

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA):

2024 Equity Grant Fund Application Guide

Dates and Deadlines

Date (subject to change)	Activity / Deliverable	Details
Wednesday, September 20, 2023	Application available on Equity & Inclusion website https://www.fcgov.com/equity/	Online system used is Alchemer
Monday, October 2, 2023 (2:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.)	Application Technical Assistance Q&A virtual meeting: Join Zoom Meeting	Optional- link on Equity & Inclusion website https://www.fcgov.com/equity/
Sunday, October 15, 2023	APPLICATION DEADLINE	Please submit by 5pm MST
Thursday November 9, 2023	Review Panel Meets	Funding recommendations
Friday November 17-22, 2023	Funding Decisions Announced	Recipients notified via email
December-January 2023	Grant Agreements Signed and Funds Delivered	Signatures via DocuSign
June – August 2024	Monitoring & Site Visits	Report data and finance details
Friday, December 29, 2024	All ARPA 2024 Funding Expended	Prepare final report, invoices and documentation
Monday, January 29, 2025	Final Report Due	Submit in Alchemer

If you have questions about this application, please email both **Claudia Menendez** at cmenendez@fcgov.com and **Melanie Clark** at mclark@fcgov.com to ensure a timely response.

About the Funding

Equity Grant Fund:

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way people work, attend school, receive healthcare, and socialize. More than three years after the first public health orders, the City of Fort Collins (“the City”) and its residents continue to recover and face uncertainty as impacts of the pandemic linger.

The Equity Grant Fund has \$200,000 of ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds reserved for eligible social justice organizations and individuals directly addressing the impact of and recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic on Fort Collins’ community groups most in need of targeted support and resources.

Funding Focus Areas:

These grants provide funding for organizations who lead and support community-led programs that ignite, inspire, and foster a community culture of belonging, uplift mental and physical health, and support the basic needs of the Fort Collins community.

The funds are for social service activities occurring in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the Fort Collins community, and as recognized in the [Fort Collins Recovery Plan](#). Some themes yielded by the community are:

- Empower individuals and businesses through strong pandemic response programs;
- Bolster community organizations, networks, and spaces that provide direct assistance, and center those most impacted;
- Remove barriers to resilience;
- Invest in infrastructure and amenities to support a vibrant future;
- Community Building;
- And educational Youth Programs and training.

This funding supports the recovery of financial and operational expenses that were limited by the pandemic, and will cover these categories:

- Technical Training and Assistance
- Revenue Loss, Funding Replacement
- Workforce Training
- Employee Salaries

Funding Details

1. For organizations: Grant awards will be between \$5,000- \$25,000 each
2. For individuals: Grants awards will be up to \$3,000 each

- These are unique, one-time federal dollars that need to be expended on targeted activities aimed at COVID community recovery projects as listed above.
- Funds will need to be fully expended by December 31, 2024.
- Funded organizations or groups will sign a Grant Agreement with City of Fort Collins.
- Reporting: impact storytelling via narrative storytelling, disaggregated data reporting, and financial reporting (submit receipts with narrative of activities) will be required quarterly.
- Funds are delivered in two installments based on spending, advancement of activities and mid-cycle reporting.

Funding for this program falls under three types of entity categories: subrecipients, contractors, and beneficiaries. Generally, these are the characteristics of these entities:

1. **Subrecipients** carry out agreed upon programs on behalf of the City. A subrecipient determines who is eligible for federal assistance, is responsible for programmatic decision making, and ensures federal rules are followed. A UEI (Unique Entity Identifier) and registration with SAM.Gov will be required.
2. **Contractors** provide goods and services that are generally ancillary to the federal program. They generally operate within a competitive market and provide goods and services to different purchasers.
3. **Beneficiaries** are the end users of the funds. They benefit directly from the funds and do not engage in ensuring federal program eligibility or compliance.

Funding Period

The funding period is January 1, 2024 – December 31, 2024.

- Funding may support eligible expenses already incurred during the funding period, as well as upcoming expenses that are anticipated in the remaining months of 2023.
- To receive funding, an organization must be selected for an award and submit a project proposal.

Eligible Organizations

Eligible organizations include those that have been directly impacted (e.g., experienced personnel turnover, additional costs, increased or decreased demand for services, etc.) by the COVID-19 pandemic and that intend to utilize the ARPA funding to assist Fort Collins residents or households mitigate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic through eligible funding focus areas.

Funds are available for these entities in the Fort Collins Community:

- Nonprofit, IRS-designated 501(c)(3) agencies in good standing
- Cooperative groups of organizations with an IRS-designated 501(c)(3) agency serving as its fiscal host
- Museums or educational centers that offer services for K-12 students; Higher Education Institutions for programs off campus
- Limited Liability Companies with a social justice mission
- Individuals with social justice-advancing initiatives (a resume will be required)

As potential subrecipients of federal ARPA funds, all applicants must be capable of managing their program(s) efficiently and in compliance with federal ARPA regulations. In addition, any grant recipients in the subrecipient category must be registered in SAM.gov and hold a UEI (Unique Entity Identifier) number.

