Request For Proposals

Community Resilience Initiatives:
Capacity Building Assistance

<u>General Information</u>

Funding Opportunity Release Date: Jan. 16, 2024
Pre-Application Webinar Date: 9:00-10:00 a.m. MST, Feb. 9, 2024
Online Application Forms Open: Feb. 15, 2024 (online application link will go live)
Deadline to Register for the Grants Portal (required to submit application): Mar. 1, 2024
Application Due Date: 4:59 p.m. MST, March 15, 2024
Anticipated Award Notification Begins: May 31, 2024
Anticipated Grant Start Date: July 1, 2024
Grant Period: July 1, 2024 – Dec. 31, 2026
Length of Funding: 30 months
Total Initiative Funding: $3,090,000
Individual Award Floor (for 30 months): $600,000
Individual Award Ceiling (for 30 months): $772,500
Number of Awards: up to 4

Background: Community Resilience Initiatives
The Community Resilience Initiatives (or CRI) is the collective name for the funding initiatives that The Colorado Trust is implementing to support the achievement of the 2024-26 strategic plan. Under the umbrella of CRI, there will be distinct funding initiatives that will support one or more objectives under the goals of the strategic plan. Most of the funding initiatives under CRI will be multiyear and allow grantees time to plan and implement projects to combat prevalent concerns in the food, housing, and mental and behavioral health realms, and build up systems or programs that can sustain and prevent further issues. CRI will support the implementation of myriad elements ranging from fostering social cohesion, building strong social networks, engaging in deliberate, respectful and effective communication, enhancing physical infrastructure, and providing access to resources and support systems that contribute to health and well-being.

For more information on all of the current Community Resilience Initiatives, please visit www.coloradotrust.org/CRI, and send any specific inquiries to CRI@coloradotrust.org.

Capacity Building
The rapidly changing landscape within the nonprofit sector has highlighted the need for philanthropic organizations to develop more structured capacity-building programs aimed at supporting broader systems, in addition to individual capacity, and to evaluate their strategic approach to capacity building. This multifaceted approach includes initiatives such as employing internal capacity-building staff, facilitating leadership cohorts, providing capacity building for both program and policy implementation, providing capacity-building assistance for organizational development and growth, and supporting sabbatical programs for nonprofit leadership (especially leaders from historically disenfranchised populations).

Capacity building – a paramount component for long-term organizational success—plays a crucial role in strengthening and enhancing an organization's ability to effectively serve its communities. At its core, capacity building is a strategic process aimed at bolstering systems, structures, cultures, skills, resources and processes within organizations. Through these improvements, organizations can successfully adapt to evolving challenges and excel in delivering their mission-based outcomes.

CRI: Capacity Building Assistance
The Colorado Trust is seeking to create a multiyear bank of capacity-building assistance providers to support the Community Resilience Initiatives grantees. The CRI: Capacity Building Assistance initiative will fund one organization to serve as the primary provider of capacity-building assistance for all CRI grantees under a specific goal area. Depending on the applicant pool, The Colorado Trust could fund one distinct capacity-building assistance provider per goal area (equaling three capacity-building assistance grantees), or could fund an entity to serve as the capacity-building assistance provider for multiple goal areas. The Colorado Trust is looking for applicants with demonstrated experience providing services and capacity-building assistance in the realms of food, housing, and/or mental and behavioral health. In addition, The Colorado Trust will be seeking to fund a capacity-building assistance grantee that can provide assistance in the space of nonprofit operations, planning, development and infrastructure strengthening. This would be the fourth potential grantee among the overall grantee pool of up to four.

CRI: Capacity Building Assistance providers could seek to raise skills or knowledge, improve systems and performance, or create tools and resources to strengthen organizational infrastructure or program and service delivery. The CRI: Capacity Building Assistance providers would respond to requests for one-on-one, tailored assistance from the existing grantees or from Trust staff. Depending on the needs of the grantees, capacity building could be delivered through training,

technical assistance, information transfer, or technology transfer (to name a few of the common approaches). The CRI: Capacity Building Assistance providers will also organize and facilitate any learning collaboratives, group webinars, as well as be responsible for organizing grantee meetings and convenings (both in-person and virtual). The CRI: Capacity Building Assistance providers may be required to operate a network of geographically diverse providers to help provide services across the state in a more responsive and appropriate manner.

