



# Neighbor Impact Grant

*Working to catalyze meaningful change*

## Program Overview

In its continued effort to support a broad range of strategies and effective solutions that address food insecurity and its systemic causes, the Maryland Food Bank is inviting proposals for its Neighbor Impact Grant Program. This is the second in a series of new, competitive grantmaking initiatives.

MFB seeks community partners who are willing to create and test new ideas quickly, who bring an enthusiasm for learning from initial lessons, and have a willingness to make changes midstream that improve on an idea as part of the innovation process. These grants will be available through a competitive application process and open to both existing MFB partners and organizations with a 501(c)(3) that have not previously partnered with the food bank.

## Exploring Break-through Approaches

The purpose of this opportunity is to support promising practices and innovative approaches that have the potential to bring about lasting change if they succeed. Another way to think about this funding initiative is to consider an answer to the question, ‘What have we seen as a problem we want to solve?’

This funding initiative supports Pillar Two of MFB’s Strategic Plan 3.0, *Creating Pathways Out of Hunger*, “addressing deeply rooted causes of hunger while opening up pathways out of food insecurity and toward greater local resiliency.” With a deep understanding and appreciation for the complexity and diversity of this work, MFB recognizes that addressing the root causes of food insecurity can take many forms.

### For neighbors and families, addressing those root causes can mean:

- Integrating food distribution strategies with wraparound approaches, or vice versa;
- Developing new strategies that reach priority populations and those reluctant to seek assistance;
- Supporting ideas, processes and approaches that leverage partnerships to achieve better results.

### At the systems level, addressing root causes can mean:

- Breaking down barriers to food access;
- Engaging in efforts that weaken/eliminate the impact of systemic racism on marginalized communities;
- Highlighting disparities like access to housing, education, jobs, healthcare, and safe environments that make the road to self-sufficiency difficult;
- Advocating for legislative and policy changes that support equitable access to safety net programs for MFB’s neighbors provided by community partners.

## Application Evaluation Factors

This grant program will support community partners in exploring new and creative approaches to solve difficult, long-standing problems. MFB is keen on capturing the results of this funding in the form of progress narratives using stories, testimonials, and more. Priority consideration will go to organizations that understand the importance of planning, analysis, and measuring results as key drivers of the transition from outputs to outcomes. Neighbor Impact Grants will support projects that transform culture, improve outcomes and close equity gaps. Support and training will be made available for this initiative.

A cross-departmental MFB team that includes staff from the Strategy Group, Programs and Development will review grant applications and award funds. This grant program will include an education campaign about MFB 3.0 strategic priorities and provide all grant applicants with information and examples of the type of initiatives that this program will fund.

**Content of Grant Application**

- **Innovation.** Please describe your idea and the problem it solves. How does it demonstrate transformational or innovative thinking? Who will be impacted?
- **Proposed Plan for Design and Execution.** Please share how you plan to launch, test and further develop/deepen your idea. How well does the project align with the strategic goals of MFB 3.0?
- **Evaluation.** Share information about the intended impact of your project and how you plan to measure it. What’s the impact on participants?
- **Sustainability and Scalability.** Outline your intentions to continue embedding this work post-MFB grant. Describe integration plans at the systems level. If applicable, please explain how your past work has prepared you to scale your work for this targeted opportunity.
- **Reporting.** Grantees will be required to submit an interim report at the end of Year One and a final report at the end of Year Two.
- **Financial Information.** Applicants must provide a budget and budget narrative and financial statements.
- **Supplemental Material.** W-9.

**Level of Support**

MFB is dedicating \$1M to this initiative over a two-year period and will award grants to approximately six (6) organizations. We want to challenge both new and existing partners to develop a proof of concept in Year One and build on their successful exploration in Year Two.

**Submission Format and Key Dates**

Grant applications must be submitted through Survey Monkey.

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| • Informational Webinar            | June 8 at 4:00 p.m. <a href="#">Recording Here</a> |
| • FAQs and Application Link Posted | June 5   |
| • Application Period               | June 5 – July 31                                   |
| • Proposal Submission Deadline     | July 31 at 5:00 p.m.                               |
| • Grant Award Announcements        | September 4 – September 15 (estimated)             |
| • Grant Period                     | October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2025               |
| • Interim and Final Reports Due    | October 31, 2024 and October 31, 2025              |

**Questions?**

- On June 8, we held the **Neighbor Impact Grant Information Session**. This webinar provided an overview of all grant parameters and included a Q&A session. [Recording Here](#)
- Starting June 5, the latest Neighbor Impact Grant information and a link to the grant application will be available on the Maryland Food Bank website: [mdfoodbank.org/impactgrant](https://mdfoodbank.org/impactgrant)