



2024-2025 Transforming Systemic Inequality Grant Opportunity

PROPOSALS DUE FRIDAY OCTOBER 11TH AT 5PM

The Leever Foundation is pleased to announce a request for proposals designed to assist Waterbury, CT by supporting local and/or regional collaborative strategies working to achieve greater equity of opportunity and outcomes in Waterbury communities that have been under-resourced and disproportionately harmed by systemic inequities. All proposals will be asked to describe to what extent activities are community led and/or informed, and if the organization or initiative is led by Black, Indigenous or other people of color.

This opportunity will specifically support work towards:

SYSTEMS CHANGE through collaborative visioning, community organizing, advocacy and/or social justice

STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION through influencing power shifts, narrative shifting and/or social innovation

USE THIS [LINK](#) TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT HOW WE DEFINE SYSTEMS CHANGE & STRUCTURAL TRANSFORMATION

The Foundation welcomes proposal requests of up to \$40,000 for activities to be implemented over one year. Depending on the application, annual continuation could be considered for up to three years. See below for more information and application instructions.

PRIORITY CONSIDERATIONS

The Foundation seeks to fund organizations/initiatives with various approaches e.g., community organizing, policy/advocacy, service, etc. When reviewing proposals, the committee highly regards programs/ initiatives that:

- **Center the power, leadership and voices of people from marginalized communities** and those directly impacted by structural racism.
- **Programs /initiatives that utilize a social justice and racial equity lens** meaning, a recognizable commitment to a more just society by addressing historical and contemporary inequities and supporting those who have been marginalized to affect change.
- **Acknowledge intersecting oppressions** Organizations understand how multiple oppressions impact one another and the lives of the people with whom they work.
- **Have an operating budget under \$2M** that meets the funding criteria. We will also consider organizations with budgets of over \$2,000,000 if your work is collaborative with smaller/grassroots organizations doing work in Waterbury and includes efforts that push systems level change in areas like advocacy to address unjust policies that disproportionately impact young people from disenfranchised and under-resourced communities; or base-building and coalition building that increases power through organizing campaigns and building a broad and diverse base of stakeholders and partners.

BACKGROUND

Founded in 1991 by Harold and Ruth Ann Leever, this family foundation's mission is to create opportunities for people, especially children, in greater Waterbury, CT to fulfill their potential.

In its recent effort to center justice, equity and inclusion, the Foundation's Spring 2024 grant round focused on supporting Waterbury CT grassroots and neighborhood focused initiatives. This Fall 2024 grant round is aimed at tackling significant structural and systemic barriers to opportunities and success for Waterbury residents, especially young people, who live at the intersections of multiple oppressions such as race, economic status, sexual orientation, immigration status, disability, etc.



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ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to apply, an organization must:

- Be incorporated as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization or be working under the auspices of an authorized fiscal sponsor.
- Have a minimum annual budget of \$150,000 or submit an application to work in partnership with an organization that does. Grant awards will not exceed 15% of the applying organization's annual budget.
- Hold a Waterbury footprint, meaning an office or a regular presence in Waterbury OR one of the key collaborating organizations has a Waterbury footprint, and the **work must impact the region that includes Waterbury.**

Please note that this grant opportunity DOES NOT fund the following:

- Individuals
- Capital campaigns
- 501(c)4 institutions
- Schools (public, private, or charter)
- Organizations with annual operating budgets under \$150k
- Entities that received funding in the Spring 2024 grant round

EXAMPLES OF POSSIBLE PROPOSAL IDEAS:

- A community-based organization that wants to offer transformational programming that gives youth the tools and access to challenge institutional barriers that limit opportunities and potential.
- Collaborative/community visioning project that centers a 'power with vs. power over' framework, which could include developing inclusive strategies for: political education and coalition building, legal and language services and/or cooperative strategies towards institutional and legislative change.
- A cross-sector collaboration that addresses the far-reaching effects of Waterbury young people's encounters with the criminal legal system by focusing on intentional prevention, addressing school discipline reforms, innovative alternatives to arrest, and/or educational and pioneering programs for court-involved youth.

PROCESS AND TIMELINE:

August 30th: Transforming Systemic Inequality Guidelines Released

Questions? Use this link to find a time to talk with staff

October 11th at 5pm: Proposal Submission Deadline

October 15th-18th : Proposal Clarification Process

Early/Mid -November: Award Decisions Announced

HOW TO APPLY:

Use this link to submit a proposal: **[Leever Foundation Grant Application Portal](#)**