economic Mobility priority includes grantmaking in the areas of housing, financial health, and job access and creation; these sub priority areas were identified as areas of community need and partnership opportunities, as well as high interest areas of community stakeholders.

Beginning in 2025, therefore, the Community Foundation will be aligning Charless Foundation grantmaking with our strategic priority focusing on housing. In particular, Charless Foundation will concentrate funding on assisting older adults in South St. Louis City through home repairs, modifications, weatherization, and preservation.

In recognition of the number of [older adults who face food insecurity](#), Charless Foundation will also provide some funding for food banks and food pantries in South St. Louis city, limited to \$10,000 per distribution site.

**Grant Purpose**Outcomes:

For this grant cycle, there are two sets of outcomes. For organizations applying for funding for home repairs, modifications, weatherization, and preservation, outcomes include:

- The quality of homes owned or rented by older adults is improved, allowing older adults to age in place
- Older adults are more financially secure as the value of their homes is increased due to home repairs, modifications, weatherization, and/or preservation

For organizations applying for funding to address food insecurity, the outcome for this grant cycle is:

- Older adults have access to nutritious food

Grant Process

The Charless Foundation is seeking nonprofit partners who work with economically insecure seniors in South St. Louis city. Target zip codes may be found in Appendix A. Older adults are defined as humans 60 years of age and older. Economically insecure is defined by the [National Council on Aging](#) as living at 200% or below the federal poverty level.

Each organization may apply for either home repairs, modifications, weatherization and/or preservation OR for food insecurity. An organization may only submit one LOI.

Grants may range from \$10,000 to \$50,000 per year. Awards for food banks and food pantries will be limited to \$10,000 per year per distribution site.

For new applicants, funding is available for one year. For past Charless grantees, funding is available for up to three years, with eligibility for second- and third-year funding based on annual reporting. All funded organizations will be required to complete a final report.

**What the Grant Will Fund:**

Strong applications will include:

- Organizations or programs that provide home repairs, modifications, weatherization, and/or preservation AND/OR organizations that provide nutritious food for older adults in targeted south St. Louis city zip codes.
- Organizations or programs that focus on economically insecure older adults.
- Partnerships that leverage funds to increase home repairs, modifications, weatherization, and/or preservation AND/OR food distribution.
- Organizations or programs that can demonstrate an increase in the value of homes owned by older adults in South St. Louis city.

General operating support is available for organizations that specialize in home repair. Program operating support is available for home repair or food programs within multi-service organizations.

What the Grant Will Not Fund

- Organizational endowments
- Research initiatives
- Capital improvements for the nonprofit organization
- Nonprofit or home-owner debt reduction
- Land or building purchases
- Repairs, modifications, weatherization, or preservation of commercial buildings
- Political campaigns or to support attempts to influence legislation of any governmental body other than through making available the results of non-partisan analysis, study, and research

Eligibility

Any nonprofit that is a 501(c)3 public nonprofit in good standing or has a fiscal sponsor and meets the requirements outlined in this RFP may apply for this funding. The nonprofit does not have to be physically located in the zip codes outlined in the RFP, though Charless funding must be used within this geographical area.

Organizations that received a one-year grant in 2025 or have multi-year grants that end in 2026 must have their grant reports in by November 2 at 5:00 pm to be considered for funding in 2026. Please reach out to grants@stlgives.org if you have any questions regarding this requirement.



Timeline

Wednesday, August 26, 2026	Request for Proposals Released
Wednesday, October 7, 2026	Applications close at 12:00pm (noon) CST
Monday, November 2, 2026	Previous grantee reporting due
Late November, 2026	Grant decisions announced

Questions/Office Hours

General questions regarding this request for proposal may be sent to grants@stlgives.org, please include "Charless Foundation 2026" in the subject of your email. For a potential applicant's specific questions regarding their proposal, St. Louis Community Foundation staff will be available for office hours at the following times:

Thursday, September 3 from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Wednesday, September 9 from 1 – 3 p.m.
Thursday, September 17 from 9 – 11 a.m.
Monday, September 28 from 3 – 5 p.m.

To secure an appointment during these hours, please email grants@stlgives.org with "Charless Foundation 2026" in the subject line. Please offer two or three times to meet in case your first-choice time has already been filled.



