



# Otto Bremer Trust Community Responsive Fund 2026 Request for Proposal Guidelines

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## Otto Bremer Trust (OBT) Community Responsive Fund 2026 RFP Summary:

Greater Twin Cities United Way (GTCUW) is grateful to be one of the Otto Bremer Trust's (OBT) intermediary partners across OBT's four state region. In 2026, GTCUW will administer \$5.5M from the Otto Bremer Trust Community Responsive Fund. This document provides information on Greater Twin Cities United Way's process to administer these funds, including the requirements set by Otto Bremer Trust.

### **Focus Areas**

Otto Bremer Trust sets the focus areas for the OBT Community Responsive Fund on an annual basis and permits Greater Twin Cities United Way (GTCUW) to utilize a process that aligns the opportunity to GTCUW's focus areas and grantmaking processes. This year, funding will be available for organizations in the following focus areas:

#### ***Applications for the following focus area will be accepted on an invite-only basis.***

- **Food.** Organizations and programs that directly operate meal sites and food shelves to meet basic daily needs. (Large, region- and state-wide food bank activities are not eligible).
- **Shelter.** Organizations and programs that provide short-term and emergency shelter beds for people who are experiencing homelessness. This includes providing hotel stays when shelters are full, or providing hotel stays in rural areas where a stand-alone emergency shelter does not exist.
- **Disability services.** Organizations providing supportive housing and services to households with people with physical or cognitive disabilities who have experienced long-term or chronic homelessness.
  - In alignment with GTCUW's focus on ending homelessness, organizations must have dedicated programs for working with people who meet the definition of chronic or long-term homelessness, and who have a disabling condition. Organizations who provide waived services, housing with support services (group homes), and/or vocational rehabilitation *without* a major focus on serving individuals meeting the definition of [long-term or chronic homelessness](#) are not eligible for this opportunity.

#### ***Applications for the following focus area will be accepted from any eligible organization.***

- **Low-income healthcare clinics.** Organizations and programs that primarily provide affordable medical, dental, or mental health services to people with limited financial resources or who are uninsured or underinsured.

- **School-based mental health.** Organizations and programs that provide clinical school-based mental health activities (therapy or group therapy) provided by licensed mental health professionals. (School-based mental health services are focused on K-12 students. Early childhood centers, colleges, universities, etc. are not eligible.)

*Note: As indicated above, the RFP process for the Food, Shelter, and Disability services focus areas will be by invitation only; there will be an open RFP application process for the low-income healthcare clinics and school-based mental health focus areas.*

### **Eligibility**

Eligibility criteria for OBT Community Responsive grants through Greater Twin Cities United Way are:

- Organizations is a 501c3 nonprofit, are not fiscally sponsored, and must be headquartered in Twin Cities. Partnerships and coalitions of nonprofit organizations are not eligible.
- Organization has at least five (5) years of successful operations during which they have continuously held 501c3 status
- Located and doing work in 9-county metro area; a majority of people served by the organization must live in the Twin Cities region
- Organization's last fiscal year's total expenses was at least \$3 million
- Organizations who are currently receiving strategic grants directly from OBT are not eligible to apply.

### **Grant Terms**

- Maximum grant award is \$75,000
- Grants cannot be more than 10% of organization's philanthropic revenue (revenue less government funding, earned income, investment gains, fee for service, and in-kind contributions; from your most recent form 990, Part VIII, Line 1f)
- Funds will be restricted to activities within the focus area. Up to 10% is permitted for administrative costs
- Grant period is anticipated to start October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026 for a period of one year

Key Dates for Applicants	
Eligibility Check-In Meeting Request Form Open	April 6 – May 1
Eligibility Check-In Meetings. NOTE: an eligibility check in meeting is required before an organization can complete the application.	April 6 – May 11
Application Open	May 1 – May 20
Application Closes	Wednesday May 20th at 4pm
Final Grant Decisions Communicated	Mid-September, 2026
Grant Term Begins	October 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2026
Grant Term Ends	September 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2027

For more information, please contact [rfp@gtcuw.org](mailto:rfp@gtcuw.org)

## Greater Twin Cities United Way Background

Greater Twin Cities United Way fuels lasting change toward our vision of a community where all people thrive regardless of income, race, or place. Because a prosperous future belongs to everyone, our mission is to unite changemakers, advocate for social good, and develop solutions to address the challenges no one can solve alone. Greater Twin Cities United Way seeks to disrupt the extent to which income, race, or place predicts a person’s ability to thrive.

