

Request for Proposals: Advancing Maternal Health Through Community Collaboration

Overview

Connecticut Community Foundation invites proposals for collaborative initiatives and projects that improve maternal health outcomes and advance health equity for families in the Greater Waterbury region.

The Foundation seeks to invest in partnerships - rather than individual organizations acting alone - that address systemic barriers, strengthen community supports, and create sustainable solutions for pregnant and postpartum individuals and their families.

In addition to grant funding, selected organizations will participate in the Advancing Maternal Health Collaborative, a facilitated learning and implementation cohort designed to strengthen relationships, coordinate services, and build long-term capacity across the region. The Collaborative will meet three times in Fall 2026 and once more in early 2027 as grants move towards implementation. Additional coaching will be made available, if needed.

Funding Available

CCF will distribute up to \$150,000 to participating organizations to support one-year collaborative projects that advance maternal health equity and align with one or more priorities identified in the grant guidelines below.

Applicants are encouraged to submit budgets that reflect the true cost of the proposed work.

Purpose

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to:

- Improve maternal health outcomes in Greater Waterbury
- Advance health equity in maternal care
- Encourage meaningful collaboration among organizations serving families

- Reduce duplication of services while strengthening coordinated care
- Build partnerships that continue beyond the grant period
- Support current and on-going collaborative work on maternal health outcomes

Priority Areas

Projects should align with one or more of the following:

- Expanding access to culturally responsive maternal care
- Increasing access to doulas, community health workers, midwives, peer support, or other trusted providers
- Improving maternal behavioral health and connections to mental health services
- Strengthening care coordination across healthcare and community organizations
- Addressing social and economic barriers that affect maternal health outcomes
- Improving awareness, education, navigation, or data-sharing that strengthens maternal health systems

Innovative approaches that address multiple priorities through partnership are strongly encouraged.

Collaborative Requirement

Collaboration is central to this funding opportunity. Applications must include at least **two organizations** working together toward shared goals. Partnerships may include:

- Community-based organizations
- Healthcare providers
- Behavioral health organizations
- Municipal agencies
- Social service organizations
- Faith-based organizations
- Educational institutions

Applicants should clearly describe:

- Why the partnership is necessary
- The role of each partner
- How decisions will be shared

Note: The Advancing Maternal Health Collaborative is designed to develop partnerships that can work together on a grant-funded project. Participation will help with this piece if you do not have a current partner.

Technical Assistance

All organizations must participate in the ***Advancing Maternal Health Collaborative*** facilitated by KJR Consulting to be eligible for funding.

The Collaborative is designed to help grantees move beyond individual projects toward long-term systems change through structured collaboration.

Participants will engage in:

- Four facilitated collaborative sessions (three in 2026 and one follow up session in 2027)
- Shared learning with peer organizations
- Mapping community assets and identifying service gaps
- Human-centered design activities with community members and individuals with lived experience
- Development of shared approaches to coordination and implementation
- Collaborative problem-solving during project implementation
- Ongoing implementation coaching tailored to cohort needs

The Collaborative is designed to help establish, continue, refine and/or support collaboration between community partners. The sessions will also provide dedicated time for partners to think through and discuss their work together.

[Click here to review the Collaborative's schedule.](#)

Funding

Connecticut Community Foundation will make up to \$150,000 available to support projects developed by program participants. Applications will be accepted and decisions will be made by the end of 2026.

Competitive proposals will demonstrate:

- Strong alignment with the maternal health priorities listed above
- Authentic collaboration among partners

- Meaningful engagement of individuals with lived experience
- A focus on racial equity and reducing disparities
- Clear outcomes and measurable impact
- Sustainable partnerships beyond the grant period
- Potential to strengthen the regional maternal health ecosystem

Applications will be evaluated based on:

- Alignment with funding priorities
- Strength of collaboration
- Community need
- Equity-centered approach
- Feasibility
- Potential impact
- Organizational capacity
- Sustainability

Grant funds may support:

- Personnel
- Program implementation
- Community outreach, education and engagement
- Partnership coordination
- Training and capacity building
- Evaluation
- Supplies and materials
- Stipends for community participants or individuals with lived experience
- Other reasonable project-related expenses

Capital projects and ongoing operating support unrelated to the proposed collaborative initiative are not eligible.

Eligible Applicants

- Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations, public agencies, and other community groups serving residents of Greater Waterbury.
 - Organizations serving populations disproportionately affected by maternal health inequities are strongly encouraged to apply and attend as a team of 2-3 people.
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Timeline

RFP Released: August 2026

Application Opens: September 22, 2026

Application Deadline: November 23, 2026

Grant Awards Announced: December 2026

Collaborative Cohort Dates:

- September 22, 2026 | 9:30 am -12:30 pm | State Education Resource Center ([SERC](#))
 - October 7, 2026 | 9:00 am -12:00 pm | State Education Resource Center ([SERC](#))
 - October 29, 2026 | 9:00 am -12:00 pm | State Education Resource Center ([SERC](#))
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Questions

Questions regarding this opportunity may be directed to: Patrick McKenna, Connecticut Community Foundation, at pmckenna@connctcf.org.

Resources

- Maternal Health Equity: A Blueprint for Connecticut | CT Health Foundation | [Link](#)
- Waterbury 2025 Town Equity Report | [Link](#)