Notice of Solicitation of Applications (NOSA)
2024-25 *READY Community Foundations* Training Program - FAQ

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Eligibility

Q   **What is a community foundation?**
A   Community foundations are nonprofit, charitable organizations that pool funds from individuals, families and businesses to support a geographical area or region.

Q   **Do you accept applications from community foundations operating under a fiscal agent or fiscal sponsorship?**
A   Yes, we will consider applications from community foundations that are operating under a fiscal agent or fiscal sponsorship arrangement. In those cases, the community foundation should be in the process of applying for tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The community foundation may be asked to submit a copy of Form 1070 and supporting documentation to ARC. For specific questions and circumstances, please email READY@purposepossible.com.

Q   **Do you accept applications from private non-operating foundations?**
A   No, tax-exempt, private non-operating foundations are ineligible. Only tax-exempt community foundations organized as public charities are eligible to apply. Under ARC Code Section 8.1(e), no ARC grant may be made directly to a for-profit entity. If you

have any questions about your eligibility, please contact READY@purposepossible.com.

Q **If we previously received a grant from ARC, are we eligible to apply for this opportunity?**

A Yes. Simply being a current or former grantee of ARC will not prevent you from applying to READY Community Foundations training program or the subsequent grant opportunity.

Q **Our organization has applied for tax exempt status by filing the Form 1023 with the IRS, but we have not received the final IRS determination letter. Is our organization eligible to apply for the training program?**

A We are committed to supporting emerging community foundations with this program. Please reach out to READY@purposepossible.com to discuss specific eligibility and IRS determination status for your organization.

Participants

Q **How should the primary participant be identified?**

A The community foundation's seniormost executive staff person who reports directly to the board must be the primary participant. This will be an executive director, or an equivalent title, such as CEO or president.

Q **How should the secondary participant be identified?**

A The secondary participant can be a staff person who works in areas such as fundraising, finances or operations, e.g., a director of development, chief financial officer or head of operations (preferably someone with responsibility for strategic decision-making). Alternatively, the secondary participant can be a member of the board of directors. The community foundation chief executive should use discretion in selecting the secondary participant based on their goals in participating. For questions about eligible secondary participants, please contact READY@purposepossible.com.

Q **Are two participants required for the training program, or is one participant possible?**

A Two participants are required. ARC intends that *READY Community Foundations* provide space for two participants from each community foundation. Both participants shall commit to active participation in the training. Eligibility for the grant opportunity will depend partially on both participants' effort and attendance in the activities.

Q **Does the secondary participant have to be on staff for the community foundation?**

A While the second person may be on staff for the community foundation, this is not a requirement. For example, the secondary participant could be a board member with fiduciary responsibility who is not paid a salary by the community foundation. The secondary participant could also be a relevant community member or donor.

Q **Can a community foundation have more than two participants?**

A No. The maximum capacity for this program is two participants per community foundation.

Q **What if your second participant would differ based on being selected for your choice 2 or 3 course option?**

A If you are selected for the training program but not placed in your first course option, we will contact you to confirm that the secondary participant listed in your application will be an appropriate participant for the course option you are placed in.

Attendance, Participation and Time Commitments

Q **Can you better explain the timeline and structure of the READY Community Foundations training program?**

A The training will require about 21–27 hours over approximately two months. The pre-course survey will require approximately 30 minutes. The pre-course homework will require approximately 30-60 minutes. Once the course starts, the weekly class will require two hours of virtual, on camera, active time. There are six classes. During the course, there will be approximately one to two hours of homework each week. During the course, every other week there will be a one-to-one consultation lasting one hour. Within two weeks following the final class, participants will be asked to complete a post-course survey lasting 30 minutes.

An example schedule is provided below:

Pre-course survey: 30 minutes

Week 0   30 minutes (homework)
Week 1   3 hours (2 hours of class, 1 hour of homework)
Week 2   4 hours (2 hours of class, 1 hour of homework, 1-hour one-to-one consultation)
Week 3   3.5 hours (2 hours of class, 1 ½ hours of homework)
Week 4   4 hours (2 hours of class, 1 hour of homework, 1-hour one-to-one consultation)
Week 5   3.5 hours (2 hours of class, 1 ½ hour of homework)
Week 6   4 hours (2 hours of class, 1 hour of homework, 1-hour one-to-one consultation)

Post-course survey: 30 minutes

TOTAL: 24 hours

Q **Will the classes be at a set day and time each week?**

A Yes, the classes will occur on a set day of the week and at a set time. Once selected for the program, participants will be asked to provide their availability for attending the virtual classes. This allows the instructor to set a consistent day/time that works best for each cohort. Once confirmed, we will make every attempt to keep the days and times the same for the duration of the six-week course. Religious and federal holidays will be taken into consideration when setting the days and times for classes and may require modifications to the set schedule. To foster deeper understanding and relationships, you will be working with a consistent cohort of community foundations for the entire training.