## Funding Opportunity Overview

Otto Bremer Trust Community Responsive Fund 2026 RFP will allocate **\$5.5M in grants** funding to direct service organizations across the focus areas of food, shelter, disability services, low-income healthcare clinics, and school-based mental health. We anticipate funding between **74-80 organizations with grants between \$50,000- \$75,000 each.**

## Required Activities

All applicants must provide a description of their proposed activities, how they will implement the proposed activities and how they will collect evaluation information. The description of proposed activities

will assist GTCUW reviewers in assessing the proposal and scoring applications. The table below is intended to transparently communicate to applicants what will be required, if selected to receive funding.

<b>Table 1: Required Activities and Evaluation Measures</b>	
<b>Required Activity</b>	<b>Required Measures to Report</b>
Provide direct services to Twin Cities nine-county area residents in at least one of the focus areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of people served in the focus area</li> <li>• Race/ethnicity of people served in the focus area</li> <li>• Income level of people served in the focus area</li> <li>• County of residence of people served in the focus area</li> <li>• Qualitative description of the community served including relevant context on the cultural, social, and economic environment</li> <li>• Qualitative description of programing and organizational successes</li> <li>• Qualitative description of programing and organizational challenges</li> <li>• See Otto Bremer Trust evaluation metrics table (Table 3) for specific focus area measures</li> </ul>
Complete midpoint check-in conversation	All funded partners will check-in with GTCUW staff at least once during the funding period to discuss technical assistance needs, implementation progress, success, and challenges.
Complete final evaluation report	All funded partners complete report including required metrics noted in grant agreements

**Learning and Evaluation**

All funded partners are required to participate in evaluation efforts with GTCUW staff in support of program learning, implementation progress, and information sharing. GTCUW intends to build learning and evaluation plans in a way that minimizes the burden on funded partners and emphasizes our impact. Data collection approaches will be further refined in conjunction with funded organizations and support from GTCUW evaluation staff will be provided, as needed.

A more detailed Evaluation and Learning plan will be shared with funded organizations closer to the start of the grant period. In the meantime, funded partners should expect to engage in the following evaluation activities over the course of the grant period.

<b>Table 2: Evaluation Activities</b>		
<b>Evaluation Activity</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Funded Partner Engagement</b>
Midpoint check-in	One meeting between March 1, 2027 and May 31, 2027	Partners will connect for 60 minutes or less with GTCUW staff for a midpoint check-in conversation.
Final evaluation report	September 2027  If funded partners receive funds through other GTCUW programs, the final report timing may be aligned with the reporting timeframe of the other GTCUW program(s).	Partners will complete an electronic submission using the GTCUW grants portal.

At minimum, all funded partners will be required to report on the following metrics noted as “All Partners” with additional metrics required dependent on selected focus areas. The reasoning for metric selection is briefly described in the table below.