Proposal Submission

Proposals for the Charless Foundation grants will be accepted through the St. Louis Community Foundation's grant portal at <https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=stlgives>. If your organization has not registered in the St. Louis Community Foundation portal previously, you will need to do so before starting an application. We encourage previously registered organizations to review the contact information in the portal and make any appropriate updates.

Once registered or if already registered, login and then click on the "apply" button in the top left corner of the page to access an eligibility quiz. Once the eligibility quiz is passed, applicants will have access to the grant application in an additional section on the same page. Submission of an eligibility quiz is not considered a proposal for this grant opportunity.

Organizations may only submit one application for funding.

Application questions and evaluation criteria can be found in Appendix B.

Please note that we have not implemented strict character limits for this application. However, we encourage applicants to be concise as clarity and brevity are valued in the review process

Required Financial Information

For this proposal you will be asked to present a project/program budget using the template provided. If this is a GOS request, you will be asked to upload your most recent fiscal year's actual budget.

You also will be asked to upload your two most recent audits or, if you do not have an audit, your three most recent IRS Form 990s. If you have filed Form 990-N e- Postcard, you will be asked to include your organization's actual budget for the past fiscal year.

Questions

If you have questions about this Request for Proposals, please contact the Community Foundation team at grants@stlgives.org. Please include "Charless Foundation" in the subject line. If there are questions that the Foundation receives more than once, we will share that question and answer with all those that have expressed interest in this grant.



APPENDIX A

The Charless Foundation target zip codes include:

63104

63109

63110

63111

63116

63118

63123

63125

63139

The Charless Home for Seniors was located in zip code 63111.



APPENDIX B

Please note that we have not implemented strict character limits for this application. However, we encourage applicants to be concise as clarity and brevity are valued in the review process.

Eligibility Questions

1. Is your organization a 501c3 public nonprofit organization or do you have a fiscal sponsor that is a 501c3?
2. Does your organization provide home repair and/or provide healthy food for older adults?
3. Does your organization serve older adults in South St. Louis City?

Project High Level Details

1. Proposal Name
2. Doing Business As - Does your organization do business under another name or DBA? If yes, please provide your legal name.
3. Grant Amount Requested
If your organization has been funded by Charless Foundation in the past five years, your organization may apply for up to three years of funding. If your organization has not been funded by Charless Foundation in the past five years, only one year of funding can be awarded.
4. Total annual organization budget for current fiscal year
5. Provide the mission or purpose statement for your organization (250 characters)
6. # of individuals expected to be served through this grant
7. Zip codes of service area(s). Please check all that apply
8. Percentage of people you currently serve from the Charless Foundation zip codes? If this is a new program, please estimate the percentage from the targeted zip codes that you plan to serve.
9. Is this a proposal for General Operating Support (GOS), Project, or Program funding?
 - General Operating Support (GOS) - Unrestrictive funds for overall mission and daily operations
 - Project funding - Funds for a specific, time-limited initiative
 - Program funding - Funds for ongoing program activities
10. Please select which funding your organization is requesting:
 - Home repairs, modifications, weatherization, and preservation
 - Food insecurity



APPENDIX B (Cont.)

Design and Alignment w/ Strategic Priorities

11. Please check all grant outcomes addressed:

- Quality of homes owned or rented by older adults is improved allowing older adults to age in place
- Older adults are more financially secure as the value of their homes is increased
- Older adults have access to nutritious food

12. Describe the people and/or community your organization serves through this program and describe how they have partnered to contribute to the program/ project you are proposing.

13. Describe your organization's program/ project design, what actionable steps you will take to implement it, and when you expect to take them.

Please be sure to highlight key staff and their roles and anticipated timelines with as much specificity as possible

14. What metrics will your organization use to measure the outcomes identified in question 11? What are the evaluation models/tools (i.e. surveys, focus groups, etc.) your organization will use to measure those outcomes? (2100 characters)

Please include any evidence-based or research-based evaluation or measurement tools that you use.

15. How does your organization's proposed program/project (if GOS, general programming) fit within the stated purpose of the request for proposals (RFP)? Describe why your organization is well positioned to carry it out.

Partnership Summary

16. Briefly describe the partnership(s) and/or collaborations critical to your organization (if request is for GOS) or program/project. Please include history, expertise, and past success with these partners. If appropriate, how have they collaborated on this proposal?