During the grant period, The Colorado Trust will be seeking to address the following evaluation questions related to the capacity-building assistance initiative. Information on these questions should be captured in the applicant's evaluation activities.
- To what extent did the capacity-building assistance address the capacity needs of grantees?
- To what extent did the grantees' capacity improve as a result of the assistance provided?

Grant Period
The anticipated funding period is 30 months, from July 1, 2024, through Dec. 31, 2026. This grant period will encompass three grant/budget years:
- July 1, 2024 – Dec. 31, 2024: Up to six months of this time will be funded as a planning period, and will allow grantees time to hire and train staff, build internal capacity, plan, and ramp up for program implementation.
- Jan. 1, 2025 – Dec. 31, 2025: This 12-month span will be for full program implementation.
- Jan. 1, 2026 – Dec. 31, 2026: This 12-month span will be funded to support program implementation, as well as any wind-down and final sustainability activities.

Grant Awards
The total available funding for this initiative is approximately $3,090,000 over the 30 months. The minimum total individual award for the entire grant period is $600,000 and the maximum is $772,500. Grant awards will be made for no more than $172,500 (not less than $150,000) for the first six-month planning period, and no more than $300,000 (no less than $225,000) for each of the two, subsequent 12-month implementation periods. Approximately four individual awards will be given.

Eligible Entities
Applicants must be Colorado-based and Colorado-serving community or grassroots entities. This includes nonprofits/charitable entities, health care organizations, educational institutions, government agencies, American Indian tribes and their designated operating divisions, and Native American-serving organizations or organizations providing services on a reservation or tribal land with a letter of support from the applicable tribe. An entity that is fiscally sponsored by an eligible organization is also eligible to apply.

The Colorado Trust will not permit grants to organizations that engage in "hateful activities," which is defined to mean activities that incite or engage in violence, intimidation, harassment, threats or defamation targeting an individual or group based upon their actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin (including an American Indian or Alaska Native tribe), ethnicity, immigration status, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, political affiliation, age, physical or mental ability, marital or familial status, parental status or military service.

Eligible entities are permitted to apply for more than one funding opportunity under CRI; however, entities can only submit one application per funding opportunity. Entities can serve as partners, contractors, consultants or collaborating entities on multiple applications on which they are not the

primary applicant. Applicants under the capacity-building assistance funding initiative can submit an application and could be funded for more than one of the four focus areas.

Required Project Elements
A. **Engagement with community.** The proposed project must explain how the grantees will be engaged throughout the grant period.
B. **Intended outcome.** The funding opportunity is intended to support the cohort(s) of grantees funded under the Community Resilience Initiatives. The project must identify the plan to build a cohesive capacity-building program to support the needs of the grantee cohort over the 30 months of funding and the impact it hopes to make for the population served. Applicants should refer specifically to one or more of the stated evaluation questions when explaining their desired impact.

Required Application Components
A. **Project Application Narrative.** The Colorado Trust is using an application with pre-determined questions to comprise the project narrative of this application. Applicants must respond to all of the questions in the application.

B. **Work plan.** Applicants must submit a work plan ([using the provided template](#)) laying out proposed objectives, activities, deliverables and timeframes. Applicants need to complete the work plan table for the first 18 months of the project, and then provide a narrative overview of what the final 12 months of the project will look like. Of the first 18 months, up to six of the initial months can be used as a planning period, and then the remainder of time through Dec. 31, 2025 (at least 12 months) is to be used for program implementation. Organizations that do not require a full six months of planning do not need to commit to the entire six months of planning and can begin program implementation earlier.

   In the project narrative and work plan, applicants should be prepared to discuss their experience and ability to provide capacity-building assistance for the specific focus area; their plan to work with a large statewide cohort; their ability to work with geographically, demographically and linguistically diverse grantees of varying capacities; their plan to assess grantee capacity; their plan to work closely with assigned Colorado Trust staff to raise grantee capacity; their history providing group-based capacity-building activities; their plan to create tools that will be beneficial and accessible to all grantees; and their plan to intake and delivery tailored assistance to grantees one-on-one.

