

2016 Catalytic Program Guidelines

Neighborhood Allies' mission is to support the people, organizations and partnerships committed to creating and maintaining thriving neighborhoods.

The goal of the Catalytic Program is to support innovative, collaborative and inspiring ideas that make our neighborhoods healthier, safer and stronger. This grant round has two priorities:

- 1) **Neighborhood-based** – Seed community development ideas that help transform vulnerable neighborhoods and identify scalable ways to create positive social impact. The 2016 funding round has six priority neighborhoods: 1) Hilltop, 2) Hill District 3) Homewood, 4) Larimer, 5) Millvale, and 6) Wilksburg. Only projects or programs serving these six neighborhoods will be considered for place-based grants this round.
- 2) **System-based** – Support comprehensive community development strategies and partnerships that will improve neighborhoods and enable residents to enjoy a better quality of life. We invite proposals from organizations serving or representing any communities in or near Pittsburgh that impact the larger community development system. We also invite proposals that are modeled to be replicated in multiple geographies.

Grant awards will range between \$25,000-75,000 and can be used to support costs related to achieving measurable results, moving concepts forward and assisting in the implementation of innovative programs or projects. These costs can include staffing and operating, program and project delivery, research and evaluation, and loans or other financing.

Successful proposals for the Catalytic Projects Program will:

1. Align with Neighborhood Allies Investment Framework
 - **Economic Opportunity:** Increasing people's financial health and credit, net assets, employment skills and connections to entrepreneurship opportunities and career paths that produce living wages.
 - **Safe and Healthy Environments:** Increasing wellness and quality of living environments for residents including placemaking, good housing and strong schools, local health centers, fresh food markets and athletic programs, community police partnerships that reduce violence and new ventures that reduce blight and attract new neighborhood amenities.
 - **Talent and Leadership Capacity:** Increasing people's confidence, motivation, hope and willingness to take risks and become active in their neighborhoods; increasing their interpersonal, project management, teamwork and other skills in service to community improvement.
2. Build a platform for ongoing collaboration
 - All participants have a shared vision for change including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions.
3. Embrace diversity and inclusiveness
 - We believe the best solutions are developed when diverse perspectives are included. We expect our partners to reflect diversity in leadership, staffing and governance.

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4. Meet some or all of the following criteria:

- Presents a promising, innovative intervention with high potential for generating strong impact if brought to scale.
- Funding fills a gap in the timing, criteria, or appetite for risk of other funding sources; and/or Neighborhood Allies' funds are critical to leverage other funding.
- Shows evidence in writing of full support of neighborhood residents (a letter of support from neighborhood stakeholders or local partners)
- There will be sufficient board, staff, and organizational structures (or formal partnerships/collaborations) in place to successfully carry out the project as proposed

STEP # 1: LET'S BE ALLIES. ALL* interested applicants will submit an idea paper by **5 pm on Monday, January 4th**, to grants@neighborhoodallies.org with "Catalytic Idea" in the subject line, outlining the following:

1. What is your idea, project, or program?
2. What is the change/impact you want to see as a result of your idea?
3. What's the approximate financial scope of the idea?
4. Who are the partners who will help make your idea a reality?

**If you've already submitted an idea paper in the past, you can re-submit as is, or an updated version based on the evolution of your idea.*

STEP #2: IMPROVE+CONNECT+COLLABORATE. Based on the idea paper review, selected applicants and their partners will be invited to present ideas in-person to Neighborhood Allies program staff. In-person idea presentations for selected applicants will be held from **January 25th - 29th**, so please plan your schedule accordingly. During this step, staff will work with applicants to build upon, lift-up and strengthen original ideas by asking important questions, making connections and creating/building powerful partnerships that foster innovation, creativity and collective impact.

STEP #3: LET'S GET STARTED. Applicants who are selected to move forward in this funding round will be notified by **Monday, February 1st**. Invited applicants will be asked to complete the full application form by close of business (5pm) **Friday, February 12th**. Recommendations for funding awards will be presented at the March Board of Directors meeting and applicants will be informed of their decision within seven days following Board action.

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