17. The Charless Foundation values innovation without duplication. What other stakeholders are doing similar work in the region and how is your organization (GOS) or program/ project different or innovative in comparison?



APPENDIX B (Cont.)

Financial Review

18. Has your organization been funded by the Charless Foundation within the past five years?
If your organization has been funded by Charless Foundation in the past five years, your organization may apply for up to three years of funding. If your organization has not been funded by Charless Foundation in the past five years, only one year of funding can be awarded.
- Yes, we have received Charless funding in the past 5 years
 - Yes, we have received Charless funding in the past 5 years AND are requesting a multi-year award
 - * If "yes, multi year request," please provide the amount that you are requesting for each of the next three years.
 - No, our organization has not been funded by the Charless Foundation in the last 5 years
19. Budget – Please provide a budget for this grant funding using the budget template provided. Your "Amount Requested from Funder" will serve as your project budget.
20. Budget Narrative – After completing the budget template, please describe any line-item expense listed on the budget in order to provide more context. Indicate whether this is a new expense or if funding is being requested to cover a current/existing expense. *Please also use this section to describe your areas of highest needs or describe your funding realities.*
21. Would you be willing to take a lesser amount if we are not able to meet your full request? If you were not awarded the full amount how would this affect your program/project?
22. Fiscal Sponsorship - Is your organization fiscally sponsored?
- If yes, please specify the name, mailing address, and EIN number of your fiscal sponsor.
 - Please attach this year's approved budget for your organization, not your fiscal sponsor's budget.
23. Please attach your **two** most recent audits. If your organization does not have audits to attach, please send your **three** most recent 990s (either Form 990 or Form 990-EZ), or Form 990-N (e-Postcard) and your prior year's income statement for the full year.
If there are any anomalies or things you would like to add further information about, please include it in the box below.
24. Authorized Signatory - Who can sign a grant agreement on behalf of the organization if awarded? Please include name and email address.



Application Review Criteria

PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPACT - 55 POINTS	
Review Criteria	Scale Details
The proposal indicates a strong understanding of the people/community served and their needs. The program addresses the needs of the people/community served.	Scoring notes: This is worth 10 points. 0-3 <u>Does not meet expectations</u>: proposal does not indicate a strong understanding of the program participants or their needs 4-7 <u>Meets expectations</u>: proposal clearly describes program participants and the circumstances that led them to the program 8-10 <u>Exceeds expectations</u>: proposal indicates thorough knowledge of culturally relevant strategies and metrics aligned to realities of participants; proposal indicates a commitment to participants
Program participants are older adults from the Charless Foundation target geography.	Scoring notes: This is worth 5 points. 0-1 <u>Does not meet expectations</u>: Program participants are from a wide geographic range with those from the targeted geography not a priority. Program participants may or may not be older adults 2-3 <u>Meets expectations</u>: More than 50% of program participants are from the Charless zip codes. More than 50% of program participants are adults over the age of 60. 4-5 <u>Exceeds expectations</u>: A high majority of program participants are adults over the age of 60 from the Charless zip codes.



PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPACT - 55 POINTS

Review Criteria	Scale Details
	Scoring Notes: These questions will be scored on three factors, each worth 10 points
The program plan is well-defined, realistic, and feasible within the timeline.	Definition: The program's goals, methods, and expected outcomes are clearly outlined. 0-3 <u>Does not meet expectations:</u> The proposal does not clearly define goals, methods, and outcomes 4-7 <u>Meets expectations:</u> The proposal defines goals, activities, and outcomes 8-10 <u>Exceeds Expectations:</u> The proposal defines goals, activities, and outcomes clearly and they are tied to a cohesive program plan
The program plan clearly outlines how the activities will achieve the stated outcomes for the people / community served.	Realistic: The program's goals, activities, and timeline are practical and achievable given the resources, constraints, and circumstances in which the program will be implemented. 0-3 <u>Does not meet expectations:</u> The proposal's goals, activities, and timeline do not appear achievable 4-7 <u>Meets expectations:</u> The proposal's goals, activities, and timeline appear achievable 8-10 <u>Exceeds expectations:</u> The proposal's goals, activities, and timeline have been implemented previously with success; for new and existing programs, proposal identifies a plan for addressing anticipated constraints or circumstantial changes that could prevent goals from being achieved.
Staff are in place and roles and responsibilities are aligned with program goals.	Staff Capacity: The roles and responsibilities of program staff are clearly defined and aligned with the program's goals. 0-3 <u>Does not meet expectations:</u> Staff roles are not clear; staff are not currently in place 4-7 <u>Meets expectations:</u> Staff roles are clear and staff are in place 8-10 <u>Exceeds expectations:</u> Staff roles are clear, staff have experience with the program and/or population; staff are in place. For new programs, staff have been hired or there is a clear plan for having staff in place at the start of the grant period to implement the program.