C. **Budget.** Applicants should review The Colorado Trust's [grantee guidelines](#) for a list of allowable expenses and their respective thresholds, and additional information on budgetary expenditures and activities. The total award amount will depend on what is proposed by the applicant and approved by The Colorado Trust. Applicants need to share in the application the total dollar amount (for 30 months) for which they are applying; however, even though the funding opportunity is for 30 months of funding, applicants only need to submit a detailed budget with narrative explanations (template provided) for the first 18 months as part of the initial application. Applicants can apply for any amount between the floor of $600,000 and the ceiling of $772,500 for the 30 months. Up to six of the initial months can be used as a planning period, and then the remainder of time through Dec. 31, 2025 (at least 12 months) is to be used for program implementation. Organizations that do not require a full six months of planning do not need to commit to the entire six months of planning and can begin program implementation earlier. Doing so will not impact the budgetary allocations.

Applicants should use the provided budget template and refer to the budget instructions for additional guidance on how to complete the narrative elements.

a. **Budgetary allocations by grant year**
   1. July 1, 2024 – Dec. 31, 2024: Floor: $150,000; Ceiling: $172,500
   2. Jan. 1, 2025 – Dec. 31, 2025: Floor: $225,000; Ceiling: $300,000
   3. Jan. 1, 2026 – Dec. 31, 2026: Floor: $225,000; Ceiling: $300,000 (grant year 3 budgets will be submitted by grantees as part of a continuation application and is not part of this initial application package).

b. **Required budgetary elements**
   1. The budget should include travel expenses for one or two staff or consultants (at least one paid staff person) to attend a two-day grantee meeting in the Denver metro area during the first half of 2025.

D. **Required Fiscal Documentation**
   a. **Fiscal information.** For all applicants and fiscal sponsors, financial documentation (per the guidelines below) must be uploaded in the organization profile section of the grants portal (once invited). This information only needs to be submitted once per organization.

   A. Annual Operating Budget Below $250,000
   - Current year operating budget, with differentiation between program vs. fundraising expenses.

   B. Annual Operating Budget $250,000-$999,999
   - Current year operating budget, with differentiation between program vs. fundraising expenses
   - List of net assets and liabilities (statement of financial position/balance sheet)
   - List of revenue and expenses with/without donor restrictions (statement of activities/income statement).

   C. Annual Operating Budget $1,000,000+
   - Current year operating budget, with differentiation between program vs. fundraising expenses
   - Audited financial statements with audit management letter for the most recent audit
     o Organizations who must complete a single audit based on federal government regulations can confirm they have uploaded their most recent audit to the Federal Audit Clearinghouse website for The Colorado Trust to review.

   b. **Fiscal sponsor or agents.** The Colorado Trust allows applicants (and, ultimately, grantees) to work with a fiscal sponsor or agent to apply and receive funding for the initiatives under CRI. An agreement between the fiscally sponsored organization and the fiscal sponsor must be signed (by both entities) and included with the application. A template for a fiscal sponsor agreement is available here, and the applicant should refer to The Colorado Trust's grantee guidelines for more

information on fiscal sponsorship. The sponsored organization must upload a completed fiscal sponsor agreement in its organizational profile in the grant portal.

E. **Additional Documentation**
   a. **Letters of support and commitments.** Applicants can include letters of commitment from partners, consultants or contractors, and letters of support from other entities. These are optional and not required. The only letter of support required is if an applicant organization is providing services on an American Indian reservation or tribal land, and a letter is required notating and approving this from the applicable tribe. Non-required letters of support will not be included in the review and scoring process for applications.

Application Checklist
The following will comprise a completed application package:
- Organizational Profile
  a. Organizational contact information
  b. Fiscal documentation (depending on the size of the annual operating budget there may be one to three required pieces of fiscal documentation)
- Project Application
  a. Project narrative (the responses to the set questions)
  b. Work plan (using the template provided)
- Budget (using the template provided)
- Fiscal sponsor agreement (if using a fiscal sponsor or agent)
- Letter of support (required only if an organization is working on tribal land).

Evaluation
The Colorado Trust prioritizes strategic learning and is asking grantees to think about how they can collect their own project-specific data and use it to strengthen their project. Applicants will be asked to provide some insight into this in the narrative portion of the application. Capacity-building assistance grantees will be required to collect data on the capacity building services provided. Additionally, grantees will be asked to participate in Colorado Trust grant monitoring activities (such as site visits, grant reports, financial reports, and regularly scheduled check-in calls) and initiative-wide evaluation activities (such as interviews or surveys). These required elements will be discussed in more detail with grantees within the first six months of funding.

In alignment with the grantee guidelines, and the desire of The Trust to evaluate its funding, grantees may be asked to share their internal programmatic data (including the evaluation data they may collect on their capacity building efforts with other grantees) with The Trust as part of its overall evaluation of the Community Resilience Initiatives.

