



Otto Bremer Trust Community Responsive Fund FAQs

Last Revised: March 26, 2026

Eligibility Criteria

1) Are national organizations allowed to apply on behalf of an affiliated organization or program in our region?

OBT prefers to directly support local affiliates to retain the most financial resources possible for direct service work. Therefore, the assessment of local organizations with national affiliations will be based on the size of the local organization itself. Local organizations that do not meet the established OBT Community Responsive Fund criteria are not eligible.

2) Our organization is the backbone of a local coalition. Can we apply for a grant through the OBT Community Responsive Fund on behalf of the coalition?

No. Partnerships and coalitions of nonprofit organizations are not eligible.

3) Can organizations apply as a coalition and consolidate their finances—including their previous fiscal year's actual expenses—into one entity?

No. The legal entity receiving grant funds must have had previous fiscal year's actual expenses of more than \$3 million.

4) Are government-owned hospitals or joint-powers healthcare systems eligible?

No. However, affiliated 501(c)(3) hospital and healthcare foundations may be eligible.

Grant Terms / Finances

5) What information will GTCUW use to determine if my organization meets the \$3M budget minimum?

GTCUW will use line 12, Total Revenue, from your organization's most recently filed 990.

6) Can you clarify the use of grant funds in relation to the guidance that no more than 10% be used for administrative expenses?

Ninety percent of grant funds are restricted to programs and direct services that align with the focus areas. Staff time required for the successful delivery of aligned direct services may be included in that ninety percent. Note that the grant funds may be utilized by multiple programs so long as the activities align with the focus areas. Ten percent of grant funds are unrestricted and may be used to support administrative expenses (e.g., indirect costs) or may be used for programs and direct services that align with the focus areas.

- 7) **The grant terms state, “No more than 10% of grant funds may be used for administrative expenses.” What does OBT consider to be administrative expenses? Are these additional expenses beyond traditional indirect expenses?**
Administrative expenses include management and general expenses and fundraising expenses, which are consistent with Form 990 (Part IX, Statement of Functional Expenses). No, administrative expenses through the OBT Community Responsive Fund are not additional expenses beyond traditional indirect expenses.
- 8) **Our organization works in multiple locations across OBT’s funding geography. Are we eligible to receive multiple grants through the OBT Community Responsive Fund?**
Yes. However, pooling multiple regions together to receive a larger grant is not allowed. The maximum grant per organization is \$75,000.
- 9) **If an eligible healthcare entity (e.g., hospital, clinic, etc.) applies for and is awarded a grant, would it be allowable for the grant funds to be disbursed to its related foundation?**
Yes. The grant can be made to either the hospital or its related foundation.
- 10) **Many hospitals have a foundation to support fundraising activities. Which set of financials should we use when determining eligibility for the OBT Community Responsive Fund?**
It is acceptable practice to assess hospitals utilizing the financials of both the hospital and its foundation. The hospital’s expenses may be used to determine eligibility regarding prior fiscal year actual expenses. The hospital foundation’s revenues may be used to determine public philanthropic financial support.

Focus Areas - Food

- 11) **Food banks that procure and distribute food to partner meal sites and food pantries are not eligible for their “food banking” activities. What if a food bank also operates its own meal site or food pantry? Would grants for those purposes be eligible?**
Yes, direct meal site and food pantry services are eligible for consideration. However, large-scale food storage and distribution center activities that primarily function to supply food to other local organizations are not eligible for support through the OBT Community Responsive Fund.
- 12) **Churches often operate food shelves and food pantries. Are food shelves and pantries provided by churches eligible?**
Yes, provided they meet the overall criteria already established.
- 13) **Many daycare centers and other day programs provide meals, although these are**

not typically open to the broader community. Would **meal programs at daycare centers** and other day programs be eligible under the focus area of food?

No.

14) Some **youth development programs** provide dinner during the school year and lunches in the summer for participants. They also provide certain holiday meals and grab-and-go pantry items. Would these types of youth programs and related services be eligible for consideration under the focus area of food?

No. The intent of the focus area is that hunger relief efforts are a major emphasis of the organization's work.

Focus Areas - Shelter

15) Short-term and emergency **shelter beds** are described in the focus area of shelter. Does this focus area allow for providing **hotel stays** when shelters are full, or providing hotel stays in rural areas where a stand-alone emergency shelter does not exist?

Yes, both examples are eligible.

16) **Churches** often operate overflow **shelter services**, either onsite or via hotel vouchers. Are emergency overflow shelter services provided by churches eligible?

Yes, provided they meet the overall criteria already established.

Focus Areas – Low-Income Healthcare Clinics

17) The focus area of low-income healthcare clinics suggests the emphasis is on charitable clinics and safety net providers. Would **programs and services specifically targeted to low-income communities** be eligible for consideration, even if they are provided by a larger healthcare system whose sole focus is not low-income healthcare?

Yes.

Focus Areas – Disability Services

18) Our **disability services** organization provides waived services; housing with support services; and/or vocational rehabilitation, but **does not focus specifically on working with people who have experienced chronic or long-term homelessness**. Are we eligible to apply?

No. In alignment with Greater Twin Cities United Way's focus on ending homelessness, the intent of the Disability Services funding is that organizations have dedicated programs for working with people who meet the definition of chronic or long-term homelessness, and who have a disabling condition.

Focus Areas – School-based mental health

19) How are you defining “school-based” mental health for the purposes of this grant?

School-based mental health refers to programs and services provided in schools as well as school-linked services, when the school plays a significant role in the coordination of care. School-based mental health interventions can occur before or after school. These services can include in-person mental health services accessed at school or near campus, as well as services accessed through telehealth. Services must be delivered by a licensed clinician.

20) Under the focus area of school-based mental health, what services are eligible?

Eligible services under the school-based mental health focus area are individual and/or group therapy delivered by a licensed clinician (LPCC, LICSW, LMFT, or LP)

21) Our program supports the social-emotional learning of young people through in- and after-school activities such as sports, volunteering, STEM workshops, and the arts, all of which improve mental health. Are these services eligible?

No. The Otto Bremer Trust’s intent in the school-based mental health focus area is to fund clinical services only.

22) Under the focus area of school-based mental health, are Head Start, early learning, and similar programs eligible?

No. For the purpose of this grant the Otto Bremer Trust’s intent is to fund K-12 and older school-based mental health programs and services.

23) Under the focus area of school-based mental health, are mental health services provided by public school districts or government entities eligible?

No. Government entities and public schools are not eligible for this opportunity. Non-public schools are eligible if they meet all eligibility criteria.

24) In Minnesota, school-based mental health services are often called “school-linked” or “School-Linked Behavioral Health”; do these mean the same thing for this RFP?

Yes, for the purpose of this grant “school-linked” and “School-Linked Behavioral Health” programs and services are considered part of school-based mental health services.

Timeline

25) Do funded programs need to spend OBT Community Responsive grant funds within 12 months?

Yes. Funded programs must spend the funds within 12 months. The start date occurs when the grant is made from the intermediary to the grantee. The grant period will be October 1, 2026 through September 30, 2027.

26) When will we find out if our organization has been awarded a grant?

Greater Twin Cities United Way will submit recommendations for grants to the Otto Bremer Trust in June for their approval. We anticipate notifying organizations of final grant decisions by mid-September.