

THE KRESGE FOUNDATION

Climate Resilience And Urban Opportunity Initiative

Frequently asked questions

The Kresge Foundation
Troy, Michigan

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Updated July 17, 2014

In addition to reviewing these frequently asked questions, we encourage you to read the primer that appears on Kresge's website, which provides a detailed explanation of the Climate Resilience and Urban Opportunity Initiative.

1. What does The Kresge Foundation mean by “climate resilience”?

Kresge employs a comprehensive definition of climate resilience that encompasses climate-change adaptation, climate-change mitigation and social cohesion. We believe that actions in support of these three dimensions are most powerful when they are pursued jointly and designed to be mutually reinforcing.

To build their resilience to climate change, communities must:

- Anticipate and prepare for pressures and shocks that climate change will introduce or worsen (i.e., pursue climate-change adaptation);
- Lessen overall demand for energy and increase the proportion derived from renewable sources (i.e., pursue climate-change mitigation); and
- Foster social cohesion, recognizing the imperative of social inclusion as well as the critical role that networks among individuals and institutions play in conveying information and mutual support.

2. What does Kresge mean by “urban opportunity”?

The Kresge Foundation's purpose is to expand opportunity for low-income people living in America's cities. We believe that all people should have the supports necessary to lead self-determined lives. We think it is important to proactively address the disproportionate impact that climate change will have on low-income communities. We recognize that policies and practices designed to enhance resilience can either reduce or inadvertently worsen disparity. We want to demonstrate that communities can build their resilience to climate change in ways that increase low-income community residents' access to jobs and economic opportunities, improve health and safety conditions in their cities, create new neighborhood amenities, and strengthen civic engagement.

3. What does Kresge hope to accomplish through this initiative?

Kresge has designed this initiative to help nonprofit organizations with deep roots in low-income communities enhance their capacity to engage in a range of local and regional venues relevant to their communities' climate resilience. We seek to strengthen the capacity of community-based nonprofit organizations to influence local and regional climate-resilience planning, policy development and implementation to better reflect the priorities and needs of low-income people in U.S. cities. Ultimately, we want to see this

capacity translate into tangible policy gains and investments that advance climate resilience and improve opportunity in America's cities.

4. What does Kresge mean by “community-based nonprofit organization”?

For purposes of this initiative, “community-based nonprofit organization” refers to a 501(c)(3) organization that focuses its efforts within a particular geographic area (e.g., a neighborhood, city or region) and views itself as accountable to the people who reside within that place.

5. Is my organization eligible to apply if it does not have deep, prior experience working on climate change?

Yes. This initiative is open to both organizations with prior experience working on climate change and/or climate resilience, and to organizations with little to no prior experience relevant to climate change. We are hoping that this initiative will catalyze additional nonprofit organizations to engage in climate-resilience work as well as support the strategic development of organizations already working on climate resilience.

In our review of submitted applications – if all other qualifications are equal – we will give some preference to organizations with prior experience on issues relevant to climate resilience, but we are receptive to applications from organizations that are new entrants to climate-resilience work. New entrants to this work may wish to consider partnering in some manner with an organization experienced in climate-resilience efforts.

What is most important to us is that applicant organizations have deep experience working successfully within low-income communities and the standing necessary to move into a leadership role on climate resilience within their localities/regions.

Whether they are established climate-change actors or relatively new to the topic, successful applicants will be focused on applying the three-part definition of climate resilience (noted above) in their work.

6. Is this initiative designed for environmental organizations, or will other types of nonprofit organizations be competitive applicants?

We expect that competitive applicants will include a wide range of nonprofit organizations, including (but not limited to) those that have been active in clean-energy deployment, climate change, community and economic development, community organizing, disaster preparedness, economic opportunity, environmental justice, local food systems, public health, transportation and urban planning.

What is most important to us is that applicant organizations have deep experience working successfully within low-income communities and the standing necessary to move into a leadership role on climate resilience within their localities/regions.

7. Are organizations that lack advocacy/policy experience but want to develop that capacity likely to be funded?

No. We think that prior experience in advocacy and policy work will position organizations to be more successful in this initiative.

