



**ROOTS & BRANCHES
FOUNDATION**

Shaping Our Jewish Future

Dear Community:

Roots & Branches Foundation is an initiative of Rose Community Foundation that engages Jewish 25 to 40 year olds in collaborative philanthropy. Each year, a new group of 18 members of Roots & Branches work together to identify needs in the community, give strategically through our grantmaking process and inform philanthropic trends.

We, the ninth cohort of Roots & Branches Foundation, have chosen to guide our giving with the Jewish philanthropic teachings of *tzedakah*, giving in the pursuit of a more just world, and *v'hechezekta bo*, strengthening those in need to help them become self-sufficient.

This year, Roots & Branches Foundation will make grants totaling at least \$73,632 to nonprofit organizations serving the Greater Denver community with programs or projects that address one or both of the following grant priorities:

1. Strengthening families and communities through increasing access to healthy food and nutrition education
2. Increasing access to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) careers for young adults ages 16 to 24 through education and skill development

We look forward to receiving proposals from organizations working to address one or both of these priorities in the Greater Denver community.

Sincerely,

Roots & Branches Foundation, Ninth Cohort

Ben Aussenberg
Matt Bloom
Aubrey Cornelius
Karen Flaxer
Dalia Garfinkel
Bodie Johnson
Katie Johnstone
Zach Kiefer
Felix Kishinevsky

Sophie Klein
Sarah Krivel
Doreen Molk
Scott Peikin
Allie Shpall
Hannah Solomon
Alison Sorkin
Katherine Touff
Emily Wasserman

Grant Priorities and Request for Proposals
Deadline: December 8, 2015

1. Strengthening families and communities through increasing access to healthy food and nutrition education

Problem Statement

Studies show that individuals who have access to and knowledge about healthy food choices are far more likely to excel, yet millions of Americans wake up hungry each day. In Colorado, one in seven people face times when there is not enough money to buy food¹ and one in five children cannot count on having enough to eat at their next meal.² Many programs that exist to help people access and afford food go unutilized. For those receiving food-related aid, the benefit is, on average, \$1.38 per meal.³ When money is scarce, people are more likely to choose more affordable, higher caloric and less healthy foods.⁴ Food insecurity also contributes to the obesity epidemic and puts many people at an increased risk for health problems.

The Change We Seek

We believe increasing food access and nutrition education can help create healthier, stronger families and stronger communities. Guided by the Jewish values of *v'hechezekta bo*, strengthening those in need to become self-sufficient, and *tzedakah*, giving in the pursuit of a more just world, we believe it is our responsibility to support programs that empower families with minor children through access to and education about healthy food.

We Will Fund

We will fund organizations or programs working to increase food access for families with minor children or expecting parents. Families served should have incomes that fall below the Colorado Self-sufficiency Standard.⁵ Programs must serve the entire family. These programs might include:

- Food production, education, outreach and distribution
- Efforts to raise awareness and increase education with enrollment in food benefit assistance programs
- Community building, collaboration, empowerment and peer-to-peer engagement

We Will Not Fund

We will not fund one-time programs or programs serving only children, without a significant focus on engaging and empowering the whole family.

¹ USDA, [Household Food Security in the United States in 2013](#), September 2014

² Colorado Children's Campaign, [2015 KIDS COUNT in Colorado!](#), March 2015

³ Based on USDA Food and Nutrition Service data: Average SNAP benefits in Colorado during FY2013, with November 2013 benefit reduction included (as cited in Hunger Free Colorado, *FACTS: Hunger and Poverty in Colorado*)

⁴ Madsen, Helen & Sarah Williams. [Food Access in Elyria-Swansea: A Review](#), July 2015

⁵ Colorado Center on Law & Policy, [The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado](#), June 2015

2. Increasing access to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) careers for young adults ages 16 to 24 through education and skill development

Problem Statement

While Colorado has one of the highest skilled workforces in the country and is expected to experience significant growth in fields requiring STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) skills, Colorado's students are not being prepared to compete for these high-wage, high-demand jobs.⁶ Instead, much of this workforce comes from out of state with only 27% of the population with postsecondary degrees being Colorado natives.⁷ STEM careers provide a pathway to self-sufficiency, with entry-level careers paying \$53,000 on average—a wage 10 percent higher than jobs with similar educational requirements.⁸ However, the current education and training programs are not adequately preparing enough people from diverse backgrounds to access these jobs.

