



**INVITATION TO APPLY**  
**girlsBEST Fund Multi-Year Grant**  
**Request for Proposals and Grant Application**

## Introduction

The Women's Foundation of Minnesota (Foundation) launched the girlsBEST (girls Building Economic Success Together) Fund in 2001 to support programs that are driven and led by girls, ages 12 through 18, across Minnesota. The girlsBEST Fund focuses on low-income girls, girls of color, girls in Greater Minnesota, and other girls experiencing the greatest disparities in outcomes. Since inception, the Foundation has granted approximately \$3.6 million in planning and multi-year implementation grants to over 100 programs that increased the readiness of 16,000 girls to achieve economic well-being, statewide.

The cumulative evaluation results of girlsBEST grants from 2002 through 2016 prove the Fund's effectiveness and success as a model approach: 94 percent of girlsBEST participants graduate from high school, 90 percent enroll in post-secondary education, and the teen pregnancy rate is four per 1,000 girls in Minnesota.

We invite Minnesota organizations and groups with girl-driven programs to apply for a multi-year grant through our girlsBEST Fund. The purpose is to support programs that enhance economic security for girls who are 12 through 18 years of age. Grants will be awarded for up to three years of funding, renewable each year based on evidence of satisfactory progress toward goals and outcomes.

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## Multi-Year Grant Information & Timeline

Grants range from \$10,000 to \$20,000 per year. The average award size is \$15,000. Please note that the size of grants may decrease slightly in years two and three.

### Grant Cycle:

Year 1: June 15, 2017 through June 14, 2018

Year 2: June 15, 2018 through June 14, 2019

Year 3: June 15, 2019 through June 14, 2020

Our girlsBEST Fund grantmaking process engages community volunteers, board, and staff as members of the girlsBEST Fund Committee. The Committee reviews the grant proposals and recommends awards for groups who they decide best represent the mission, goals, and values of the Foundation.

## 2017 Application and Process Timeline

- **March 14:** Online application available for organizations to start applying.
- **March 22:** Grant Information Webinar at 11:30 a.m. (*A recording will be posted to wfmn.org.*)
- **April 17:** Proposals due by 5:00 p.m.
- **April-May:** girlsBEST Fund Committee reviews proposals and selects organizations to present proposals to the Committee on **May 20**.
- **May 4:** Applicants selected for a site visit will be notified.
- **May 20:** Site visits will be scheduled for applicants still under consideration. Site visits will be conducted in-person at the Women's Foundation offices.
- **May 30:** Grant award and declination letters sent to applicants.

## Questions & Assistance

Throughout the application process, please contact us with questions or if you need assistance.

- Andrea Satter, Program Officer, at 612-236-1805 (direct), 888-337-5050 (toll free) or [andrea@wfmn.org](mailto:andrea@wfmn.org).
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## Funding Criteria & Eligibility

- Only programs that operate in Minnesota and serve Minnesota girls will be considered.
- Priority is given to programs that focus on low-income girls, girls of color, girls in Greater Minnesota, and other girls experiencing the greatest disparities in outcomes.
- Only programs that demonstrate a strong focus on increasing girls' economic readiness will be considered for an award.
- Only proposals that demonstrate how girls are involved in all aspects of the program including planning, implementation, and evaluation will be considered.
- Programs and projects must serve girls between 12 and 18 years of age.

## Eligible programs include:

- Nonprofit tax-exempt organizations and schools that operate programs in Minnesota.
- Unincorporated organizations with a tax-exempt fiscal sponsor.
- American Indian Nations.

## The following activities or groups are NOT eligible for girlsBEST funds:

- Scholarships to attend college, university, technical or certificate programs.
- Projects within religious institutions that do not align with the mission and values of the Women's Foundation of Minnesota.
- Retroactive support of projects or activities.
- Fundraising Events.
- Individuals.
- Organizations that may be deemed as discriminatory on the basis of race, creed, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, age, physical or mental ability,

veteran status, military obligation, and marital status.

- An organization that limits or opposes a woman's right to self-determination.
- Reduction of an operating deficit or to liquidate existing debt.