<b>Table 3: Otto Bremer Trust Final Report Evaluation Metrics</b>	
<b>All Partners</b>	
<b>Evaluation Metric</b>	<b>Metric Reasoning</b>
Number of people served in focus area	A count of the number of people served helps GTCUW to better understand and communicate partner service reach.
Race/ethnicity of people served in focus area	Understanding the race/ethnicity of people served helps GTCUW to ensure that funded partners and services are being provided equitably.
Income level of people served in focus area including type of income (earned, government benefit, other)	Collecting information on the income level (using categories to be finalized such as 200% Below Federal Poverty Level, between 200%-300% FPL, above 300% FPL) and type of income of people served supports understanding the communities most in need for

	services and understanding the economic well-being of the Twin Cities community.
Zip code or county of residence of people served in focus area	GTCUW has a nine-county service area, including the counties of Hennepin, Ramsey, Anoka, Scott, Carver, Dakota, Washington, Chisago, and Isanti. Collecting information on area of residence is needed to describe the scope and reach of services provided to the Twin Cities community.
Qualitative description of the community served including relevant context on the cultural, social, and economic environment related to focus area	To help GTCUW understand the lived experience of people served by funded partners and how different social factors can influence a person's access to services.
Qualitative description of any programing changes/developments and organizational successes related to focus area	GTCUW utilizes funded partner input when designing funding opportunities, implementing quality improvement, and determining technical assistance resources. Collecting information on what is going well is necessary to amplify proven and promising practices.
Qualitative description of organizational challenges related to focus area	Collecting information on barriers to successful implementation is essential to understanding community contextual factors impacting funder partners and identifying opportunities for GTCUW to better align funding opportunities with partner needs.
<b>Food Security Focus Area</b>	
<b>Evaluation Metric</b>	<b>Metric Reasoning</b>
Total pounds of food distributed	To provide details on funded partner operations and resources provided to community members.
Qualitative description of the types of food security supports provided (Fresh food, shelf stable, household goods, locally produced, culturally relevant)	To provide details on funded partner operations and resources provided to community members.
<b>Shelter Focus Area</b>	
<b>Evaluation Metric</b>	<b>Metric Reasoning</b>

Number of people that obtain housing other than emergency shelter	To help GTCUW better understand the role that shelter organizations play in preventing and ending chronic or long-term homelessness. It is not required that funded partners provide long-term housing.
Number of supportive services provided	To help GTCUW better understand the holistic wraparound services approach to preventing and ending chronic or long-term homelessness that shelter organizations utilize. GTCUW will align response options to this metric with the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) core supportive services list.
<b>Disability Services Focus Area</b>	
<b>Evaluation Metric</b>	<b>Metric Reasoning</b>
Number of clients served that receive federal or state housing vouchers	To help GTCUW understand how other support services are utilized and to learn more about the populations served. GTCUW is striving to align with common metrics required by other housing services funders.
Number of supportive services provided	To help GTCUW better understand the holistic wraparound services approach to preventing or ending chronic or long-term homelessness that shelter organizations utilize. GTCUW will align response options to this metric with the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) core supportive services list.
<b>School-Based Mental Health Focus Area</b>	
<b>Evaluation Metric</b>	<b>Metric Reasoning</b>
Number of patients with health care coverage disaggregated by uninsured, on Medicaid, on Medicare, and private insurance	To help GTCUW understand how insurance coverage influences access to care and learn more about the populations served. GTCUW is striving to align with common metrics required by other healthcare service funders.
Total number of visits/encounters disaggregated by visit type (individual therapy, group therapy, other)	To provide further description of the scale of funded partner operations.
<b>Low-income Healthcare Clinics Focus Area</b>	
<b>Evaluation Metric</b>	<b>Metric Reasoning</b>

Number of patients with health care coverage disaggregated by uninsured, on Medicaid, on Medicare, and private insurance	To help GTCUW understand how insurance coverage influences access to care and learn more about the populations served. GTCUW is striving to align with common metrics required by other healthcare service funders.
Total number of visits/encounters disaggregated by visit type (medical, dental, mental health and SUD, other)	To provide further description of the scale of funded partner operations. GTCUW is striving to align with common metrics required by other healthcare service funders. It is not expected that funded partners provide all visit types.
<b>Disability Services Focus Area</b>	
<b>Evaluation Metric</b>	<b>Metric Reasoning</b>
Number of clients served that receive federal or state housing vouchers	To help GTCUW understand how other support services are utilized and to learn more about the populations served. GTCUW is striving to align with common metrics required by other housing services funders.
Number of supportive services provided	To help GTCUW better understand the holistic wraparound services approach to preventing or ending chronic or long-term homelessness that shelter organizations utilize. GTCUW will align response options to this metric with the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) core supportive services list.