Applicants may want to address these requirements immediately if they have not already done so, to avoid any possible delays in obtaining their funding if awarded.

The City **is unable to** award funding assistance directly to:

- Organizations that engage in any discriminatory practices on the grounds of race, color, national origin, religion, creed, disability, age, sex, actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, or familial status.
- Organizations that stipulate mandatory religious engagement or influence in the provision of their services. (Faith-based organizations may be eligible for funding if they serve all members of the community regardless of religious belief or practice.)
- Organizations that are funders or pass-through entities, except those that are serving as a fiscal host for direct service programming.

Eligible Expenses & Activities

Please note: These funds are one-time grants.

Examples of Eligible Expenses (not limited to):

- Technical Training and Assistance
- Revenue Loss, funding replacement
- Workforce Training
- Employee Salaries
- Technology and media for educational programs
- Educational Curriculum Development
- Purchase of program supplies and materials
- Training costs (conference registration and travel, or mileage reimbursement)
- Salaries for facilitation and teaching staff
- Equipment and/or site rentals
- Printing and media

Exclusions:

The City is **unable to** contribute funding towards:

- Damages covered by insurance
- Payroll or benefits expense for employees whose work duties are not substantially dedicated to the eligible activities supported with this funding
- Residents without legal presence
- Hazard pay
- Staff positions that are fundraising or administrative in nature
- Other operating expenses not related to recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic
- Costs that are eligible for reimbursement from other federal or state sources

Eligible Populations

Documentation of Eligible Populations

- Funded programs must serve Fort Collins residents and program activity must occur in Fort Collins and Growth Management Area
- Black, Native American and Indigenous, Asian and Pacific Islander, Latino/Hispanic communities, additional multicultural and linguistically diverse communities, LGBTQIA+ community, reduced income households, households in [Qualified Census Tracts are eligible](#).
- Programs in highly diverse neighborhoods
- Programs serving communities and households identifying as ethnically, culturally, or linguistically diverse.
- Programs serving low or moderate income households and communities

Subrecipient Awardees

Note: this section details requirements for subrecipient agreements. Not all project proposals will fit under this category.

The City will require subrecipients to meet federal documentation standards

Please apply and the Equity Office will work with you to determine the type of service agreement that is best for your organization. We encourage all identities to apply.

You can read the full guidance provided by the federal government here (page 16-20):

<https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRF-Final-Rule-Overview.pdf>

Qualified Neighborhoods: To find qualified census tracts within Fort Collins visit:

https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sadda/sadda_qct.html?locate=08069001306

Demographic Information Collection

All grant recipients will be asked to report on data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, gender, income, neighborhood, street name, and zip code, and other relevant factors.

Additional Details

- Recipient organization is subject to records monitoring related to the program or project receiving assistance, including verification of Fort Collins or Growth Management Area residency/address of clients benefiting from the funding.
- Additional terms and conditions set forth in a Grant Agreement signed by both the grantee and the City. (Examples available for review upon request)

Continue Reading Below for the Application Details and Process

Application Basics

The 2024 ARPA – Equity Grant Fund Application is available at:
www.fcgov.com/equity

How To Apply:

1. Click the application link above.
2. Complete all questions in the Alchemer application.
3. Upload any additional documents that are requested within the application.
4. Submit the application by October 13th, 2023 before 5:00 p.m. MST.
5. During the application process, you will also need to complete a Financial Risk Evaluation Questionnaire. You can download this form directly from Alchemer in the documents section.

Application Deadline is Tuesday, October 13, 2023, 5:00pm MST.

The application can be repeatedly accessed and saved in Alchemer before submission. You can save your application in Alchemer to return to it later, however; it is recommended that applicants back up their responses in a Word document so you can easily copy and paste responses.

Technical Assistance

City staff will be available to answer technical questions in both a group format as well as one-on-one sessions upon request. Technical assistance is encouraged.

An optional technical assistance session will be available in a group format via zoom on the following date: **Monday October 2, 2023 | 2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.**

To schedule a one-on-one session, please contact email both **Claudia Menendez** at cmenendez@fcgov.com and **Melanie Clark** mclark@fcgov.com to ensure a timely response.

Financial Risk Questionnaire (if contracted as a subrecipient)

During the application process, a supplemental Financial Risk Questionnaire is required to be completed in order to be considered for this award. The Questionnaire will help confirm that your organization has the accounting practices needed to track federal funding and will provide opportunities for the City to address any concerns before contracting begins.

The Board will not consider this information when making award decisions. However, applicants must provide satisfactory answers in order to accept a funding award. City staff will review the Questionnaire answers and will give an opportunity to the applicant to address any concerns. The City retains the right to revoke the award decision if the applicant cannot provide a satisfactory answer.

Please contact both **Claudia Menendez** at cmenendez@fcgov.com and **Melanie Clark** mclark@fcgov.com to ensure a timely response if you have questions.

