

LOHENGRIN
FOUNDATION

THRIVING YOUTH



**STRONGER
COMMUNITIES**

**Youth & Community Center
Capital Investment Initiative**

**Request for
Proposals
2024**

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ABOUT US

OUR MISSION

The Lohengrin Foundation's mission is to advance equity, opportunity, and justice to eradicate systemic barriers and promote vibrant, safe, and thriving communities.

Our Values

Equity

We embrace differentiated approaches that activate the voices, power, and full potential of those served by addressing the root causes and impacts of structural and systemic racial, social, and economic disparities.

Opportunity

We believe that equitable access to educational, economic, and social mobility efforts must exist to be attainable by all.

Justice

We act to achieve fairness, equity, and the removal of systemic barriers in pursuit of a just society.

Collaboration

We aim to address the complex challenges facing our society, amplify our impact, and create lasting, positive change through partnerships with community organizations, governmental agencies, policymakers, peer funders, and those directly impacted by the changes we are trying to advance.

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THE INITIATIVE

BACKGROUND

Chicago's school-aged population hovers just under 450,000, representing approximately 17% of the city's population, with over 320,000 youth enrolled in Chicago Public Schools. Since 2021, the number of young people in Chicago has decreased, while varied negative health and crime statistics have increased over the same period. According to the city's violence reduction dashboard, the percentage of Chicago youth aged 0–19 experiencing a shooting or homicide has increased since 2021, with nearly 20% of youth exposed to increased incidents of violence in 2023.

While a downward trend in shootings and violence exposure for 20–29-year-olds over the same period offers some hope for our community, this is not the case for Chicago's youngest and most vulnerable population. It also does not represent the promise and potential we see for our youth across the city.

These data, as well as the extensive body of research on the positive impact of site-based youth and community development efforts has prompted the Lohengrin Foundation to launch, **Thriving Youth, Stronger Communities**, a youth and community center capital investment initiative.

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THE INITIATIVE

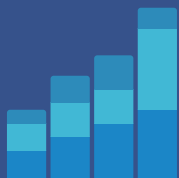
BACKGROUND



450,000 youths in Chicago are school-aged



17% of Chicago's population



20% of shooting victims were school-aged youth



School-aged youth experienced a consistent increase in exposure to violent incidents since 2021

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ROOTED IN COMMUNITY

In designing Thriving Youth, Stronger Communities, the Lohengrin Foundation utilized a community-centered and data-informed approach to guide the development and implementation of all aspects of the initiative.

From listening sessions, data reviews and strategy feedback sessions, to the development of a Community Advisory Council to support the application review process, the Foundation is centering community, every step of the way.

The design of the initiative:

- Incorporates feedback from listening and learning sessions with over 40 community and youth leaders, grantee partners, peer funders, and organizational collaborators.
- Utilizes data from youth specific research findings and quality-of-life/community plans across Chicago, highlighting the needs of youth and the community at large.
- Embeds a robust due diligence process to ensure the guidelines and request for proposal process is equitable and accessible to applicants.
- Brings together an Advisory Council composed of community leaders, funders, youth leaders, and developers who will advise the Foundation's Staff and make recommendations on the application review and selection process.
- Engages an experienced network of nonprofit leaders with direct experience leading youth and community center development projects to serve as a peer network for applicants. All champions have successfully led projects from concept and fundraising to construction and occupancy.

ADVISORY COUNCIL

Thriving Youth, Stronger Communities has an Advisory Council composed of youth and community leaders, developers, and funders who reflect diversity of thought, experience, and expertise. Together, they support community outreach efforts and advise the Lohengrin Foundation's board of directors at each phase of the application review process.

As of October 15, 2024, the Advisory Council Includes:

Kareeshma Ali

Pritzker Traubert
Foundation

Bernardo Gomez

Mayor's Office
Community Safety
Coordination Center

A.J. Patton

548 Enterprise

Kristian Arnedariz

Little Village Community
Council & Metropolitan
Tenants Organization

Monica Horton

American Society of Retina
Specialists

Jose Rodriguez

Robert R. McCormick
Foundation

Zahara Bassett

Life is Work

Brooke Jenkins

Mayor's Youth Commission

Sacella Smith

Illinois Department of
Commerce and Economic
Opportunity

Cynthia Cornelius

Cabrini Green Legal Aid

Molly Leonard

JP Morgan Chase & Co

Dr. L. David Stewart

Territory NFP, Climate Action
Museum

Chris Eagan

Steans Family Foundation

Debbie Liu

Metropolitan Planning
Council

Kayla Villalobos

VOCEL

Sol Flores

Knight Impact Partners

Celia Lozano

Tides Foundation

Stender Von Oehsen

Mayor's Office, Department of
Family and Support Services

Ghian Foreman

Emerald South Economic
Development
Collaborative

Marco Mendez

State of Illinois,
IL House 03

Christen Wiggins

Chicago Community Trust

ELIGIBILITY &

LOCATION

Who is eligible to apply?