Q **How long are the one-to-one consultations and when/how are they scheduled? Are they the same day every other week?**

A The three one-to-one consultations are intended to address the individual goals and needs of community foundation participants. These individual sessions will last one hour each and will be conducted either in weeks one, three and five, or in weeks two, four and six. The sessions will be scheduled by the facilitator no later than the Friday

prior to the start of the course. They will not necessarily be on the same day and time each week.

Q   **What happens if a participant misses a class?**

A   ARC strongly encourages both participants to attend <u>all</u> virtual training classes and one-to-one consultations and to complete all assignments promptly to derive the most value out of the program. To be eligible for subsequent grant opportunity, participants must not miss more than one class.

Q   **Who should attend the weekly classes?**

A   Both the primary and secondary participants should join the weekly classes. The named participants from the community foundation should remain consistent throughout the classes to avoid disruptions to course flow/dynamics.

Q   **What are the attendance requirements?**

A   Both the primary and secondary participants must attend at least five of the six classes and all three one-to-one consultations to successfully complete the training and to be eligible for the grant. Participants are strongly encouraged to attend all six classes and all three one-to-one consultations to derive the most value out of the training.

Q   **Does the secondary participant have to attend all three one-to-one sessions?**

A   Yes. Both primary and secondary participants must attend all three one-to-one sessions.

Q   **When you say that both participants can only miss one session, is that per participant (i.e. ED cannot make a session one week, secondary can't make it to the next week) or per group (i.e. ED cannot make a session one week, no more absences are allowed for either individual)?**

A   Each one participant may miss one class during the six-week training program. E.g. If the primary participant misses class 2 AND the secondary participant misses class 3, the community foundation is still eligible to apply for funding. But, if the primary participant misses class 2 and class 3 AND the secondary participant does not miss any classes, the community foundation is NOT eligible to apply for funding. Each participant may only miss one class.

Q   **If we know now that both participants will be away one of the weeks of our highly preferred session, should we apply for a different session?**

A   In order to qualify for consideration for grant funding, each participant may only miss one class. If you know that you will miss one week due to a prior commitment, you may consider selecting a different course. However, this decision is up to each individual community foundation.

Training Program Structure and Format

Q   **Will the training be virtual?**

A   Yes. Training classes are delivered virtually via Zoom.

Q How long are the training classes?

A The six training classes will last two hours each. The three one-to-one consultations are scheduled every other week and will last one hour each.

Q Will the classes be delivered in real-time or are they pre-recorded?

A The classes will occur in real-time, and participants must join the class at the scheduled day and time. Every participant is expected to actively participate. It is imperative that primary and secondary participants join the classes with the cohort they are assigned. There is no asynchronous training.

Q If selected, will my community foundation participate in all three course options/offerings?

A No. You must select one course option for both participants from your community foundation to participate in.

Q Will my community foundation get our first choice for course options?

A We will do our best to place you in your first-choice option, however, we ask for your second and third choices in case we cannot provide all participants with their first choices.

Q Does each participant from the community foundation need to be in the same cohort?

A Yes. Cohorts will be determined at the community foundation level, not at the individual participant level. It is important for both participants to be in the same cohort to work together on their goals and activities.

Q Will there be training around reporting/compliance/regulations related to receiving ARC grant funds?

A While the training program itself will not directly provide training related to receiving ARC grant funds, ARC will provide technical assistance and post-award trainings for READY Community Foundations participants who receive the Phase II grant award. This technical assistance and post-award training will cover reporting, compliance, and federal regulations for grant awards.

Q Will the 30 participating community foundations have access to materials from all 3 training options?

A We are committed to providing helpful resources to community foundations serving Appalachia. In the fall, we will determine if the materials for the three courses are helpful as standalone resources and, if so, we will share them with all participants once the training program has ended.

Q Will the homework tie into the real work the community foundation is currently doing?

A Yes! The homework is intended to be applied to your work in real time. The exercises will incorporate current questions, challenges and opportunities facing your community foundation.

Q Is Course 2: Community Centric Grantmaking Programs focused on developing our organization into a grantmaking agency?

A Yes, course 2: Community Centric Grantmaking Programs covers one of the primary activities of community foundations – grantmaking. This course will explore techniques to increase accessibility to your grantmaking programs, models that offer a more inclusive approach to grant making, and thinking about ways we can center community in how we support their needs.

Application Questions

Q **How are historically underserved and marginalized populations being defined?**
A Historically underserved and marginalized populations are defined as:
- Black, Latino, Indigenous and other persons of color (BIPOC).
- Persons with disabilities.
- LGBTQIA persons.
- Low-income persons.
- Economically at-risk persons.
- Persons with low educational attainment.
- Any other historically underserved and marginalized populations and/or places.