Additional Materials

Applicants will need to attach the following materials to their online application:

- If applicable, Board of Directors Roster (2022)
- If a nonprofit entity, IRS 501(c)(3) Designation (first page)
- If a nonprofit entity, Certification of Good Standing (2021 or 2022)
- Organization Budget for current fiscal year (revenues & expenses)
- Financial Risk Evaluation Questionnaire (provided)

For Non-Profits: Unique Entity ID (UEI) Number (if contracted as a subrecipient)

To apply, all applicants must be registered in SAM.gov and have a Unique Entity ID (UEI) number. As of April 4, 2022, the federal government has transitioned from using a DUNS number to a UEI number when applying for federal funding.

- **If your organization already has an account at SAM.gov**, your organization has already been assigned a UEI number and you can locate it in your SAM.gov account.
- **If your organization does not have a SAM.gov account**, please create an account on SAM.gov and once registered your organization will be issued a UEI number.
- **If you need help please contact Claudia Menendez** at cmenendez@fcgov.com and **Melanie Clark** at mclark@fcgov.com to ensure a timely response if you have questions.

For more information on how to find your UEI number, visit: <https://sam.gov/content/duns-uei>

Application Review & Evaluation

Review Process

The Equity Office and selection committee will read, evaluate, and deliver a funding recommendation in early April. Project coordinator Claudia Menendez will have voting privileges.

Follow-up questions may be generated for the applicants during this process, with questions being emailed to the primary application contacts for response.

Evaluation Method & Criteria

Each grant application will be scored using a weight-based rubric that will evaluate the proposal's potential attainment of the following criteria:

- Programming results in impactful benefits to the clients and/or the community
- Clear Nexus with COVID-19 pandemic recovery
- Advances the City's Strategic Objective Related to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
- Innate score of individual review committee members

The complete scorecard that the Board will use when making decisions is available in the appendix.

Applicants will be notified of the outcome of the committee's deliberation session after final recommendations are completed in early November 2023.

Following approval of funding, staff will work with applicants that were awarded funds on additional due diligence items and contract execution. Payment will be completed in January-February 2024.

Open Process

The City of Fort Collins maintains an open process and encourages applicants to ask for help at any time during the submission process.

Monitoring

The federal government has advised all jurisdictions that a federal audit of ARPA funding will occur periodically. In addition, ARPA subrecipients are subject to the same audit requirements as the ARPA recipient, i.e., the City of Fort Collins. To prepare for audit, the City of Fort Collins requires all ARPA funding recipients to provide quarterly reporting on related finances and pre-determined measurable outcomes and submit to subrecipient monitoring by the City. In addition, ARPA recipients will need to retain documentation to corroborate the reporting and the City of Fort Collins may request a spot file audit to verify that the documentation is occurring and accurately represents the reporting.

In addition, an annual report at the conclusion of the funding period will be required. This report will include similar information from the quarterly reports but may request additional information such as qualitative data like testimonials.

Questions?

The following City staff are available to answers any questions: email both **Claudia Menendez** at cmenendez@fcgov.com and **Melanie Clark** at mclark@fcgov.com to ensure a timely response.

The City of Fort Collins will make reasonable accommodations for access to City services, programs and activities and will make special communication arrangements for persons with disabilities. All venues for participation in this process are fully accessible. Please call 970.416.4254 for assistance. Auxiliary aids and service aids are available for persons with disabilities. V/TDD: Dial 711 for Relay Colorado to call 970.221.6757. All materials or translators are available in Spanish or other languages on request. Please call 970.416.4254 or email titlesix@fcgov.com.

Appendix

2023 ARPA - Equity Grant Fund

Scorecard Criteria & Weight

0 to 5 points per criteria assigned by each reviewer

EVALUATION CRITERIA	WEIGHT	POTENTIAL POINTS
Programming results in impactful benefit to the clients and/or the community <ul style="list-style-type: none">Evaluate program information to determine if program provides significant impacts to the Fort Collins communityEvaluate if the measurable outcomes are relevant and related to the proposed program	5	25
Clear nexus with COVID-19 pandemic recovery <ul style="list-style-type: none">Evaluate whether proposed program clearly mitigates the impact of COVID-19 or related public health mandates.	5	25
Advances the City's Strategic Objective Related to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion <ul style="list-style-type: none">Advance equity for all with an emphasis on racial justice to remove systemic barriers so that persons of all identities, including race, ethnicity, religion, gender and gender identity, age, class, sexual identity, mental and physical abilities and ability can fully participate in City services and experience equitable community outcomes. (NLSH 1.4)	5	25
Innate Score <ul style="list-style-type: none">Evaluate your internal validation and importance of the program's request for funding	1	5

80 Total Points

Scoring Key

0 – No Evidence; does not respond to the criteria at all

1 – Low Strength; minimum acceptable attainment of the criteria

2 – Below Average Strength; acceptable attainment of the criteria

3 – Medium Strength; effective attainment of the criteria

4 – Above Average Strength; substantial attainment of the criteria

5 – High Strength; exceptional attainment of the criteria