8. With what types of public-led efforts must applicants intend to engage to be successful in this grant competition?

We are interested in helping groups strengthen their capacity to engage in an array of climate-resilience efforts relevant to their communities. Such efforts might include the development and implementation of local and/or regional policies and plans focused on climate-change mitigation, climate-change adaptation, disaster preparedness, land use, public health, transportation and/or urban sustainability.

Our assumption is that advancing a comprehensive climate-resilience and urban-opportunity agenda will be a multifaceted, long-term effort. We are interested in supporting organizations that wish to strengthen their capacity to “go the distance” and address a range of levers and strategies. Therefore, competitive applicants will intend to engage in an array of local and/or regional efforts important to climate-resilience and/or employ a holistic approach to climate-resilience planning rather than engage in a single policy or planning venue.

9. Must the efforts in which applicants plan to engage be public-led?

One goal of the initiative is to advance public policy, budgetary frameworks and/or public-financing commitments that advance comprehensive climate resilience. We think that this requires engagement with and influence on public sector-led efforts. In some cases, a robust social-sector-led effort with clear public-sector leverage targets might be eligible, but applicants will need to make a strong case for the significance of the opportunity presented by the effort.

10. Can organizations apply if they are based in a state or local jurisdiction in which governmental entities have not established climate-change policies or initiated climate-resilience discussions?

A goal of the initiative is to advance public policy, budgetary frameworks and/or public-financing commitments that advance comprehensive climate resilience. We think that this requires engagement with and influence on public-sector-led efforts. As such, organizations working in jurisdictions in which climate-resilience efforts are explicitly under development or implementation will be at a competitive advantage. That said, we encourage potential applicants to consider whether their local jurisdictions will be updating policies or practices with significance for climate resilience (e.g., storm water management plans, land use master plans, regional transportation plans, emergency management plans) that present opportunities for influence. In the absence of such promising public venues for action, an applicant would need to make a strong case that

opportunity existed to enhance climate resilience through other means.

11. What types of projects or initiatives will be less competitive?

Please read the primer that appears on Kresge's website, which provides detail on the Climate Resilience and Urban Opportunity Initiative, as it includes the criteria that Kresge will use in review of Statements of Qualification.

We will give strong preference to organizations that:

- Intend to engage in *an array of efforts* related to improving their community's climate resilience;
- Are skilled at *working across sectors* (e.g., nonprofit, public and private); and
- Can bring a *variety of tactics* to their climate-resilience efforts.

Applications will be *less competitive* if they:

- Do not reflect Kresge's three-part definition of climate resilience (noted above);
- Are not focused on low-income, urban areas with the intent of delivering multiple benefits to low-income community members;
- Do not present opportunity for meaningful cross-sector collaboration;
- Lack potential to influence specific, public-sector-led efforts with high relevance to climate resilience;
- Propose engagement in a relatively isolated intervention (e.g., opposition to individual pollution sources, advocacy concerning a single transit line, or implementation of energy-efficiency improvements) rather than a comprehensive resilience-planning effort or a suite of near-term policy or planning efforts relevant to the community's climate resilience;
- Propose to serve only one neighborhood or a small set of neighborhoods without an evident pathway for impact beyond those boundaries;
- Focus on a rural geography;
- Seek support for organizations that do not have full-time, paid staff; and/or
- Seek support for a lead organization (i.e., the organization submitting the application) that has a 2014 organizational budget of less than \$500,000.

12. Does Kresge have a preferred budget size in mind for organizations that will be funded under this initiative?

Kresge expects to recommend planning grants for organizations with various budget sizes. Of the 20 planning grants that we intend to award, we expect that no more than four of them will be to groups with annual operating budgets less than \$500,000. We also expect that no more than four will be to groups with annual operating budgets in excess of \$3,000,000.

We are mindful of the size of a Kresge grant in relation to an organization's total operating budget. As such, organizations with smaller operating budgets may receive

smaller planning grants than organizations with larger operating budgets. We will determine this on a case-by-case basis.

