

FAQs for Grantee Organizations

Q: Can I share this grant opportunity with other like-minded organizations?

A: Yes. This grant program is an open RFP.

Q: Where can my organization apply?

A: Please visit our [landing page](#) to learn more about the updated funding pillars and access the application form. All relevant details and resources will be available there throughout the application period.

Q: How long will the application be open?

A: The application will open on September 30, 2025, and close on October 31, 2025. An informational webinar will be available starting October 6, 2025, and linked on the application landing page for reference throughout the application period. Any applications submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

Q: Can our organization apply if we serve communities outside of Chicago?

A: The Chicago Community Impact Grants Program is focused on supporting nonprofit organizations serving youth in Chicago. Organizations must demonstrate a strong presence and impact within the city to be considered.

Q: Our organization is also interested in general operating and program support. Can these grants be used for general operating support?

A: At this time, McDonald's is prioritizing funding for program support through the Chicago Community Impact Grants Program. While we recognize the importance of general operating support, our current focus is on investing in programs that directly align with our funding pillars—Fostering Communities and Feeding Futures. Organizations will only be allowed to submit proposals for program-specific funding that demonstrate measurable impact in these areas.

Q: Are current McDonald's grantees guaranteed funding in the new cohort?

A: No. All organizations, including current grantees, must reapply and will be evaluated based on the updated grant criteria. This ensures a fair and competitive process that prioritizes alignment with the program's focus areas and measurable community impact.

Q: I have questions about the grant process or grant application.

A: To maintain a fair application process, McDonald's is not taking any preliminary or informational calls with prospective applicants. Please refer to the FAQs and the Informational Webinar for more details found [here](#).

Q: What is the expected timeline for grant decisions and funding?

A: Grant decisions will be communicated in Q4. Specific timelines for notification and funding disbursement will be shared on the application landing page.

Q: If awarded, can our organization share the news on our social channels?

A: McDonald's is excited to partner with our grantee organizations to amplify our community investments and partnerships. Grantees will be provided with a toolkit that includes specific details and messaging to communicate about the grant externally.

Q: If our organization does not qualify, will we receive any bridge funding for 2026 (Year 4)?

A: Yes, McDonald's will review all existing partners in depth and will work with the impacted organization on funding during the bridge year.

Q: In addition to grant support, our organization has a strong need for volunteers. Can McDonald's help with volunteerism?

A: At McDonald's, community engagement is a priority. We always look for opportunities to engage and volunteer in the community. Please provide specific details on volunteer opportunities in your grant application for our consideration. Feel free to reach out to McD_Volunteer_Program@us.mcd.com for more information.

FAQs for Stakeholders & Media

Q: What is the Chicago Community Impact Grants Program?

A: In partnership with The Chicago Community Trust, McDonald's created this program to invest charitable funds in Chicago-based nonprofit organizations addressing youth opportunity and food insecurity.

Q: Why is this grant program focused on supporting youth opportunity and food insecurity related programs/organizations?

A: McDonald's believes that expanding access to education and employment unlocks potential and reduces barriers for youth. This program builds on our long-standing commitment to empower future leaders through training, education, and career pathways. As a global food business, we also recognize the importance of nourishment in helping communities thrive. That's why we're investing in programs that address food insecurity and promote fair access to food for youth. These focus areas were shaped by input from local stakeholders to ensure investments are directed where they can make the greatest impact.

Q: Your investment is minimal compared to other Chicago companies. Any comment?

A: McDonald's recognizes its responsibility to invest in the Chicago community and remains committed to supporting the people in our hometown. This program is one of many ways we bring our purpose—to feed and foster communities—to life, through grantmaking, strategic partnerships, and volunteer efforts. Since 2022, we've invested \$8.5 million through the Chicago Community Impact Grants Program, reaching more than 80,000 residents across the city.

Q: How has McDonald's invested and engaged with the Chicago community?

A: Since the launch of The Chicago Community Impact Grants Program in 2022 in partnership with The Chicago Community Trust, McDonald's has invested \$8.5 million in support of local organizations, positively impacting tens of thousands of young people across Chicago.

In 2025, we're investing an additional \$4 million to continue driving meaningful change.

Each year, we've strived to address the city's most pressing needs through our investments, community engagement and volunteering and celebrate the resilience, creativity, and dedication of its nonprofit community. Dive deeper into our journey and discover past recipients and programs:

- [2022 Grantmaking](#)
- [2023 Grantmaking](#)
- [2024 Grantmaking](#)

Q: How much are you awarding each organization? Why aren't you transparently sharing the breakdown?

A: Grant awards range between ~\$50,000 and \$150,000. It is up to the discretion of each organization to disclose the amount it received.

Q: Why did organizations receive varying amounts? How did you decide how much to give to each?

A: Grant awards vary depending on the size and scope of the organization, with final amounts determined by the strength and demonstrated need of the application. Grant awards range between ~\$50,000 and \$150,000. While all applications submitted will be considered, only a limited number of grants will be awarded.

Q: Does McDonald's implement similar programming on a national or global scale? In what other cities does this program exist?

A: This grant program is specifically focused on impacting youth in the city of Chicago serving ages 16-24. Our connection to Chicago runs deep. McDonald's founder, Ray Kroc, opened his first restaurant in Des Plaines, Illinois, in 1955, and today, our global headquarters remains in the heart of the city. Chicago isn't just where we're based—it's our hometown. That's why we are

committed to creating opportunities in the communities that give us so much.

Q: Why did McDonald's change the application from closed to open?

A: The decision to open the application process reflects the expansion of the Chicago Community Impact Grants Program in both its focus areas and funding this year. By broadening the program's scope, McDonald's is deepening its commitment to supporting communities across Chicago—especially at a time when needs are urgent and growing. An open process ensures greater transparency, fairness, and opportunity for organizations doing impactful work. Since 2022, the program has invested \$8.5 million in nonprofit organizations citywide, and this shift marks a meaningful step toward amplifying that impact.

Q: What are the criteria organizations will be evaluated against?

A: McDonald's, in partnership with The Chicago Community Trust, has developed clear grant criteria, a comprehensive evaluation process, and a scoring system to guide funding decisions. Organizations will be assessed based on their proven impact in the communities they serve, alignment with one of the program's two focus areas— *Fostering Communities: Pathways to Empowerment* or *Feeding Futures: Food Access and Insecurity*—as well as financial stability and the ability to sustain programming. The goal is to invest in a broad range of nonprofits that are driving meaningful change across Chicago.

Q: Why did you change the funding pillars to Feeding Futures: Food Access and Insecurity and Fostering Community: Pathways to Empowerment?

A: These pillars reflect McDonald's sharpened focus on two urgent challenges facing youth in Chicago: food insecurity and barriers to opportunity. As a global food brand and one of the world's largest employers, these community needs are near to our heart. We're committed to investing in programs that support youth ages 16-24 and empower them to reach their full potential - from expanding food access to creating pathways to education, training and employment.

Q: Will you be tracking the results of the grant program (e.g., a report on how each recipient used the money and impact)?

A: Yes, we will track progress and results ongoingly, and we will continue to share impacts of these programs in the future. In partnership with The Chicago Community Trust, the McDonald's team developed a comprehensive evaluation and measurement process, and each organization will be required to submit progress reports for the grant they receive. In addition, members of the team will engage in regular status calls and site visits with grantee organizations throughout the grant term.

Q: Are the Chicago Community Impact Grants a multi-year grant?

A: At this time, all grants will be for a one-year term (2025-2026).