## Utilization of Grant Funds

Grant funds are restricted to programs and direct services that align with the funded focus area, with 10% of the funds available for administrative expenses. Staff time required for the successful delivery of aligned direct services may be included in the 90% of the restricted funds. Grant funds may be utilized by multiple programs within your organization so long as the activities align with the funded focus area. Up to ten percent of grant funds are unrestricted and may be used to support administrative expenses (e.g., indirect costs).

GTCUW does not require funded partners to report on how they spend grant funds or provide detailed invoices, however, funded partners may be asked for a high-level overview of how grant funds were used over the course of the grant to support learning and evaluation and plan future grantmaking.

GTCUW partners closely and relationally with all funded partners to maintain consistent communication and complete multiple due diligence processes, positioning GTCUW to address concerns early. GTCUW is committed to stewardship of resources in alignment with the intended impact and use of funds. If there are concerns about fraud or misuse, GTCUW implements the following process:

- GTCUW will pause grant payments immediately.
- Engage the organization and their board chair to explore the concern and gather additional information.
- When a concern is substantiated, grant payments are immediately terminated and the organization is asked to repay any GTCUW funds that were misused.
- When a concern is resolved and unsubstantiated, grant payments will resume.

## Funding Eligibility

**Organizations must meet the following requirements to apply:**

- Organizations are a 501c3, are not fiscally sponsored, and must be headquartered in the nine-county Twin Cities region.
- Organization has at least five (5) years of successful operations during which they have continuously held 501c3 status.
- Organization's last fiscal year's actual expenses must be a minimum of \$3 million.

**Important Note on Financial Review:** Your organization must meet the financial standards for Greater Twin Cities United Way funded partners based on a review of financial documents, such as, your most recent financial statements, form 990, and audit (if your organization is required by law to complete an audit) in order to receive funding. **Organizations required to complete an audit are highly recommended to have a “clean” (unqualified) audit opinion to be considered for funding under this RFP.** You will be asked to upload financial documents as part of the application. Please note that grants cannot be more than 10% of organization's philanthropic revenue (revenue less government funding, earned income, investment gains, fee for service, and in-kind contributions). GTCUW makes the final determination on grant amounts based on financial review and funds availability.

You will be asked to upload the following financial documents as part of the application:

- Last three years of 990s

- Most recent organization budget or forecast
- Most recent board-approved audit
- 501c3 determination letter
- If not funded by Greater Twin Cities United Way before, W9

For any special considerations related to these criteria, please contact us at [rfp@gtcuw.org](mailto:rfp@gtcuw.org) to determine your eligibility.

## Funding Priorities

We will prioritize organizations that meet the following criteria.

- Your organization demonstrates strong engagement with the community served that informs service design and delivery and is responsive to community issues and solutions.
- Your organization provides a holistic approach to service delivery.
- Your organization articulates how its work creates impact for the people it serves.

## Application Process

### How To Apply --Greater Twin Cities United Way Grants Portal

Non-profit organizations wishing to apply for this RFP must submit an [OBT Eligibility Meeting Request Form](#) by Friday, May 1st, 2026 and complete an Eligibility Review Meeting with a GTCUW Program Officer by Monday, May 11th, 2026. After completing an Eligibility Review Meeting, eligible organizations will be invited to complete the full application. Applications will open on May 1st and must be submitted in the Grants Portal by Wednesday May 20th at 4pm. Applications will be scored by a team of Greater Twin Cities United Way staff using the proposal assessment rubric provided below.

**IMPORTANT:** In order to access this RFP, please use one of the following sets directions if you are a **New User** to our Grants Portal, or a **Current User**.