13. May a coalition of groups apply for a planning grant?

Yes. Partnership or coalition efforts are eligible. In such cases, one of the participating organizations must be designated the lead for the effort, and that organization's responsibilities must extend beyond financial management at least to include overall coordination and communication with Kresge. The qualifications of the lead organization (i.e., the organization applying for the grant) must be provided as well as a brief description of each participating organization. The application must explain how the participating organizations will work together and how their collective effort will be grounded in the needs of a particular community or set of local communities.

The resulting implementation plan must be developed on behalf of the partnership or coalition as a whole. Kresge will not accept applications from more than one group for implementation efforts growing out of the planning period.

14. Does Kresge have a preference for supporting coalitions or individual organizations?

No. We are interested in supporting organizations that are capable of working in effective, strategic partnership with other institutions. We anticipate that successful planning-grant applicants may include organizations applying on behalf of themselves only, organizations applying in partnership with one or more entities, and multi-organization coalitions.

If a partnership or coalition is successful in receiving a planning grant, the resulting implementation plan must be developed on behalf of the partnership or coalition as a whole. Kresge will not accept applications from more than one group for implementation efforts growing out of the planning period.

15. If a set of groups is applying as a coalition, can the groups add up their individual budgets to reach the \$500,000 budget level?

No. We will look primarily at the 2014 budget of the organization that is submitting the Statement of Qualifications on behalf of the coalition. We also will be interested in knowing the annual organizational budgets of the other participating organizations.

16. Will re-granting be allowed?

Yes, if the re-grants support local work consistent with the purpose of the Kresge grant award.

17. Can potential grantees subcontract parts of the planning to another nonprofit with complementary strengths?

Yes.

18. If an organization is included as a partner or a subcontractor, must it be a 501(c)(3)?

No. The applicant organization must be a 501(c)(3). Partners and subcontractors need not be.

19. What does Kresge mean by “partnering with organizations in other sectors and disciplines as well as with organizations that hold perspectives different than its own”?

Kresge thinks that advancing comprehensive climate resilience and urban opportunity requires many partners working across multiple sectors and disciplines over a significant period of time. We want to know that applicant organizations are capable of working in partnership, however tactical, with groups that approach climate-related challenges and/or urban opportunity with different points of view.

20. What scale of urban focus is Kresge interested in supporting? Is a neighborhood-level focus sufficient? Is there a scale that is too large for support under this initiative?

Kresge is open to different geographic scales of effort, but applicants’ proposed activities must be positioned to make a material difference in advancing comprehensive climate resilience within the urban context. Organizations that are proposing to work in a neighborhood or a set of neighborhoods rather than at a city- or region-wide scale must make the case in their applications that the scale at which they propose to work will be positioned to have a multiplier effect.

While we recognize that cities exist within and are dependent upon a broader landscape, this initiative is focused on urban areas. As such, we do not anticipate supporting efforts that extend to exurban and rural areas.

21. Would you consider organizations that work in a rural setting to benefit urban, low-income communities?

No.

22. Is Kresge prioritizing cities of a certain size or density?

No, but we have somewhat of a bias toward large urban areas.

23. Does Kresge intend to prefer any particular geographic areas?

No. We consider this a national initiative and will consider requests from across the U.S.

24. Is Kresge prioritizing projects that involve multiple cities/regions or can we focus on one city/region?

We will prioritize projects that involve a single city/region.

25. If organizations are part of a national alliance, would they be more competitive if they apply together as the alliance or separately for their particular local or regional work?

This initiative is intended to support place-based work in individual communities. The organizations will be more competitive if they apply separately for their particular local or regional work. If all other qualifications are equal, applicants that are connected to a regional or national network will be considered favorably over those that are not linked to such efforts.

26. How will Kresge review two or more high-quality Statements of Qualifications from applicants in the same geographic area? Will these groups be encouraged to collaborate on one award, or will only the best be invited to apply?

We expect to handle this on a case-by-case basis. We are unlikely to award grants to more than one organization working in the same geographic area.

