

## **F.R. Bigelow Foundation | Systems Change | LOI Scoring Rubric**

### **Grantmaking focus areas:**

F. R. Bigelow Foundation believes that our community should not only benefit from our work, but inform and form it as well. Creating solutions to today's issues requires a collaborative approach. Our work is also rooted in a commitment to racial equity.

The goal of our Systems Change Grant Program (invite-only) is to support efforts to help systems adapt, transform and/or be disrupted to achieve more equitable results.

The Foundation's Systems Change Grant Program seeks to address root causes of any issue impacting the East Metro (including, but not limited to, the five funding priorities of our Community Solutions Grant Program).

This includes non-partisan activities such as advocacy, organizing, research, civic engagement, narrative change and/or storytelling, but does not include lobbying.

### **Funding Priorities:**

#### **Arts & Culture**

Strengthening the arts and culture sector to serve all individuals and all communities across the East Metro region

- The Foundation believes that all peoples, their cultures, and their art contribute to the meaning and understanding of our humanity and should be honored and celebrated.
- Priority will be given to arts and culture organizations that seek to amplify narratives and voices across BIPOC communities and other communities experiencing marginalization (e.g., people with disabilities, low-income communities, members of the LGBTQIA+ community, formerly incarcerated people, etc.) through the arts.

#### **Community & Economic Development**

Building a strong and vital East Metro through community building, physical development and strengthening support for low-income individuals, families and underrepresented communities through workforce development and training

- The Foundation seeks to invest and partner in solutions informed and formed by the people facing the highest barriers to wealth creation, economic security and family-sustaining career pathways. In the East Metro, this includes BIPOC, women, veterans, young people, people with disabilities, formerly incarcerated people and LGBTQIA+ people.
- Specific priorities for wealth creation include strengthening the entrepreneur ecosystem and increasing local ownership of businesses and homes.
- Regarding economic security, the Foundation recognizes the importance of anchor institutions embedded at the neighborhood level. For workforce development, we will prioritize employment pathways that meet the needs of individuals and employers alike.

### Health

Increasing health equity through quality, affordable, culturally relevant services, particularly for low-income, uninsured, under-insured and socially marginalized individuals

- The Foundation continues to prioritize health organizations that focus on health equity and increase access to affordable, culturally relevant health services.
- The Foundation hopes to align its health grants to be inclusive of programs and organizations that serve low-income families, provide free or affordable, culturally relevant services, and holistic care.
- Given the increase in severity, cost of and demand for mental health services, urgent care and/or crisis prevention, access to reproductive health care, trauma-informed health care, and free or reduced services for uninsured or underinsured communities, the Foundation will prioritize these programs and organizations to continue to serve our most vulnerable and marginalized communities.

### Human Services

Investing in basic needs for individuals and families, helping them be safe, stable and independent

- The Foundation will prioritize grants that assist residents in navigating life transitions, finding safety and stability, and promoting independence.
- In addition to supporting work that centers the voices of the people most impacted by an organization's work, special priority will be given to disability support services, child welfare support services, family and parent support services, food relief and assistance, older adult services, immigration and legal services, and re-entry supports for formerly incarcerated people.

### Youth & Education

Supporting under-served children, youth and young adults by investing in access to high-quality education and youth development both in and out of school from cradle to career

- The Foundation recognizes how important it is for students and young people to feel cared for, protected, valued and seen after a difficult period in their learning and growth. This is complex and urgent work, and the Foundation will prioritize organizations that blend academic, social and emotional support for young people most impacted by educational inequity.
- The Foundation will also prioritize support to organizations working to build a robust early childhood system that gives children and families access to high-quality care and education programs.

## Section 1: Overview & Proposed Work

**Scoring Description:** To what extent does the applicant clearly describe their current focus, key initiatives or programs, and the communities they serve? Strong proposals will show how the organization positions itself within broader efforts to advance change in one or more priority areas, and how its work contributes to long-term systems-level impact.

