



2026 HEALTH EQUITY CAPACITY-BUILDING (HECB) PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Updated: 11.12.2025

PROGRAM PURPOSE

1. Can you provide examples of past HECB grantees to give a sense of the types of organizations this program supports?

The HECB program has supported a total of 21 organizations. You can learn more about the program overall on the [HECB program page](#).

2. The RFP states that organizations that will be considered for funding must be led by and serving people with lived experience in one or more Underserved Communities, including communities of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), LGBTQ+ people, people with disabilities, and people experiencing homelessness. Will organizations led by and serving other communities be considered?

Generally not. We selected these communities as the focus of the HECB program both because the lack of access to healthcare and health care equity is more acute than the general population, these communities remain under-resourced, and MeHAF has not made any of these communities the specific focus for other major grant programs in the past, and a critical part of MeHAF's mission to improve health equity for all in Maine.

In order to be considered for an award, applicant organizations must have a primary focus on one of these communities, or a group of people that substantially overlaps, and demonstrate meaningful leadership from people with lived experience within the community, through a combination of staff and board makeup and broader community input into the organization's work. It is not required or expected for all members of an applicant's staff or board to be members of any particular group or community, but leadership from community members with lived experience should be a clear feature of the organization.

ORGANIZATIONAL ELIGIBILITY

3. My organization does not have tax-exempt status or our tax-exempt status is pending. Do I need a fiscal sponsor?

Yes, you may be able to apply via a fiscal sponsor.

Any organization intending to apply through a fiscal sponsor, must contact [Holly Irish, Grants Manager](#) to discuss your situation **before** beginning an application. Holly will guide you in submitting

a fiscally sponsored application that meets all requirements.

Please note failure to make contact regarding your grant application and the fiscal sponsorship process will make your application ineligible for consideration.

4. Can you further elaborate on what a fiscal sponsor is and what the relationship may look like?

If you intend to apply through a fiscal sponsor, the relationship between sponsor and sponsee needs to be in place before submitting an application. Both organizations will need to meet with Holly Irish for a brief meeting to review all the requirements of both organizations and ensure a mutual understanding of the steps involved in the grant process.

A *Memorandum of Understanding* (MOU) or signed fiscal sponsorship agreement that details the fiscal sponsorship relationship will need to be attached/uploaded to the submitted application as well. An agreement template is included in the grant application, which may be used. If you choose to use a different format for the agreement, it must be substantially similar to the template and acknowledge all requirements of both parties. A MOU or agreement must be signed by both parties and be active for dates that include the grant period noted on your application.

Please note failure to make contact regarding your grant application and the fiscal sponsorship process will make your application ineligible for consideration.

HECB PROGRAM INFORMATION

5. How many LOI applicants do you anticipate will be invited to submit full proposals?

The HECB program has typically been very competitive. Each round, we receive many more proposals than we are able to fund. We generally invite full proposals from about twice as many applicants as the number of grants we expect to award. We are expected to make seven awards in 2026.

6. When submitting an LOI, I am asked to indicate which format I would prefer to use (interview, video, or written submission) if my organization is invited to the finalist stage. Is that selection binding, or can I change my mind later?

The preference you indicate at the LOI stage is not binding. It is designed to give us a general sense of what types of submissions we are likely to receive at the full application stage so that we can plan for the review process. If selected for a final proposal, you may opt to make a different choice at that time.

MEHAF ONLINE GRANTS PORTAL – GENERAL INFORMATION

7. I'm having technical difficulties with the application. What should I do?

For help with technical difficulties, please contact [Holly Irish, Grants Manager](#), as soon as possible.

8. If my organization has an account in the grants portal, but the contact person is not the lead for this application, should the application lead have their own account? Can we share login information? What if more than one person is putting together the application?

Each organization may have one account in the grants portal. Multiple people from a single organization may request log-in credentials from MeHAF's Grants Manager, but the grants portal allows only a single point of contact (i.e., the grant contact). Only the *grant contact* has the ability to submit or receive documents within the portal.

The grant contact may share their login information with others that have a role in preparing the application.

Within the HECB application there are also fields that ask for an *additional contact*. If your organization receives a grant, the Program Officer will add this person as a secondary contact to their HECB email group of grantee contacts. These additional contacts will not receive notifications about the grant that come from the grants portal, such as grant agreements, reporting reminders, etc.

9. Does the MeHAF grants portal auto-save my draft application?

Yes, the grants portal will auto-save your application, but it is always a good idea to save it periodically as you work on your draft. If writing text documents, we recommend first drafting them in Word or other word processing software, and then copying and pasting them into your online application. This may help to avoid losing any unsaved written work if you have technical issues or your internet connection goes down unexpectedly while working on your application. Please note that bullets or other symbols, charts, etc. are not compatible with the text boxes of the online application.

10. Once submitted, can the application be reopened and modified?

Once submitted, you will no longer be able to change the application. However, you will be able to view and print your submission.

LOI SUBMISSION & FOLLOW-UP

11. How do I submit my LOI application?

Log in to the grants portal to review funding opportunities and apply. If you have any doubts about whether your organization already has an account, please contact Holly Irish prior to creating a new account to avoid creating a duplicate record. Holly is also available to help if you do not know your log in credentials.

12. May we submit more than one LOI?

An organization may submit a single LOI on its own behalf. An organization may serve as a fiscal sponsor for more than one other organization, or serve as a fiscal sponsor at the same time as submitting an LOI on its own behalf.

13. Are there character limits for the LOI?

The LOI consists of completing some basic organizational information, and describing how your organization aligns with the criteria listed in the RFP. Though you can use up to 9000 characters, we suggest keeping your answers from 2000 characters to 4000 characters in the provided textbox.

14. When I submit the LOI, will I receive a confirmation?

If you are the designated grant contact person, you will receive a confirmation. Please be sure to confirm that you have marked our grants portal's sending email address (administrator@grantinterface.com) as a "safe sender" so you receive all grant-related communications from our system.

15. If our LOI doesn't result in an invitation to submit a full proposal, will we get feedback on our application? Will we learn who received invitations or awards?

Yes, MeHAF staff are happy to provide feedback following each stage of the grant process. The denial email will let you know how to schedule a debriefing call if you wish.

We will notify all applicants from both the LOI and full proposal stages via email when we post the full list of awarded grantees for the 2026 HECB Program on our website in June 2026.

FUNDING DECISIONS AND NOTIFICATION

16. When can we expect to hear whether we have been awarded a grant?

We will notify all applicants about the status of your application via email on **Wednesday, May 13**. We send notifications to those who are selected as well as those who are not. If you do not receive an email from us by that date, please do not hesitate to contact us. We have had occasional issues with email delivery from our grants portal to some addresses, including those that have received portal email successfully in the past. We are happy to hear from you if there is a problem – please do not assume we have denied your proposal if you do not see a message in your inbox.