The Colorado Health Foundation™

Funding Opportunity:

Equitable Community-Designed Outdoor Spaces

This funding opportunity supports **planning** grants to inform the design and construction of outdoor spaces, such as playgrounds and parks across Colorado that allow children, youth and families to become co-designers of their own reimagined spaces for physical activity while fostering a sense of community, agency and belonging.

Race is a central consideration for the development of healthy communities. Effective strategies that engage all youth, especially youth of color, must recognize race and place barriers that impact opportunities to create lifelong physical activity practices. Limited recreation space coupled with safety concerns restricts the physical activity opportunities of communities of color. Families in rural communities also lack outdoor amenities and safe places to play. Often, the areas with the least access to public play spaces are the most stressed. Rarely are spaces provided for intergenerational physical activity and cohesion in rural communities.

This funding opportunity prioritizes outdoor spaces that center the needs of communities living on low-income, communities of color and rural communities

in Colorado in the pursuit of health equity.

This funding opportunity differs from previous opportunities as it emphasizes a more dynamic planning process for how communities are engaged in designing outdoor spaces. Applicants must undertake a planning process that includes deep community engagement bringing community members together to actively co-design spaces that reflect the community's needs, history and culture, and encourages positive physical activity and psychological safety. Projects may utilize the Community Engagement Spectrum, Equity-Centered Community Design™*, or another relevant model to support the planning and design process. We invite you to work with a program officer to determine the right process for your community project.

Planning funds in the range of $25,000 - $50,000 can be used to support community engagement and co-design activities. Planning grants may include personnel costs, meeting space needs, stipends for community members, administrative costs, meeting materials, translation and interpretation costs, among other needs. Landscape architects selected by the Foundation will provide technical assistance to support communities through the design process, as needed. Costs for this technical assistance will be covered by the Foundation separately from the planning grant.

At the conclusion of planning grants and by invitation-only, projects will be considered for capital grant support for construction of shovel-ready projects. This funding is not guaranteed. We expect that the strength and depth of the community engagement process will yield a competitive project to be considered for implementation funding by the Foundation and other funders.

Proposed projects must reflect the Foundation's cornerstones . These outline who we serve, how our work is informed and our intent to create health equity.

Have questions? We are here to talk through your ideas and encourage you to connect with us before applying for funding. If you are not already connected with a program officer, please reach out to us by Show email or phone at Show phone.

Si necesita acceder la solicitud de fondos en español, por favor contáctenos a Show email.

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Click on the below accordion menu for additional detail on funding criteria to help prepare you for submitting a grant proposal.

Criteria

- Applicant organizations must demonstrate commitment to undertake a comprehensive planning process that includes deep community engagement that leads to a community-owned or community-driven outdoor project co-designed with the community.
- Planned design and construction of outdoor spaces in high-need areas that serve individuals of all ages and create access for intergenerational activities that encourage physical activity and strengthen community, agency and belonging.
- Commitment to building intergenerational outdoor spaces that encourage physical activity, socialization and strengthen community building. Projects may include age-specific segments, with considerations for those living with physical and/or developmental disabilities, in the design as appropriate, such as playgrounds. If on school grounds, the space must be open to the general public during non-school hours.

Preference will be given to projects that center the needs of communities living on low-income, communities of color and rural communities, such that projects:

- Based on enrollment data from the nearest school, will serve a higher than average (50% or greater) number of young people of color and/or young people receiving free and reduced lunch.

- Will result in outdoor spaces and/or amenities that sufficiently serve the most disadvantaged community member

- Meet a need to replace existing unsafe or outdated equipment in an outdoor space within five miles of a proven rural community-hub, public location or space.

Measurable Reach:

Applicants will be asked to estimate how many individuals will use the outdoor space and to indicate how their work will increase the number of Coloradans who have convenient access to recreational physical activity.

We often partner with third-party evaluators, contractors and other organizations over the course of our work with applicants and grantees. Your application and its attachments may be shared with these individuals or entities during the review process and grant cycle. All third-party organizations partnering with the Foundation have signed a confidentiality agreement and will not use or share the information for purposes outside of the scope of work specific to the grant application or grant award. If you have any concerns or would like additional information, please email Show email *or call our senior director of Grantmaking Operations at*

Show phone.

Resources

- Community Engagement Spectrum
- Equity-Centered Design Process

Grant Deadlines

Feb 15, 2027

We're here to help

Have questions? Contact your Program Officer for more information.

FIND A PROGRAM OFFICER ??

ACCESS YOUR APPLICATION