<b>Score</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>5</b>	The organization exemplifies these criteria and provides strong responses to the corresponding LOI questions. The response provides a cohesive explanation of the organization’s work, who the organization works with, and why the work matters. It clearly situates the organization within broader efforts to contribute to long-term systems-level impact.
<b>4</b>	The organization exemplifies some of these criteria and provides good responses to the corresponding LOI questions. The organization describes its programs and communities clearly, though some elements may not be fully developed or connected. The role within the broader change efforts is present but may be more implied than explicitly articulated.
<b>3</b>	The organization generally aligns with the criteria and provides adequate responses to the corresponding LOI questions. The response offers a basic description of key initiatives, programs, and general understanding of the organization.
<b>2</b>	The organization may align with some of the criteria and provides minimal responses to the corresponding LOI questions. The information provided is fragmented, vague, or overly general, making it difficult to understand

the organization's focus or whom it serves. Little connection is made to contributing to long-term systems-level impact.

1

**Comments  
or  
Questions**

The organization does not meet or does not clearly describe how it meets these criteria. The response does not clearly explain the organization's work, communities, or relevance to long-term system-level impact.

## **Section 2: Vision & Approach**

**Scoring Description:** To what extent does the applicant articulate a compelling long-term vision for change that addresses root causes and advances equity? Strong proposals will demonstrate how their work adapts, transforms, and disrupts systems through approaches such as advocacy, organizing, or research. The applicant should also show how their work is informed by, formed with, and directly benefits communities most impacted, and how guiding principles or frameworks shape their approach.

**Score**

**Description**

5

The organization exemplifies these criteria and provides strong responses to the corresponding LOI questions. The organization articulates a compelling long-term vision and clearly explains how its work contributes to a long-term systems-level impact. The response demonstrates authentic connection to communities most impacted and shows how stated values or frameworks actively guide decisions and practices.

4

The organization exemplifies some of these criteria and provides good responses to the corresponding LOI questions. The organization describes a meaningful vision and references community benefit and guiding principles, though some relationships between vision, practice and impact could be more explicit.

3

The organization generally aligns with the criteria and provides adequate responses to the corresponding LOI questions. The response expresses aspirations or values but provides limited explanation of how they shape

actual work or partnerships. Community connection is mentioned but not clearly integrated into the organization's approach.

**2** The organization may align with some of the criteria and provides minimal responses to the corresponding LOI questions. The organization shares high-level intentions or language about impact, but it is unclear how this translates into practice or benefits communities most impacted.

**1** The organization does not meet or does not clearly describe how it meets these criteria. The response does not clearly articulate a long-term vision or how the work contributes to a systems-level change efforts. Little to no connection is made to community influence, benefit, or guidance practices.

**Comments  
or  
Questions**

### **Section 3: Organizational Readiness & Capacity**

**Scoring Description:** To what extent does the applicant demonstrate organizational readiness and capacity to carry out this work? Strong proposals will describe leadership, staffing, financial health, and infrastructure in ways that convey both current strengths and areas for growth. The applicant should show how funding will support continued growth, strengthen organizational infrastructure, and expand their ability to sustain long-term systems change across the priority areas.

**Score**

**Description**

**5** The organization exemplifies these criteria and provides strong responses to the corresponding LOI questions. The response clearly describes leadership and a readiness that inspires confidence in the organization's ability to carry out the work. Information shared thoughtfully identifies how funding will strengthen infrastructure, support sustainability, and build capacity to lead change over time.

**4** The organization exemplifies some of these criteria and provides good responses to the corresponding LOI questions. The organization provides a clear overview of its structure and readiness, though some elements may lack detail or connection to future growth. The use of funding to strengthen capacity is described but may not be fully developed.

- 3** The organization generally aligns with the criteria and provides adequate responses to the corresponding LOI questions. The response offers general information about leadership or operations but does not fully convey how the organization will sustain its work. Connections between funding and long-term capacity building are present but remain broad.
- 2** The organization may align with some of the criteria and provides minimal responses to the corresponding LOI questions. The description of leadership and financial position is minimal or fragmented, making it difficult to understand readiness to implement work.
- 1** The organization does not meet or does not clearly describe how it meets these criteria. The response does not provide enough detail about organizational leadership, capacity or financial context to determine readiness. It's unclear how funding would support the organization's ability to carry out or sustain the work.

**Comments  
or  
Questions**