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## girlsBEST Fund Framework

### A. girlsBEST Fund Outcome

Grants through the girlsBEST Fund support girl-led programs that are designed to achieve this outcome: *Individual girls ages 12 to 18 will increase readiness to achieve economic well-being.*

### B. The Stages of Girls' Economic Development

Achieving the outcome of girls' increased readiness to achieve economic well-being takes time. Over time, girls ages 12 through 18 change their attitudes and develop skills as a result of their participation in girlsBEST programs. Our evaluation has identified three stages of girls' readiness for economic well-being:

1. **STAGE ONE | Awareness:** Girls become increasingly aware of the ways in which women are treated unequally in our society due to sexist practices that are embedded in institutions and policies, which in turn affects their economic potential.
2. **STAGE TWO | Agency:** Girls become aware that they can become agents of change in their girlsBEST programs through leadership and participation in program activities.
3. **STAGE THREE | Activism & Advocacy:** Girls become aware that they can take action, individually and collectively, to impact systems and institutions that do not promote women's equity.

### C. girlsBEST Fund Program Tracks

The girlsBEST Fund supports programs in four program tracks. Applicants will choose one program track that best describes their work with girls:

1. **Academic Programs:**
  - Programs that help girls stay in school and pursue college and future career goals.
  - Programs that build girls' financial and economic capacity.
  - School-based programs that help girls excel in math, science, and other subjects from which girls have traditionally been excluded or underrepresented.
2. **Entrepreneurial Programs:**
  - Programs that teach and support girls in business planning and development.
3. **Employment Development and High-Paying/High-Skill Careers:**
  - Programs that build girls' employment skills and/or encourage them to seek high-paying and high-skill careers.
4. **Public Education and Advocacy Programs:**
  - Programs in which girls organize on particular issues that impact their economic success, such as teen-pregnancy prevention or ending violence.

#### D. girlsBEST Fund Notable Practices

Evaluation shows that girlsBEST programs that are successful in developing the economic potential of girls share some notable practices:

1. **Mentoring: Create supportive environments for girls.** Building supportive environments leads to increased readiness of girls to achieve economic well-being. Mentoring helps build girls' confidence and economic readiness.
2. **Diversity:** Programs are intentionally designed to build skills for achieving economic well-being among low income girls, girls of color, girls living in Greater Minnesota, and other girls experiencing the greatest disparities in outcomes, including LGBTQ youth and those experiencing disabilities.
3. **Leadership development that leads to girl-driven programs.** Girls are involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of girlsBEST programs. Programs build girls' leadership by allowing girls to design and implement program strategies and take activist roles in the community.
4. **Cultural and Community Awareness: Help girls gain self-confidence and self-esteem by building cultural and community awareness.** Projects that focus on helping girls build self-esteem within their cultural traditions and community identities, where appropriate, have been found to enhance girls' leadership skills and self-confidence.
5. **Collaboration.** Building collaborative relationships in communities, with schools, churches, non-profits, community agencies, etc., builds the status of girls and strengthens girls' programs and economic readiness in communities throughout Minnesota.
6. **Financial Literacy.** Successful programs offer a variety of financial literacy curricula to help girls learn how to manage and save money. Girls learn how to apply for financial aid for post-secondary educational institutions, and how to run and manage a small business or other financially-focused activities. Girls learn about high-paying and non-traditional jobs and careers.
7. **Multi-Generational Approach.** Programs which offer parallel or complementary opportunities for mothers, grandmothers, aunts, and families of girlsBEST participants tend to increase the readiness of girls to achieve economic well-being.

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girlsBEST Fund Multi-Year Grant Application

**\*\* APPLICATION DEADLINE \*\***  
**April 17, 2017 – 5:00 p.m.**  
**through online submission**

**Organizational Information**

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Name of Organization:

Mailing Address:

Phone Number:

Website:

Contact Person (include title):

Contact Person's Telephone Number:

Email:

Federal Taxpayer Identification Number (if applicable):

Do you have 501 (c) (3) status?      Yes              No

If no, please provide information about your Fiscal Sponsor:

Name of Fiscal Sponsor and Contact Information for Executive Director:

Fiscal Sponsor's Mailing Address:

Current Organizational Budget: \$

Amount of this request: \$

Total Project Budget: \$

Total dollars and number of WFMN grants you have received: \$

**Proposal Description**

Maximum of 5,000 characters (including spaces) for EACH question through online submission.

