



2024

## Request for Proposals

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*The Harvest Foundation's 20th Anniversary  
Community Projects Committee: Project Hope*

### **PURPOSE**

What we heard throughout our strategic planning process was clear: We need to help members of our community to speak up and take action to build a better Martinsville-Henry County. To celebrate The Harvest Foundation's 20th Anniversary and fulfill community building and engagement components of the Foundation's strategic plan, the Project Hope 2024 Committee will fund small, grassroots projects with their neighbors in Martinsville-Henry County.

### **WHO'S ELIGIBLE**

- Entities that are recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)3 charitable organization, political subdivision, or governmental organization eligible for charitable contributions under the Internal Revenue Code
- Entities that are not recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)3 charitable organization are still eligible to apply. Such entities include community groups who, through volunteerism and community engagement, will undertake small, grassroots projects with immediate impact. The committee will assist in finding an appropriate fiscal sponsor.

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## 1. About The Harvest Foundation

The Harvest Foundation is a private foundation focused on place-based investments in the rural communities of Martinsville City and Henry County, Virginia. We envision a community where everyone shares in the promise of a Martinsville/Henry County (MHC) that is healthy, prosperous, and vibrant. The Foundation, in partnership with the diverse people and organizations that call MHC home, serves as a long-term catalyst, advocate, and investor to make our community a welcoming place where all can thrive. Since its establishment in 2002, Harvest has committed more than \$170 million through more than 400 grants to local nonprofits and municipalities.

Our current five-year Strategic Plan is guided by our North Star of Hope and focuses on building thriving youth, a vibrant community, and a resilient and diverse economy to improve education, economic vitality, and civic capacity for community revitalization.

While grantmaking is an important aspect of the work, Harvest uses other platforms to advance our overall vision of community transformation. These include:

- Convening & Facilitating – We bring people together and support collaborative processes that lead to impact.
- Connecting – We connect public and private sectors with communities to create solutions and solve problems.
- Learning – We support shared learning so that we all have the knowledge and skills to constructively engage and collectively act.
- Catalyzing – We build momentum and spark action to bring community ideas to life. We work to renew the social fabric of our community and commitment to the common good.
- Investments – We make financial investments in community-driven projects and initiatives that align with the Foundation’s strategic objectives.

## 2. Purpose Overview & Background

The Harvest Foundation staff worked throughout 2021 to find a meaningful and impactful project and/or program to celebrate the Foundation's 20th Anniversary.

Throughout the foundation's strategic planning process, a common theme appeared: generally, people don't feel hopeful about their own personal future and the future of our community.

Over the years, people across the United States have become less engaged in the community and civic groups. Engaging in the community is how neighbors get to know one another and see each other as people.

Engaging in the community creates social capital, defined by Wikipedia as "the networks of relationships among people who live and work in a particular society, enabling that society to function effectively." Social capital touches so much of our lives, it helps people find jobs, find homes and of course, build friendships. It's how communities come together to create a better and healthier future for themselves.

One way to return hope to a region is to strengthen our social capital through building community connectivity.

The Project Hope 2024 Committee is tasked to approve small, grassroots projects that build hope in communities and get residents involved through volunteerism and positive community engagement.

The Committee will consider all proposals and make final recommendations to staff at The Harvest Foundation, where staff will make the final decision and award funding. All approved proposals will meet Harvest funding guidelines and structure.

### 3. Project Goals

The Project Hope 2024 Committee is looking for small projects that involve volunteers to improve the community or help a community member(s) in need. The projects should be able to be implemented in a short period of time and not require ongoing financial support. The committee will be looking for a diverse group of projects that are spread throughout MHC and include a diverse group of community members.

Proposals should fall under the following theme, within one of its focus areas, for 2024:

**Community Connections**  
***Creating inclusive spaces, fostering meaningful interactions, and empowering community members to learn, grow, and connect***

Project Hope 2024 aims to support volunteer-led projects that bring people together and promote belonging by providing opportunities for interaction and empowerment.

Examples include:

- Cultural diversity and arts initiatives
- Educational programs addressing community challenges, such as health awareness/prevention
- Peer support groups providing a supportive environment for shared experiences and learning
- Beautification/Enhancement of gathering spaces that are accessible to the public
- Establishment of safe spaces (i.e. for vulnerable groups such as the unhoused, youth, etc.)