The Change We Seek

We seek to increase access to STEM education and exposure to related careers for low-income young adults ages 16 to 24, with the goal of developing a local STEM-ready talent pipeline. Females and minority individuals are underrepresented in STEM careers, so we especially seek to increase opportunity and access for these populations. People ages 16 to 24 are today and tomorrow's parents and workforce and should be equipped with the knowledge, skills and training to excel in the Colorado labor market. In the spirit of the Jewish value of *v'hechezekta bo*, strengthening those in need to become self-sufficient, we seek to fund efforts that prepare young people, especially females and minorities, for the growing number of jobs requiring STEM skills in the coming years.

We Will Fund

We will fund programs in STEM education and skill development that provide entry-points into the workforce for young adults ages 16 to 24. Young people served should have incomes that fall below the Colorado Self-sufficiency Standard.⁹ For those living with their families, the family income must fall below the Colorado Self-sufficiency Standard. These programs might include:

- STEM education, career opportunities or workforce readiness
- Technical and certificate programs or training opportunities that transition students from high school into the STEM work force
- High school programs that prepare students for STEM careers
- Internships, apprenticeships or other career exposure

We Will Give Higher Priority

We will give higher priority to programs that specifically focus on serving females and minority individuals.

⁶ STEM Colorado, [The Colorado STEM Education Roadmap](#), August 2014

⁷ Colorado Workforce Development Council, [Colorado Talent Pipeline Report](#), January 2015

⁸ Brookings Institute, [The Hidden STEM Economy](#), June 2013

⁹ Colorado Center on Law & Policy, [The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Colorado](#), June 2015

Eligibility and Application Information

Deadline

All grant applications must be submitted by December 8, 2015. Late or incomplete applications may not be considered.

All applicants will be notified of decisions by early March 2016.

Grant Funds and Type of Support Available

Roots & Branches Foundation will grant at least \$73,632 through this Request for Proposals. We anticipate making multiple grants and will consider requests ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000. We will consider requests for general operating support in cases where the mission of the organization and all of its work is closely aligned with one of our grant priorities. Organizations with broad missions or multiple focus areas, should apply for program support to fund a specific program or project that aligns with one of our grant priorities.

Grant Period

Grant funds must be expended between April 2016 and March 2017.

Eligibility Requirements

Roots & Branches Foundation will only accept proposals from organizations serving the Greater Denver community, including Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas and Jefferson counties.

Applicants must be nonprofit organizations with tax-exempt classification from the Internal Revenue Service, a tax-supported institution such as a school or government agency or they must have fiscal sponsorship from a tax-exempt organization.

Organizations may only submit one application in response to this Request for Proposals. In cases where two or more organizations are partnering on a program or project, one organization should submit a single proposal on behalf of the partnership.

Organizations with a pending grant request to Rose Community Foundation may also apply for this grant program.

Questions

If you have questions about Roots & Branches' funding priorities, please contact Ben Finan, Collaborative Giving Coordinator, at bfinan@rcfdenver.org or 303.398.7417. If you have questions about the online grant application please contact Cheryl McDonald, Grants Manager, at cmcdonald@rcfdenver.org or 303.398.7446.

Completing Your Application

Applications must be submitted online. To create an account and view and complete the grant application, visit our [online grant application system](#).

After Submitting Your Application

Once you have submitted your online grant application, you will receive an email confirmation that it has been successfully submitted in the system. If you wish to access your application after submittal or to apply for another grant in the future, log in to your account by visiting RCFdenver.org/logins to access the link.

Site Visits

Some applicants will receive site visits as part of the grant review process. If your organization is selected for a site visit, it will take place between mid-January and mid-February 2016.

Application Questions and Required Attachments

All grant applications must be completed and submitted online. The following information is provided as a resource only, to help you prepare your proposal. Responses to all questions and all required attachments must be submitted online. Limit your responses to the character counts provided for each question. Character counts include spaces. If a question is not applicable, explain why it is not applicable instead of writing "N/A."

For uploads, we prefer to receive the source file (in Word or Excel) rather than a PDF, when possible. Be sure your documents are formatted to print on 8.5x11" paper. Please note the file size limits in megabytes (MB).