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1. Describe your organization's mission, goals, major programs, and their participants.
2. Describe your girl-led programs and the core elements that help build readiness for economic well-being among girls, ages 12 through 18.
3. Describe the girls who will be involved in your program, including age, geographic location, race/ethnicity, and socio-economic background.
4. Describe the strategies and activities you will use during the three-year grant period to build girls' economic well-being.
5. Describe the outcomes you anticipate during a one-year period and how you would measure "success." Please include a timeline of activities.

## APPLYING THE girlsBEST FUND FRAMEWORK

Maximum of 2,000 characters (including spaces) for EACH question through online submission.

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### Outcome

- If you received a planning grant, please describe the outcomes thus far.
- If the program is a current girlsBEST Fund grantee, please describe what is different or new to your program in terms of building girls' economic well-being.

### Program Tracks *(see pg. 3, girlsBEST Fund Program Tracks)*

- Which girlsBEST Fund program track applies to your program? *(Select one.)*
- Why does your program best fit this program track?

### Stages of Girls' Economic Development

Over the course of your three-year girlsBEST Fund program:

- How will your program:
  - Facilitate an increase in girls' *awareness*?
  - Help girls develop a sense of *agency*?
  - Increase girls' *activism and advocacy*?

### Notable Practices

#### *Mentoring*

- How will your program utilize mentoring?
- In what other ways will your program build a supportive environment for girls?

#### *Diversity*

- How will underserved and underrepresented girls benefit from your program?

#### *Leadership Development*

- How will your program develop girls' leadership?
- How will girls be involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of your program?

#### *Cultural Awareness*

- How will your program develop girls' cultural awareness?

#### *Collaboration*

- Will you be collaborating with other organizations as part of your program? Please describe.

#### *Financial Literacy*

- In what ways will your program build girls economic well-being and financial literacy?

#### *Multi-Generational Approach*

- How does your program incorporate activities with significant adults in the lives of girls?

## Application Checklist

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Please complete and attach the following:

- Grant application narrative questions in online form.
- Project Budget and Narrative: Applicants will download the budget and narrative form in the web portal. They will edit and upload that document in the online application.
- Current year organizational budget and year-to-date income and expense statement.
- Signed W-9 form for the organization.
- Copy of most recent audited financial statement or IRS Form 990.
- IRS Determination letter.
- If you have a fiscal sponsor, copy of signed Fiscal Sponsor Agreement.
- List of current board members, which **MUST** include gender and race/ethnicity of your board of directors or governing body.

### Questions & Assistance

Throughout the application process, please contact us with questions or if you need assistance.

- Andrea Satter, Program Officer, at 612-236-1805 (direct), 888-337-5050 (toll free) or [andrea@wfmn.org](mailto:andrea@wfmn.org).

Women's Foundation of Minnesota  
Diversity Survey

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The Women's Foundation of Minnesota values diversity and leadership by women and girls. We want to understand the level of involvement of women and girls in your organization. Specifically, we are interested to know how your programs engage low income girls, girls of color, girls who live in Greater Minnesota, and other girls experiencing the greatest disparities in outcomes. Please complete this chart with as much information as you can provide. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED BY ORGANIZATION (#)</b>		
<i>Please complete remaining questions for those served by your girlsBEST program.</i>		
<b>TOTAL NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS SERVED BY girlsBEST FUND PROGRAM (#)</b>		
<b>GENDER IDENTITY (#)</b>		<b>WHERE DO PARTICIPANTS LIVE?</b>
Female		American Indian Nation
Male		(Please identify)
Transgender		Greater Minnesota
Prefer Not to Identify		Twin Cities Suburban
Gender Nonconforming		Twin Cities Urban
<b>RACE/ETHNICITY (#)</b>		<b>OTHER CHARACTERISTICS (More than one may apply)</b>
American Indian or Alaska Native		Immigrant or Refugee
Asian or Pacific Islander		Disabled
Black or African American		LGBTQI
Hispanic or Latina/o		Veteran
White		<b>AGE GROUP AT START OF PROGRAM (#)</b>
Multiracial		Under 11
Unknown		12-18
		19-24
<b>INCOME LEVEL (#)</b>		
Poverty or Below		Middle Income
Low Income		High Income

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