

# NEIGHBORHOOD MATCH FUND APPLICANT GUIDE

## WHAT IS THE NEIGHBORHOOD MATCH FUND?

The Neighborhood Match Fund, also referred to as the NMF regularly awards contracts with local residents organizing projects and opportunities that bring neighbors together to learn, build relationships and celebrate community. The NMF will award contracts ranging from \$2,000 to \$10,000 that focus on COVID-19 resident resiliency and recovery and projects that increase the overall quality of life in neighborhoods.

## NMF PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

Our purpose is to invest strategically in resident and neighborhood leadership, with an emphasis on communities with the greatest need. Our investments are meant to:

- Lift up resident leadership in the development and implementation of the project.
- Promote social justice and inclusion.
- Benefit the public/community.

## NMF APPLICANT AND PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Eligible applicants are:

- Non-profits located in Grand Rapids
- Informal resident groups from Grand Rapids
- Individual Grand Rapids residents
- NOT businesses or companies

Eligible projects must:

- Take place in the City of Grand Rapids.
- Have a clear public purpose (benefits the community).
- Intentionally align with NMF purpose and objectives.
- Be completely free for the community to participate (No admission fees, fundraising).
- Abide with all City ordinances and policies.
- NOT be used to pay for salaries or wages.
- NOT be used for lobbying efforts.
- NOT use NMF award funds to purchase alcohol.
- NOT increase cost to the City of Grand Rapids in anyway (Eg. maintenance & code compliance).
- NOT financially benefit City of GR staff, City Commissioners and/or Appointed/Elected Officials.

## NMF PROJECT ROLES

**Project Lead** - This is the main person leading the project. They must live in Grand Rapids city limits within the project's area of impact. The project lead is the primary contact between the City and the project team. They are also responsible for submitting project reporting throughout the project.

**Project Team Members** – In addition to the project lead, there must be at least two designated project team members. Team members support the project lead and help complete the project. Your team members must represent the individuals you are serving. Project team members will also receive reminder emails and communications from the City as secondary contacts.

**Fiduciary** - A fiduciary is a non-profit organization that assists with grants to help distribute and manage funds. If your project is selected, you will choose a project fiduciary located in your ward from a list provided. You will work with this organization to access and manage your funds.

## NMF PROCESS AND LOGISTICS

### STEP 1: Submit your Idea

The project lead can go to [www.grandrapidsmi.gov/nmf](http://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/nmf) to submit a NMF project idea during one of our bi-annual submission periods. They will be asked to:

- Describe the project in writing or video format.
- Explain how the project aligns with the NMF purpose and objectives.
- List out a draft of how the team would use the NMF funds (be clear and purposeful).

At this stage, you should start thinking about who your fiduciary will be. Once you have decided, work with the City to make sure they are registered as a vendor. To do so, you can contact Alex Droese at 616-456-3000 or [adroese@grcity.us](mailto:adroese@grcity.us).

## **STEP 2: Receive a Decision**

After the submission period closes, the NMF Committee reviews idea submissions and decides who will receive funds. We choose projects based on objective alignment, potential impact, inclusion, etc. Award amounts are determined by the funding needs outlined in the idea submission. Regardless of our decision, we will contact you by phone or email.

## **STEP 3: Schedule a Meeting with NMF Staff**

If you are awarded NMF funds, the project lead is required to attend a mandatory meeting with an NMF staff member. These meetings usually take place the Monday and Tuesday after decisions are announced. The project lead must respond to our email and phone calls as soon as possible to secure a time slot that best fits their schedule.

## **STEP 4: Meet with NMF Staff**

The project lead must attend this meeting, but we strongly encourage all project team members to be present. We will work together to:

- Declare a Project Team
- Declare or Identify a fiduciary
- Refine the project budget
- Identify the project area of impact
- Discuss project logistics and next steps

All this information will then be translated into an NMF contract between your team and the City of Grand Rapids.