Submitted proposals should align with the theme and focus areas listed above. The proposal should also address how the community members were engaged in the creation of the project and how they will be involved in the implementation.

The Committee hopes to accomplish the following:

- Plant seeds of hope in Martinsville-Henry County for the future, and develop opportunities to strengthen relationships among neighbors who come together to create a better future for themselves.
- Build grassroots communities through volunteerism and engagement by funding small projects that have an immediate impact.

- Create accessibility to The Harvest Foundation for small, grassroots organizations that typically may not apply for Harvest grants.
- Bring greater awareness of The Harvest Foundation to the overall community for those who may not be familiar with the foundation's work.

#### **4. Submission Requirements & Eligibility**

The application to submit this RFP can be found here:

[theharvestfoundation.org/project-hope](https://theharvestfoundation.org/project-hope)

An optional 1-3 minute video is encouraged to help explain your project/program to the funding committee. *(See Appendix II for tips to create your video)*

Eligibility:

- Entities that are recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)3 charitable organization, political subdivision, or governmental organization eligible for charitable contributions under the Internal Revenue Code
- Organizations and groups who, through volunteerism and community engagement, will undertake small, grassroots projects with immediate impact in Martinsville - Henry County
- Entities that are not recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)3 charitable organization are still eligible to apply. The committee will assist in finding an appropriate fiscal sponsor.

#### **5. Funding & Budget**

The Harvest Foundation Board of Directors approved \$100,000 for funding all projects/programs for Project Hope 2024. Applicants are encouraged to apply for projects and programs of all sizes. Committee members will consider proposals up to \$15,000 and review each project's budget to determine appropriate funding.

## **6. Timeline & Reporting**

**May 20, 2024 – Request for Proposals (RFP) Released**

**June 3, 6, 10, 20, 2024 – Ignite Hope Project Planning Sessions**

**June 3, 2024 – Application Period Opens**

**August 9, 2024 – Applications Due**

**September 30, 2024 – Notification to Applicants**

**June 30, 2025 – Deadline for Completed Projects**

Recipients will be responsible for a single report due 30 days following the program/project's completion. Each recipient will be assigned to a Program Officer to guide them throughout the process.

## **7. Main Contacts**

India Brown

Program Officer

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Director of Communications

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## Appendix I: Guidance for New Applicants

There are several steps to develop a project. The guidance below provides a general breakdown of the steps needed to develop a successful project. Applicants are always welcome to contact The Harvest Foundation for assistance with any of these steps.



**Ready to submit? Be sure to review your application and budget before submitting.**

**Questions? Contact the Harvest Foundation for assistance!**



## Appendix II: Video Submission Tips

Your video submission is an **optional** opportunity you can use to further illustrate your project/program and how it will positively impact communities in Martinsville-Henry County.

It does not have to be a big production. A 1-3 minute selfie video (or it can be filmed by another person) should include:

- 1) Your introduction (name, title)
- 2) Description of your project
- 3) Any visuals (the place where your project/program will take place, a look at the volunteers), etc.
- 4) The impact your project will have on communities in Martinsville-Henry County
- 5) Other information you think will be relevant to the project selection committee

Your phone includes basic editing tools if you need them to trim down the length of your video. It should not exceed 3 minutes.

[Here's an example of what your video could look like.](#)

Tips on Recording:

1. Face the light and keep your smartphone above eye level
2. Record outside or in a well-lit area
3. If you have one, use a selfie stick!
4. You don't need a script but think about what you want to say before you hit record. It's harder than you think.
5. Use the editing tools on your phone to trim your video if needed.
6. Email [lhodges@theharvestfoundation.org](mailto:lhodges@theharvestfoundation.org) if you have any questions or concerns about submitting your video.

## Appendix III: Project Examples

Example projects proposed through this grant program may include (but are not limited to):



### BEAUTIFICATION

Beautification projects can range from picking up trash to planting beautiful flowers to painting a creative mural. A beautiful community lifts spirits and builds community pride.



### LENDING LIBRARY

Lending libraries help communities lend and share many different items. They provide free access to items and provide ways for community members to support each other.



### COMMUNITY GARDEN

Community gardens provide opportunities to grow healthy foods or lovely flowers while nurturing community relationships.



### PARK CLEANUP

Clean local parks provide hubs for communities to gather, children to play and individuals to enjoy recreation *together*.