2026 Grant Guidelines

These guidelines outline the types of grants we intend to fund in 2026. They provide background on each of our strategic plan goals and a description of the projects we will consider funding within each goal area. We update these guidelines every year as our funding plans evolve to align with our strategic plan and shifting environment.

If you are interested in a grant, the first required step is to speak with members of our grantmaking team. You can use this link to find a time to meet. As a reminder, our funding is strategic and focused, and we use these conversations to better understand your work and if there is alignment with our funding opportunities. When there is alignment, we will invite you to apply for a specific grant opportunity.

In the sections below, you will see how we plan to fund within each goal area. If your project ideas or goals fall outside of what is mentioned here, it is unlikely we will be able to fund your work.

What we don't fund:
- Grants for individuals
- Direct services: hands-on services provided straight to individuals or groups; they involve direct interaction between the provider and the recipient.
- Clinical laboratory research
- Capital projects, endowments, or chairs associated with universities or medical schools
- Projects that do not benefit Connecticut residents
- Lobbying or influencing the outcomes of proposed legislation or an election

Goal 1: Expanding health care coverage

What's the need?
Having health insurance is critical to being able to access care to stay healthy and manage illnesses. Connecticut has made tremendous progress in reducing the number of uninsured residents in the past decade, but a new federal law, HR1 or the "big beautiful bill" act, will require significant changes to Medicaid in 2026. For example:
- The law eliminates Medicaid eligibility for certain categories of immigrants with legal status, beginning in October 2026.
- Connecticut will be required to impose work-reporting requirements for adults covered by the Medicaid expansion, or HUSKY D, which covers more than 300,000 people in the state. This takes effect on Jan. 1, 2027, and planning and implementation – including developing new reporting systems – will need to occur in 2026.

These changes are expected to cause more than 100,000 people to lose coverage. We plan to focus on grantmaking to minimize coverage losses and other potential harms from these policies, as well as to ensure that the people most affected by these changes have the information they need.

We plan to fund:

- Efforts to defend and protect Medicaid (HUSKY) eligibility for current recipients and preserve data security. This includes efforts to ensure that the rollout of work requirements and other provisions of HR1 are done in the least harmful way possible.

- Efforts to minimize coverage losses.

- Research and data on the need for coverage options for people who have incomes just above the HUSKY threshold.

- Monitoring the impact of coverage changes due to new eligibility and work requirements.

Search our grants database for examples of projects we've funded related to coverage expansion [here](#).

Goal 2: Sustainable funding for community health workers

What's the need?

Community health worker services are widely recognized as an extremely effective tool for advancing health equity. These services can help people get care and make sure their needs are met in ways that are respectful and culturally responsive. A law adopted in 2023 calls for the state to begin paying for community health worker services through Medicaid, a sustainable funding mechanism used in many other states. Our grants will support efforts to implement this law.

We plan to fund:

- Efforts to organize and mobilize support for funding community health worker services through Medicaid.

Search our grants database for examples of projects we've funded related to community health workers [here](#). View our topic guide on CHWs [here](#).

Goal 3: Maternal health equity for people of color

What's the need?

Data across the country and in Connecticut demonstrate the need for coordinated efforts to address maternal mortality and morbidity, especially for people of color. There is significant momentum in the state and nationally to address the severe disparities that exist in maternal mortality and morbidity.

We plan to fund:

In 2025, the foundation concluded an extensive research process and published a [blueprint](#) for maternal health equity for people of color in Connecticut. We anticipate that most grantmaking related to this blueprint will begin in 2027. Early in 2026, we will develop a grantmaking strategy to inform how we fund. We welcome conversations about projects while we are developing this strategy, and we might consider awarding grants through the President's discretionary grant process that focus on:

- Demonstrations (pilots, testing models, etc.) that address racial disparities in maternal health within a health system.
- Creating a model program or initiative that falls within the priorities outlined in the maternal health blueprint and has the potential to create larger systems change.

Examples of funding in maternal health will be available through our grants database after awards are made.

Goal 4: Fostering the infrastructure for health equity

What's the need?

Our overarching goal of achieving health equity for people of color would not be possible without a strong field of advocates driving change at both the grassroots and grasstops levels, as well as data and news coverage to inform equity work and public debate. We are interested in supporting efforts to ensure there is a strong pool of advocates focused on improving health outcomes for people of color in Connecticut.

We plan to fund:

CT Health typically funds policy and advocacy efforts in each of our goal areas. Many of the grants under this goal are by invitation only and often align with our goal areas. We might issue requests for proposals to support specific advocacy efforts or to find new advocacy partners. We list our requests for proposals here. Search our grants database for examples of media projects we've funded here and race, ethnicity, and language data projects here.