Q **My community foundation currently operates with minimal staff or is undergoing staff turnover. Does this put us at a disadvantage for READY Community Foundations?**
A No. We consider that these community foundations are uniquely positioned to benefit from the training, and they are encouraged to apply.

How to Apply & Application Troubleshooting

Q **How do I access the application portal?**
A To access the application portal, you must first register on my.reviewr.com/site/READYCF. You must have an active email address to register. Upon form submission, you will be taken directly to the application form. You may login at my.reviewr.com/site/READYCF to edit and update your application until the deadline on July 5, 2024.

Q **Can I save my progress and return to the application later?**
A Yes, you can save your incomplete application and logout of the Reviewr application. You must login again to complete the application by the deadline of 5:00 p.m. ET on July 5, 2024. Incomplete applications will not be considered. For more help, please see the instructional videos here: https://www.reviewr.com/applicant-training-resources/

Q **Can I edit my application once submitted?**
A No. Once submitted you may not make edits to your application. Please ensure that all information is correct and complete prior to submission.

Q **Do both participants of the community foundation have to submit an application?**
A No. Only one application per community foundation needs to be submitted.

Q **Help! I've lost my password!**
A If you forget your Reviewr password, please go to the login screen and click the link "Forgot Password?" An email will be sent to the registered email account with a link to reset your password.

Q How do I know if my application was successfully submitted?
A Upon successful submission, applicants will receive an email confirmation to the registered email address.

Q I'm still having technical trouble; who can help me?
A Please email READY@purposepossible.com for any questions not answered here.

Assessment & Selection

Q How will my application be assessed?
A Applications will be reviewed by an ARC panel. Assessment criteria and discretionary or qualitative factors will be utilized in evaluating applications. (See NOSA Section 5.1 for more information on assessment criteria.) Special consideration will be given to community foundations serving:
- Distressed counties and census tracts.
- Interagency Working Group on Coal and Power Plant Communities-designated communities.
- Communities served by the Rural Partners Network.
- Historically underserved and marginalized populations.

ARC encourages community foundations with limited capacity to apply for the training program.

Q When will I know if I have been selected to participate?
A All applicants will be notified about selection by email during the week of August 19, 2024.

Q How many community foundations will be selected to participate in the training program?
A The training program is available to two participants from up to 30 community foundations, or 60 total participants.

Grant Program

Q What are the eligibility requirements to apply for the $25,000 grant opportunity?
A Successful completion of the training and its requirements.

Q Will I need to submit a separate proposal for grant funding?
A Yes. A NOSA will be released at a later date to include grant information and application documents.

Technology Requirements

Q What technology is required to participate in the training?
A Each participant must have a computer or tablet with a camera and microphone, and internet access. Participants are expected to be on camera and interacting during the classes and one-to-one consultations. Access to Zoom via a web browser or via an app will be required. No matter what browser you use, to ensure full compatibility, you should do the following:
- Enable JavaScript.

- Enable cookies.
- Refer to your browser's Help for information about enabling cookies (many modern browsers enable them by default).
- Use a browser that automatically supports the TLS 1.2 or above encryption protocol.

ARC and READY Appalachia

Q **Is the *READY Community Foundations* program an application to enroll in a training program or to receive a grant?**

A *READY Community Foundations* is currently accepting applications and is designed to train local community foundation executives, as well as their staffs and board members, in effective operations, fundraising and programming specific to community foundations. Participants will engage in six weeks of virtual cohort-based learning and skill development. The goal of the currently open *READY* application is to identify 30 community foundations to participate in the training.

Upon successful completion of this training, eligible participants can apply for a grant of up to $25,000 per community foundation provided by ARC. There will be a separate application process for the grant opportunity, which will only be available to participants who successfully complete the training.

Q **How can our organization be informed about future trainings?**

A To stay up to date on the latest ARC news, including the release of new opportunities and resources, sign up for our weekly email newsletter, *In the Region*.

Q **Are there other ARC funding opportunities, aside from this program, that are available specifically for Community Foundations?**

A Currently READY Community Foundations is the only ARC initiative specifically targeted for this group of applicants. However, ARC administers several competitive grant programs which may align to your foundation's mission and goals. Stay up to date on ARC's website and sign up for our weekly email newsletter, *In the Region*.

Q **Is this an annual program that is offered each year? Will there be a second round at a later date?**

A There is not a second round of READY Community Foundations planned at this time. However, there's more to come under the READY initiative, including additional NOSAs we plan to release later this year! Stay tuned for updates on our website and sign up for our weekly email newsletter, *In the Region*.