PROGRAM DESIGN AND IMPACT - 55 POINTS

Review Criteria

Proposal shows clear methodology and metrics for evaluating success of the program.

Program highlights evaluation techniques or practices that are grounded in research or evidence that supports its strategies and expected outcomes.

Evaluation approach is practical and feasible with the program's scope and resources.

Scale Details

Scoring Notes: This is worth 10 points

0-3 Does not meet expectations: Evaluation methodology and metrics are poorly described and/or do not tie to expected outcomes

4-7 Meets expectations: Evaluation methodology and metrics are appropriate for the program and measure outcomes

8-10 Exceeds expectations: Evaluation methodology and metrics are evidence-based and provide a clear picture of individual and programmatic success



Application Review Criteria

PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS - 10 POINTS

<i>Review Criteria</i>	<i>Scale Details</i>
The proposal clearly outlines the roles and contributions of key stakeholders involved in its implementation. The proposal demonstrates successful collaboration with stakeholders in the past, showing a history of effective partnerships.	Scoring Notes: This is worth 5 points 0-1 <u>Does not meet expectations</u>: Proposal does not indicate a history of strong partnerships with clear roles 2-3 <u>Meets expectations</u>: Proposal provides an understanding of partners, past work together, and partners' roles. 4-5 <u>Exceeds expectations</u>: Proposal clearly outlines the history and success of partnerships, including roles each partner plays and importance to the program success
The proposal clearly outlines how key stakeholders, including clients, will contribute meaningfully to the program's design, execution, and outcomes.	Scoring Notes: This is worth 5 points 0-1 <u>Does not meet expectations</u>: Proposal does not indicate that partners and participants provide input into program design 2-3 <u>Meets expectations</u>: Proposal provides an understanding of how partners contribute to the program design; Program uses surveys and other evaluation mechanisms to solicit participant feedback 4-5 <u>Exceeds expectations</u>: Proposal indicates a commitment to inclusive program design; partner organizations and clients appear integral to program design



BUDGET JUSTIFICATION & FINANCIAL REVIEW – 10 POINTS

Review Criteria	Scale Details
The program budget is transparent and well-organized, with clear breakdowns of how funds will be spent. The program budget is reasonable and includes considerations for all related costs, including indirect or hidden costs. The program budget aligns with and directly supports the achievement of the program's goals and objectives.	Scoring Notes: This is worth 10 points 0-3 <u>Does not meet expectations</u>: The proposed budget and narrative are not clear, reasonable, and justified. Proposed budget and narrative do not align with the program's goals and objectives. 4-7 <u>Meets expectations</u>: The proposed budget and narrative are clear, reasonable, and justified in relation to the program's goals and objectives 8-10 <u>Exceeds expectations</u>: The proposed budget and narrative are clear, reasonable, and justified with detail. The proposed budget and narrative clearly outline how grant funding will be used to support the grant goals and objectives
Financial statements are available and indicate the following characteristics: • 3-6 months of spending in reserve: Based on unrestricted reserves and/or liquid assets, it refers to how many months the nonprofit can operate at the current level of spending without new income. • Limited debt margin with resources available to cover debt payments: Total liabilities divided by the total assets at the end of the year (debt margin) does not exceed financial limits. • Operating at cost or with a surplus: Non-profit has enough income to cover expenses two or the past three years. • Diverse revenue sources: Nonprofit has a mix of revenue sources that helps to manage risk over time.	Scoring Notes: Pass/Fail Question Pass: Financial statements indicate that the organization meets at least two or more characteristics listed and/or the proposal has provided reasonable justification or descriptions of relevant circumstances in its application.



Application Scoring Overview Section	Points
Program Design & Feasibility	55
Program Partnerships	10
Budget Justification & Financial Review	10
TOTAL	75