Section I

- Organization Name (Character Limit: 100)
- Executive Director's Name (Character Limit: 50)
- Project Name (*if applicable*) (Character Limit: 100)
- Name of Primary Contact for this Request (Character Limit: 50)
- Primary Contact's Email Address (Character Limit: 50)
- Primary Contact's Phone Number (Character Limit: 20)
- Fiscal Sponsor: Does your organization use a fiscal sponsor? If yes, provide the organization name, address and website as well as the name of a contact person and his or her phone number and email address. If no, please indicate. (Character Limit: 500)
- Information Sharing: May we share the information you've provided with Donor-advised Fund holders at Rose Community Foundation who may be interested in this work? Your answer will not have an effect on the funding decision for this request. (Multiple choice: Yes, No)

Section II

- Description: Provide a brief description of the grant request. (Character Limit: 500)
- Priority Alignment: Indicate the priority under which you are applying. (Multiple choice: Food, STEM)
- Type of Grant Requested: We will consider requests for general operating support in cases where the mission of the organization and all of its work is closely aligned with one of our grant priorities. Organizations with broad missions or multiple focus areas should apply for program support to fund a specific program or project that aligns with one of our grant priorities. (Multiple choice: General Operating Support, Program Support)
- Total Amount Requested: Roots & Branches Foundation will grant at least \$73,632 through this Request for Proposals. We anticipate making multiple grants and will consider requests ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000. (Character Limit: 20)

Section III

- Mission and Vision: Provide the organization's mission and vision statements. (Character Limit: 3000)
- Goals and Objectives: Provide a brief statement of the organization's current goals and/or objectives. (Character Limit: 2000)
- Impact You Seek: A statement of the problem the organization is trying to solve with this project or program and how the community will look different if/when the organization succeeds. If general operating support is requested, answer this question for the organization overall. (Character Limit: 2000)

- Project Description: Describe the work for which the organization seeks funding including specific activities. (Character Limit: 2000)
- Target Population: Provide a descriptive list of characteristics of the population(s) the organization seeks to serve with this program or project including, but not limited to: age, geographic location, ethnicity and economic background, including the percent of people or families served whose incomes fall below the Colorado Self-sufficiency Standard. Include the number of people that will be served during the grant period. If general operating support is requested, focus on the population served by the organization overall. (Character Limit: 2000)
- Past Outcomes: List the outcomes (measurable results) the organization has achieved with this program or project to date. If general operating support is requested, focus on outcomes for the organization overall. (Character Limit: 1500)
- Anticipated Outcomes: What outcomes does the organization seek to achieve with this program or project during the grant period? What evaluation methods will be used to track results and measure outcomes? If general operating support is requested, focus on outcomes for the organization overall. (Character Limit: 1500)
- Priority Alignment: Describe how the program or project, or in the case of a general operating request the organization's mission and core work, aligns with one of Roots & Branches Foundation's stated grant priorities. (Character Limit: 2000)
- Additional Information: Is there anything else the members of Roots & Branches Foundation should know? (Character Limit: 1500)

Section IV

- Fiscal Year End Date (Character Limit: 10)
- Organization's Operating Budget: Provide the organization's operating budget for the period covered by the grant (March 2016 through February 2017). An Excel file is preferred. (File Size Limit: 1 MB)
- Program or Project Budget (*if applicable, only required for program support requests*): For program or project support requests, provide a detailed line item budget for all program expenses and revenue. Itemize each major budget category of expense and revenue, and the total cost of the program or project. In the case of revenue, include all funds available for the program or project. If there are grants, indicate whether the grants are pending, anticipated or secured. An Excel file is preferred. (File Size Limit: 1 MB)
- Budget Narrative: The budget narrative for an organization seeking general operating support should address the five largest categories of expense and revenue in the organization's overall budget. The budget narrative for a program support request should address the five largest categories of expense and revenue in the program or project budget and should indicate how Roots & Branches funding would be expended. (Character Limit: 2500)
- Most Recent Year End Statement of Financial Position (or Balance Sheet) (File Size Limit: 1 MB)
- Most Recent Year End Statement of Activities (or Income and Expense or Profit and Loss Statement) (File Size Limit: 1 MB)

Section V

- Anti-Discrimination Statement: Provide the anti-discrimination statement adopted by the board of directors. Include the date the statement was adopted. (Character Limit: 1500)
- Board of Directors: Provide a list of the board of directors including occupations and/or community affiliations. (Character Limit: 1500)
- Key Staff: Provide the names and qualifications for key staff on this project. (Character Limit: 1500)
- IRS Determination Letter: Upload the organization's IRS determination letter issued within the last five years indicating tax-exempt status. If a fiscal sponsor is being utilized, provide its IRS determination letter. (File Size Limit: 3 MB)