- 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations.

Who is not eligible to apply?

- For-profit organizations.
- Individuals.
- Schools, though schools may apply in collaboration with a nonprofit partner.

Project eligibility requirements:

- Project sites must be in Chicago. Special consideration will be provided to proposed sites in communities with high youth density populations and limited or no existing comprehensive youth and community centers or equivalent sites.
- Projects should be able to be realized in 3–5 years.
- Projects must focus on a new construction youth and community center or the conversion of an existing building into a youth and community center.
- We will consider projects ranging from stand-alone youth and community centers to centers that are part of a larger economic or community development strategy or capital projects such as a housing or health center. The Foundation will only allocate funding to the youth and community center aspect of any larger strategy.

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GRANT SIZE & FUNDING SCHEDULE

The Foundation anticipates awarding one grant, totaling up to \$15M, to support our grantee partner throughout the pre-development, construction, and occupancy phases of their project.

The grant award amount will be based on the full scope and size of the final project, including the number of youths to be served and potential community impact.

Funds are expected to be disbursed in five installments, aligned to various project phases, including:

- Pre-development.
- At the beginning of construction.
- At an agreed-to funding milestone during construction.
- At occupancy.
- At post-occupancy to support the center operations.

The Foundation does not expect its funding to support more than 50% of the overall project's total development costs.

THE INITIATIVE

TWO-STEP APPLICATION

The Lohengrin Foundation is pleased to announce the launch of Thriving Youth, Stronger Communities, a youth and community capital investment initiative.

Through this initiative, the Foundation seeks to offer capital and programmatic operating support to a nonprofit partner for the development or creation of a new youth and community center. We aim to serve as an early investor in a capital investment project leading to a comprehensive youth and community center.

This initiative includes a two-step proposal process for engaging with nonprofit partners to respond to the issues of violence that impacts Chicago's most vulnerable young people.

The Foundation is accepting Letters of Interest (LOIs) from nonprofit organizations or collaborations seeking to strengthen youth and community health, education, safety, and well-being outcomes by creating a new youth and community center. The LOI is the first step in the proposal process, followed by an invitation for select organizations to submit a complete application.

Nonprofit organizations with new, innovative, community-centered, and driven capital projects are strongly encouraged to apply.

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LETTERS OF INTEREST

DUE DECEMBER 6, 2024

The two-step proposal process begins with the Letter of Interest. The LOI guidelines and details will be released on October 15, 2024, with letters due on December 6, 2024, by 11:59 p.m. CT.

The components of the LOI will help us to understand your proposed project, initial details, and overall funding plan. We expect LOIs to range from 4–6 pages. **All applications must be submitted online.**

LOI Components

Project Overview - 1 Page

1. **Project Name**
2. **Description** - Describe the project, intended impact, need for the center, and anticipated activities that will occur at the center.
3. **Site Location and Community Impact Area** – Provide the location and Chicago Community Area to be impacted through the center.
4. **Timeline** – Describe your timeline for the project, including when you expect to start construction and begin operations.
5. **Anticipated Partnerships** – Describe any committed community, development, and/or operational partners for the project.

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LETTERS OF INTEREST

COMPONENTS

Your Vision for the Future - 2-3 Pages

1. **The Story** – Describe your vision for the proposed youth and community center. What prompted the decision to embark on this initiative; where is your organization in the capital development and fundraising process, and who else is committed to the project?
2. **The Community** – Tell us about the community where you envision the site will be located, including the targeted service neighborhood boundaries, the proximity to other major youth-serving community assets, such as schools, early childhood or other youth and community centers. Please list the community partners firmly committed to the project through a memorandum of understanding or formal agreement. Describe how youth and other community partners are engaged and involved in the design and development of the proposed site.
3. **The Intended Impact** – Describe the intended impact and community members you anticipate supporting.

Funding the Vision - 1-2 Pages

1. **Capital and Project Budget** – Attach a copy of the full project budget, including anticipated funding sources, anticipated capital, and non-construction related expenses.
2. **Budget Details:**
 - a. **Construction Budget Narrative** – Describe the project budget and rationale. Tell us how you anticipate funding the project and describe any funding sources that are committed, pending, or being pursued.
 - b. **Operating Budget Narrative** – Describe the operating structure. Tell us how you expect to operate the community center and if any subsidies are anticipated to be required.

FULL APPLICATION

DUE MAY 2, 2025

Selected organizations will be invited to submit a full application for funding consideration. Application requirements and other details will be included in the final application guidelines released February 3, 2025, with applications due on May 2, 2025, by 11:59 p.m. CT.

Application Components

Applications must include, but may not be limited to the following:

- Architectural plans and drawings.
- Proof of pursuit of site or site control (deed, purchase or lease agreement, etc.).
- Site assessments including environmental approvals ensuring the site is suitable for construction/occupancy.
- Capital budget (including hard and soft costs).
- Status of funding and funding strategy, including all sources that have been received, are committed, have been requested, and are anticipated (including documentation).
- Proposed operating budget / pro forma, programming plan, and any site maintenance and operating agreements.
- The applicant's plan and activities undertaken to engage youth and the community members in and throughout the development process.
- A youth density report and projections of youth/community impact.
- Participation in an application screening interview.