## **STEP 5: Secure your Funds**

Once we finalize your contract, we will email you a copy. The contract will need to be signed by the project lead, fiduciary, and NMF Coordinator. The fiduciary needs to be registered as a vendor with the City of Grand Rapids. When we have received all the above, we will process your award and distribute your check. Checks can be picked-up at City Hall or mail to your fiduciary.

## **COMPLETING & TRACKING YOUR NMF PROJECT**

Once your NMF funds have been distributed, you are all set to start implementing your project. There are many parts to completing an NMF project, so it is important to start tracking early and stay ahead. Below are a few things to remember.

### **Track Spending**

You will want to start tracking project spending from day one. We do not need to know every detail, but we do need to know how much of your award was spent and how much of your award was spent in Grand Rapids city limits. We would like for you to try your best to spend the funds with vendors located within Grand Rapids city limits. If you do not spend all of your award, you will be required to refund the amount you did not spend back to the City, so please try your best to spend all of the funds.

### **Track Match**

Match is an important part of your project. You will need to match at a minimum the amount that you are awarded. For example, if you are awarded \$5,000, you will need to contribute \$5,000 which can be accomplished in a number of ways:

- Cash Match:** These are donations or contributions in the form of cash
- Meijer donates \$100
  - Mobile GR sponsors \$1,000

**In-Kind Match:**

These are donations or contributions that are not cash. This category covers many options such as food donations, discounts, and time (non-volunteer). In-kind match will be converted to a dollar amount for tracking purposes.

- Free advertising from La Mejor = \$200
- Neighbor donates fruit = \$100
- Local speaker presents for free = \$300

**Volunteer Match:**

Each hour spent working on the project will count as \$27.20 toward your match. This is a popular way of achieving match, and the hours add up quickly. You will need to track project volunteers by GR Resident and Non-GR Resident.

- A person who volunteered once at event- 8 hours= \$217.60
- A person who consistently volunteered over the course of the project (errands, meetings, events) – 25 hours = \$680

**NMF PROCESS OVERVIEW**

**Important Dates: NMF Contracts 2021 Round 2**

- Submit Project Idea:** December 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020 at 11:59pm
- Decision Notification:** Week of January 18, 2021
- Meet with NMF Staff:** Week of February 1 and February 8, 2021
- Funds Available\* By:** Monday, March 1, 2021
- Implement Project:** March 1, 2021 and August 31, 2021
- Closing Report Due:** Tuesday, August 31, 2021 at 11:59pm

\*Only 1 award per applicant per year

**Take photos**

Last, but certainly not least, you will want to take many photos over the course of your project. Photos will help you capture and share your success to our NMF team and bring to life the project you worked so hard on.

**SUBMITTING YOUR CLOSING REPORT**

At the end of your project, the Project Lead must submit a closing report. If **you do not, you will not be eligible for future funding**. This information lets us know how your project went and allows us to show City Commission the benefits of our community investments. Photos and narrative that you share may be used to create an article highlighting your work.

Thoroughly tracking your project and following our Closing Report Guide will make this part much easier. The closing report is filled out online and will require the following:

- Responses to project narrative and project reflection questions
- A completed Expense & Match Summary Sheet
- Digital copies of all volunteer sign-in sheets
- A minimum of five project photos
- Any additional links, documents, information (not required)

## TIPS TO CREATING A GREAT NMF PROJECT SUBMISSION

- Have a clear and developed project purpose and desired outcomes
- Be relevant and clearly inclusive of the diversity of the project impact area
- Be organized and clear with your thoughts and ideas
- Show that you are passionate and intentional with your work
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of how you want to practically use the funds

If you have any questions, comments, or need additional support at any point along the way, please email us at [nmf@grcity.us](mailto:nmf@grcity.us), or visit our website at [grandrapidsmi.com/nmf](http://grandrapidsmi.com/nmf).

Thank you for considering the Neighborhood Match Fund!