Applicants can allocate up to 10% of the total award for evaluation related costs (staff, consultants, meeting expenses, etc.).

Grantee Selection and Awards
All CRI applications will be scored on a 100-point scale using an established rubric provided to the reviewers with the total maximum points per each required application component detailed below.

Application Component	Possible Points
Project application narrative	50
Work plan	40

Budget	10

The Colorado Trust will extend five points to any applicant who meets at least one of the following criteria. These criteria will be assessed based on the questions already provided in the application:
- experience working with an American Indian tribe
- leadership by a person of color (either by executive leadership or board majority)

Successful applicants will be notified of their award through the receipt of a notice of award beginning May 31, 2024. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified beginning June 30, 2024.

Payments
Grantees will be required to register with The Colorado Trust's online payment portal to receive payment. Grantees will have their approved funding amount paid out in three payments based on the grant years.
- July 1, 2024 – Dec. 31, 2024: Payment made on or around July 2024.
- Jan. 1, 2025 – Dec. 31, 2025: Payment made on or around January 2025.
- Jan. 1, 2026 – Dec. 31, 2026: Grantees will file a continuation application for the final 12 months of the project. Payment will be made on or around January 2026.

Additional Relevant Information
Incomplete applications will not be considered, reviewed or scored.

All applicants are expected to adhere to The Colorado Trust's grantee guidelines, both in preparing applications and implementing funded activities should an award be made.

There are no set word or character limits for the application., although The Colorado Trust is asking applicants to only include narrative elements that pertain to the application questions posed, and refrain from including extraneous or "nice-to-know" information (versus "need-to-know" information).

Application documents, forms and attachments should be uploaded into the system in Adobe Acrobat (.pdf) or Microsoft Excel (.xls) format.

The Colorado Trust, in part of its commitment to capacity building, will be providing constructive feedback to all applicants based upon its internal review of the application, regardless of final award status. Colorado Trust staff will seek to provide this during late summer and early fall of 2024.

The Colorado Trust is utilizing an online application form for this initiative. Applicants are encouraged to use the provided application documents on the CRI landing page to construct and organize their applications. Applicants will then need to cut and paste the application elements into an online form. Applicants should not use photos, large or complex graphics, or uncommon fonts, tables or spacing in the application. The Colorado Trust apologizes in advance for the duplication of work or inconvenience that this may cause for applicants.

To remain unbiased in its review of applications and to avoid providing an unfair advantage to any single entity, Colorado Trust staff will not be engaging in conversations regarding the funding initiatives outside of officially sanctioned pre-application activities (such as the webinars). Colorado Trust staff will create and maintain, on www.coloradotrust.org/CRI, a frequently asked questions (FAQ) document that will be used to house clarifying information on the initiative, RFP

and the application process. Applicants are encouraged to attend the pre-application webinar and to check the FAQ document frequently to access the most up-to-date information. Applicants can also email CRI@coloradotrust.org with their questions regarding the funding opportunity. A response will be sent, and then the emailed questions and responses will be added to the FAQ document.

The period for which The Colorado Trust has approved for support (grant period) is for the full 30 months, and this will be shown in the notice of award provided to grant recipients. The notice of award will be made with the assumption that funding will be available and the intention to fund the full 30 months. However, funding and payment for subsequent periods after the initial grant period is based upon the availability of funds.

Expectations of The Colorado Trust
Grantees can expect the following from The Colorado Trust:
- Serve as a thought partner with each grantee to help ensure grantee success
- Actively engage in all monitoring and evaluation activities to improve systems and processes to support grantee success and internal grantmaking
- Develop relationships with each grantee to support receiving feedback directly from grantee partners
- Bring resources to the relationship, when appropriate, beyond just funding
- Create and support learning opportunities to assist in the continued evolution and improvement of our collective work.

Expectations of Grantees
The Colorado Trust has the following expectations from its grantees:
- Work diligently to undertake funded activities
- Communicate honestly, responsively and regularly with The Colorado Trust about progress and challenges
- Complete required monitoring and evaluation activities by their designated due dates
- Adhere to required elements mentioned in the RFP, the notice of award and The Colorado Trust's grantee guidelines
- Attend and actively participate in grantee convenings and meetings
- Participate in joint capacity-building efforts and cohort activities.