To Sign Up as a **New User** of the GTCUW Grants Portal:

1. Check to see if you have an existing account by [following this link](#) and entering your work email as your username and your password. If your email is recognized and you need a new password, click **Forgot User ID or Password?** If your email is not recognized and you need to create an

account, proceed to step 2.

2. If you need to create an account, [fill out this form to get started](#). It may take our team 3 business days to get your account up and running. You can also use this form to sign up to receive access to any open GTCUW RFPs. If you already have an account, please refer to the next set of directions for **Current Users** on how to receive access to open GTCUW RFPs.
3. Once your account has been created, you will receive an automated email from [RFP@gtcuw.org](mailto:RFP@gtcuw.org) directing you to log in to your Grants Portal account.
4. After creating your account, you can [click on](#) this link to log in. **You may want to bookmark this page for future use.**

For **Current Users**, How to Sign up to Access Open GTCUW RFPs:

1. Log in to your online grants portal account. If you don't have a login, refer to the above instructions on creating one.
2. First check if you already have access to your desired RFP(s).
  - a. After logging in to your grants portal account, navigate to the Applications/Reports tab at the top of the web page to check which RFPs you currently have access to.
3. If you don't see your desired RFP(s) available in the **Applications/Reports** tab, navigate to the **Sign Up for Open RFPs** tab and sign up for the RFP(s) for which you'd like to apply. It may take our team 3 business days to process this request and for you to see the requested RFP(s) in your Applications/Reports tab.

Refer to our [info sheet](#) for further details on how to navigate your Grants Portal account, and reach out to [RFP@gtcuw.org](mailto:RFP@gtcuw.org) with any questions.

## Application Materials

Please see our [website](#) for application materials and additional guidance. We will update this page with additional resources and guidance on a regular basis throughout the application process.

To help applicants prepare to apply for the full Otto Bremer Community Responsive Fund grant application, we will post a Word version of the application form on our [website](#) by May 1<sup>st</sup>. Please note that we’re providing a Word version of the application to support your preparation; final applications must be submitted in the Grants Portal to be considered.

### Proposal Assessment Rubric

The written application will be scored against the proposal assessment rubric below.

Area of Assessment	% of Total Score
Organizational description	10%
Alignment with communities with greatest need or unmet needs	25%
Summary of proposed work	40%
Evaluation capacity	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

Applicants will be notified of final funding decisions via email in September 2026. Please refer to “Key Dates for Applications.”

Greater Twin Cities United Way reserves the right to make awards that support our cultivation of a balanced grant portfolio that most effectively advances our mission, goals, and priorities. Toward this end, and in addition to criteria identified in this RFP, funding decisions may include considerations of geography, scale and ecosystem factors, among other factors. Greater Twin Cities United Way will submit recommendations for grants to the Otto Bremer Trust for their approval. We anticipate notifying organizations of final grant decisions by mid-September.

### Grant Terms and Payments

- Grants are anticipated to be between \$50,000-\$75,000 with a grant term of October 1, 2026 to September 30, 2027.
- Funded partners will be asked to provide direct deposit information for payment.
- All funded partners will be required to participate in the following:
  - Provide direct services to Twin Cities nine-county area residents in at least one of the focus

areas

- Complete midpoint check-in conversation
  - Complete final evaluation report
- 
- In addition to a mid-point check in with a GTCUW Program Officer, funded partners may have contact with their Program Officer throughout the grant period for relationship building, additional resources, and to address any questions or concerns related to the grant.

### **Application Resources and Other Questions**

During the application period, Greater Twin Cities United Way staff are available to answer your questions and assist with your application.

- Please see our [website](#) with additional information about this funding opportunity. We will update this page with additional resources and guidance on a regular basis throughout the application process.
- Please refer to our [info sheet](#) for further details on how to navigate your Grants Portal account, and reach out to [RFP@gtcuw.org](mailto:RFP@gtcuw.org) with any questions.
- Contact us at [rfp@gtcuw.org](mailto:rfp@gtcuw.org) and a Greater Twin Cities United Way staff person will respond to your question within 3 business days.