

Dr. Frank E. Boston Black Justice Fund Justice Fund

Letter of Interest Announcement

HealthSpark Foundation is now accepting applications to the Dr. Frank. E Boston Black Justice Fund and the newly created Justice Fund.

The Dr. Frank E. Boston Black Justice Fund (BJF) was developed and launched in 2021 to increase resources specifically allocated to historically underfunded Black-led and Black-serving organizations. The Black Justice Fund invests in emerging Black leaders in Montgomery County, supports positive storytelling of Black communities across the County, and builds community infrastructure and power in Black communities to advance justice and liberation for all County residents. Since its creation, the BJF has awarded \$373,500 in grants.

Building out our commitment to justice and liberation for all, and building on lessons learned from the BJF, the Justice Fund extends our dedicated support to communities and organizations that have also experienced historical and ongoing challenges in accessing power. The Justice Fund supports emerging leaders in Montgomery County, supports positive storytelling of communities across the County, and builds community infrastructure and power in historically marginalized communities to advance justice and liberation for all County residents. Projects may support work to address historical inequities among immigrants, people who identify as LGBTQIA, people with disabilities, or women, as examples. The creation of this fund represents our pursuit of growing and centering our work in racial and social justice in Montgomery County and our organizational vision of “Transformative leaders. Thriving communities. Opportunity and justice for all.”

We are pleased to announce the funding opportunities through these two grant programs that share the same programmatic goals. Through these Funds, we will support a range of activities that represent **power-building, leadership development** or **storytelling**.

Prior projects awarded under these goals include:

- Power-building: “BIPOC Student-Led Campaign to Reverse Hope Deficit in Our Youth” by [I Choose to Win](#) that engaged Montgomery County’s 23 high schools through Black Student Union organizations to create projects around reversing the hope deficit in youth. Students led their own campaigns, from ideation to execution, with the top submissions receiving community support, visibility, and a stipend to bring their ideas to life.

- **Leadership development:** “Montgomery County Youth Leadership Council” by KB Foundation, Inc. which conducted a thorough community examination through an asset map and needs assessment, which informed a youth-led leadership summit. The project aimed to create a sustainable, annual event for civically engaged youth to connect with community leaders and prepare for future leadership roles.
- **Storytelling:** “Giving Voice to Black Elders” by Community Hero PA (CHPA) which conducted a needs assessment that gathered stories, passions, and needs from over 500 seniors and their families, offering a unique opportunity to hear from Montgomery County Black elders. To ensure these voices were not overlooked, CHPA dedicated resources to capturing and amplifying their emotions, perceptions, and stories.

Qualities We Value in Applicants

- Organizations that actively connect with the community to guide and inform their initiatives.
- Organizations that recognize the diverse and complex experiences of community members, particularly those affected by inequality in opportunities, barriers, and outcomes.
- Mission and activities are tailored to meet the specific needs of underrepresented groups and communities, ensuring a significant impact in addressing those needs.
- Organizations that actively seek and embrace partnerships and coalitions.

Grant Funding Details

HealthSpark anticipates:

- Awarding grants with a maximum of \$20,000 for a one-year period beginning early July 2025
- Awarding grants as general operating support or programmatic (restricted)
- Announcing award decisions in late June

Letter of Intent (LOI) Submission Instructions

To streamline the application process, we request a Letter of Intent (LOI). Though HealthSpark Foundation is granting funds under two separate programs, all applicants will complete the same LOI, and HealthSpark will organize them internally. This means you need to submit one LOI, regardless of which program you are applying for. Please ensure that your LOI clearly highlights how your project aligns with the shared programmatic goals of advancing **power-building, leadership development** or **storytelling**.

The deadline for submitting LOIs is **Friday, April 18, 2025, 5 pm**. After reviewing all submissions, a limited number of selected applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal. All applicants will be notified by **Wednesday, April 30, 2025**.

What to Include in Your LOI:

Please include the following information in your LOI:

- Organization Mission and Overview - A brief description of your organization, including your mission, the community you serve, and activities and services. (If this information is available on your website or a brochure, you can link to the appropriate website pages or attach a copy of the brochure instead).
- Project Summary - Please share a concise overview of the activities that will be supported. How does your project contribute to power-building, leadership development, or storytelling within your community, and what specific outcomes do you hope to achieve?
- Alignment - Why is this project or initiative important to implement at this moment, and how does it address current community needs or challenges?
- Contact Information - The name, title, organization/affiliation, email, and phone number of the primary contact person for the LOI.

LOI Length and Submission:

- Please keep your LOI to no more than two pages.
- Submit your LOI as an attached PDF via email to Akshara Vivekananthan, Program Officer at avivekananthan@healthspark.org.

Eligibility Requirements

- Projects must serve Montgomery County residents; applicants must have a 501(c) (3), or have a fiscal intermediary/sponsorship relationship, or be a religious organization, or part of Montgomery County government.
- Organizations that are not Montgomery County-based (i.e., statewide or national organizations) should clearly demonstrate their connections and work to Montgomery County, the relationships with organizations in Montgomery County, and the connection to and understanding of Montgomery County residents and their needs. Grants awarded to these regional, statewide, or national groups will be in the form of a restricted grant to take place in Montgomery County, where work is centered.

Questions

We truly welcome phone calls about these grant programs before applying! If you have any questions or are thinking about applying to the Dr. Frank E. Boston Black Justice Fund or Justice Fund, please contact Akshara Vivekananthan, Program Officer at avivekananthan@healthspark.org.

About HealthSpark Foundation

In September 2024, HealthSpark Foundation launched our 2025-2029 Strategic Plan, which will direct our efforts to advance positive social change in Montgomery County and to build community power – our belief that people should have influence and control over the policies, programs, and practices that affect their lives.

Every day in Montgomery County, community organizations and leaders are working to address and improve civic engagement, racial and social equity, public policies and systems, and social determinants of health and well-being. Our grantmaking, convening, and leadership will stand behind and support their inspirational and essential efforts. Each year, HealthSpark will prioritize strategic initiatives that support transformative leaders, build thriving communities, and achieve opportunities and justice for all.

Our strategic goals—Community Power, Leadership, and Solutions—are designed to advance our updated mission: to achieve healthy, equitable, and hopeful communities throughout Montgomery County.