FULL APPLICATION TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Support and Technical Assistance

Invited applicants will receive access to a network of Technical Advisors to support applicants as they further develop, refine, or expand upon their proposed projects and vision for a youth and community center.

Applicants which advance to the proposal phase will have access to a group of local Community Champions selected by the Foundation. These leaders have direct experience undertaking a successful capital development project from concept to completion.

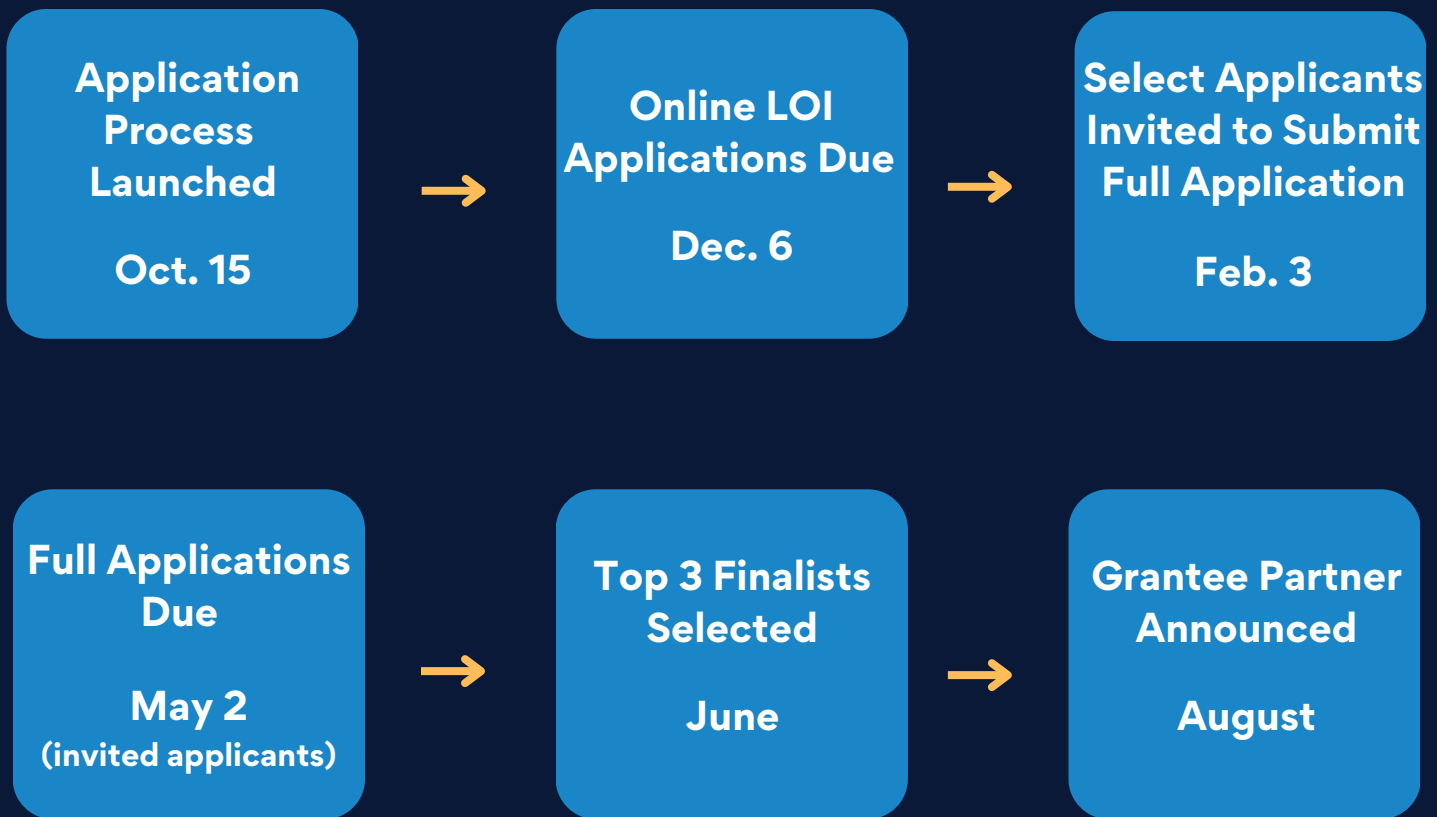
Please be advised that applicants are required to have a representative participate in an **Applicant Technical Assistance Convening** to be held in-person on **February 11, 2025**.

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TIMELINE & KEY DATES

Application Timeline



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KEY LINKS → & SUPPORT

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Application Links

**Register for
Info Sessions**

**Access
Online LOI
Form**

**Visit the
Website**

**Contact
Lohengrin**

Questions?

email

thrivingyouth@lohengrinfdn.org

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