



CONNECTING PEOPLE
INVESTING IN IDEAS
BUILDING COMMUNITIES



SOUTHWEST INITIATIVE
FOUNDATION

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swifoundation.org

The Southwest Initiative Foundation is a regional champion and inclusive partner committed to prosperity for all southwest Minnesota kids and the communities they call home.

The outcome of this work is the achievement of economic mobility: the collective ambition that all people attain a reasonable standard of living, with the dignity that comes from having power over their lives and being engaged in and valued by their community.

We are offering grants to support 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations directly serving our southwest Minnesota communities for work related to Grow Our Own.

Questions can be directed to Nancy Fasching at 320-484-9104 or nancyf@swifoundation.org

Grow Our Own Grants

*Closing the opportunity gap for
our kids and their families*

Areas of Focus

Early Learning and Development

- **High Impact Strategies** to increase child success, from birth through age 8, through wraparound services, programs and resources to be accessible to children and families in diverse and underserved areas including: mental health services and supports; social, emotional and physical health; and supplemental after-school programs
- **Professional Development for Practitioners** that offers training and development programs to more effectively operate and address the needs of young children, birth through age eight.

Stable Families

- **Projects that enable more effective parenting** to encourage healthier patterns of family formation and stability for children with preference given to projects that focus support for efforts where children and the adults in their lives build the relationships and resources needed to thrive by removing barriers in accessing early childhood development, education pathways, health and wellness, social capital and economic opportunity.

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Excellence. Accountability. Impact.™

Confirmed in Compliance with National Standards for U.S. Community Foundations. An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer.

Areas of Focus

K-12 Years

- **Empowerment programs** that provide impactful and culturally responsive mental health supports and interventions for youth as they explore and grow their resiliency through identity, agency and belonging by developing personal and interpersonal capacities.
- **Intergenerational mentoring opportunities** through community-building approaches that intentionally build upon the strengths of all generations, identify shared interests, and strive for positive outcomes across generational as well as racial/ethnic differences which have the potential to encourage different generations to invest in each other. Potential projects include forming strategic partnerships between aging-focused and youth-focused organizations that promote the importance of reciprocity and interdependence through inclusive practices such as team building and leadership work as well as intergenerational arts, oral history, cross-age mentoring, intergenerational exercise, and community gardening, where likely and unlikely personal connections were formed.

Vibrant and Welcoming Communities

Projects that build inclusive communities with preference given to proposals that support creative approaches with involvement of marginalized populations in the areas of:

- **Support existing integration strategies** and encourage additional local organizations to develop and implement projects tailored to their communities' needs.
- **Collaborative projects that bring together people across lines of difference**, with partnership among organizations to work together to design, implement and learn from new activities. Potential partners may represent key community organizations, such as SWIF affiliates, local libraries and museums, educational entities, etc.
- **Activities or events designed to connect community members of different backgrounds** in a spirit of neighbor-helping-neighbor. Applicants must have the ability to bring together the rich diversity of the community by partnering with diverse-based organizations, and by working with the trust of the community of the residents to be mobilized. This includes engaging and connecting immigrants, long-term community members who may have less exposure to diverse residents and others in activity planning and participation. Preference will be given to innovative community strategies inspired by participation in Welcoming Week efforts.

Pathways to Meaningful Work

- **Projects that promote employment and educational** opportunities and reduce barriers for students in non-traditional education settings in order to participate effectively as productive workers, family members and residents. Preference will be given to workforce development opportunities in career laddering that support the progression from entry level positions to higher levels of pay, skill, responsibility, or authority.



Process and Criteria

The Southwest Initiative Foundation wishes to signal to groups with diverse cultures, philosophies, and experiences that they are welcome partners in its efforts. SWIF will seek grantees and partners that incorporate diversity into their missions and strive to encourage diverse governance boards, partner organizations and those impacted. SWIF will seek to assure that its grantmaking activities reflect and promote the diversity of the communities we serve.

Application Process

- Applicants must complete the grant application at: <https://swifoundation.tfaforms.net/4762009>
- You will receive an e-mail confirming our receipt of application.
- The grant deadline is **5 pm on March 15, 2023**.
- If there are questions related to your application, a member of our grant team will contact you.
- You will be informed of the decision by the end of April.
- Southwest Initiative Foundation reserves the right to make modifications to the program in response to community need and available resources.

Grant Guidelines

- All proposals must demonstrate a benefit within one or more of the following 18 counties in southwest Minnesota: Big Stone, Chippewa, Cottonwood, Jackson, Kandiyohi, Lac qui Parle, Lincoln, Lyon, McLeod, Meeker, Murray, Nobles, Pipestone, Redwood, Renville, Rock, Swift and Yellow Medicine; or the Upper Sioux Community or Lower Sioux Indian Community.
- Proposals must be submitted by an independent 501(c)(3) organization, a unit of government, religious institution, or educational entity.
- **Funding requests of up to \$10,000 will be considered**; Matching funds are encouraged. Additional funds may be awarded, dependent upon availability.
- Projects must be completed within 12 months of the grant award date.
- Only one grant application may be submitted per organization.
- A final report may be due following the grant period.

Grant Exclusions - *Ineligible organizations or activities include:*

Individuals, businesses, or other for-profit organizations; Specific religious purposes or activities; Capital funding, campaigns or endowments; Funds for re-granting

Grant Award Selection Criteria - *Proposals that are in line with the criteria below will receive priority consideration in our grant review process.*

- Applicant organization meets all eligibility criteria and any other requirements specified in this RFP
 - Applicant organization's mission and primary programs, services and/or activities strongly align with the Southwest Initiative Foundation's mission and focus of the Grow Our Own initiative
 - Impact — projects that demonstrate an overall impact within Southwest Initiative Foundation's region through an evidence-based approach and strong alignment with Grow Our Own outcomes
 - Collaboration/partnership — projects work with other organizations in unique and impactful ways
 - Community need — projects that successfully address an identified need and/or opportunity
 - Measurable results — projects that can show quantitative results in this grant's areas of focus
 - Asset-based approaches — projects that maximize the strengths, talents and resources of the local community
 - Replicability – projects that can easily be replicated throughout the SWIF region
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