27. May governmental entities or regional councils of government apply?

No. This initiative is intended to strengthen the capacity of community-based nonprofit organizations to influence local and regional climate-resilience planning, policy development and implementation to better reflect the priorities and needs of low-income people in U.S. cities. While we expect that applicants will work in partnership with – and/or to influence the plans and priorities of – governmental and quasi-governmental entities, we do not intend to fund governmental entities or regional councils of government through the initiative.

28. Would a national or regional nonprofit organization or a university that is partnering with local organizations be a competitive applicant?

Most likely not. Our intent is to support organizations that have a long-standing commitment to work within a particular urban, low-income community. We can imagine successful applications in which a community-based nonprofit organization is the lead organization, and it has proposed to work in partnership with a national or regional nonprofit organization or a university.

29. May current Kresge grantees apply for support under this initiative?

Current Environment Program grantees are not eligible to apply for support under this initiative as a lead applicant. Please contact your program officer if you have questions

about this.

Organizations that currently receive support from Kresge through programs other than the Environment Program may apply. In reviewing a request from an existing Kresge grantee, we will be mindful of the percentage of its organizational budget that would be coming from Kresge should the planning grant be awarded, however.

30. Does the planning or program activity need to take place in an urban area?

Yes.

31. During the planning-grant phase, can the grantee conduct work related to advocacy or policy development, or is such work only viable during the implementation phase?

The planning effort may include developing strategies to engage in policy work if such activity is necessary to achieve desired climate-resilience improvements in the local area. We will consider requests that include an element of advocacy and policy development activity during the planning-grant period.

32. Can the planning or program activity be for a state policy intervention that will have a positive impact on low-income communities?

The planning effort may include developing strategies to engage in state policy work if such activity is necessary to achieve desired climate-resilience improvements in the local area that will be the focus of the implementation plan. This initiative is not intended to primarily support policy advocacy at the state level or policy work that does not directly emerge from locally identified needs and benefit low-income people.

33. Is Kresge interested in proposals that impact the issues it is trying to address but are not originating from community-based organizations?

No. We are interested in strengthening the capacity of community-based nonprofit organizations to influence local and regional climate-resilience planning, policy development, and implementation to better reflect the priorities and needs of low-income people in U.S. cities.

34. Should we submit letters of support from potential partners with our Statement of Qualifications?

No. We will request such letters only from those organizations that are invited to submit full applications.

35. Do we need to submit a budget for a planning grant?

A budget is not required at the Statement of Qualifications phase of application. If your organization is invited to submit a full application for a planning grant, a budget will be required at that time.

36. We are considering applying through a fiscal sponsor? What organization's name should we use in our application?

The application should be submitted in the name of the organization that would be the recipient of Kresge's grant funds, i.e., the fiscal sponsor. Please be certain to explain in the narrative that accompanies your Statement of Qualifications the nature of the relationship between your organization and your fiscal sponsor.

37. Is the executive summary included in the five-page narrative limit?

No. You will be asked to enter the executive summary into a field within the online application system.

38. Are the names and qualifications of staff and consultants and the 2014 operating budget counted against the five-page limit on the narrative to be submitted as part of the Statement of Qualifications?

No. Those are to be submitted as attachments separate from the narrative.

39. What is Kresge's approved indirect cost rate?

We recognize that it is important for organizations to include indirect costs in their budget. We seldom approve requests with indirect cost rates in excess of 20 percent.

40. Are Canadian organizations eligible for support under this initiative?

No. This initiative is focused on the U.S. only.

41. Does this initiative represent the only opportunity to apply for an Environment Program grant from Kresge this year?

No. It is, however, the only open portal for applications at this time. We anticipate making a limited number of grants under our interests in climate resilience in coastal cities and regions, sustainable water-resources management in a changing climate, urban energy resilience, and climate-resilience field building during the year; however, we will review proposals under those categories on a by-invitation basis only.

We will post updated information on our website as new opportunities to apply arise. Interested organizations are encouraged to stay in touch through email subscription, RSS, or social media. Please go to kresge.org/subscribe for details.