



ESL Federal Credit Union
Community Impact Request for Proposal
Community Engagement through Placemaking Grant

ESL invites neighborhood and community-based non-profit organizations (or those with a non-profit fiduciary) in the six-county region to submit a proposal for funding consideration to ESL Community Impact. This Request for Proposal (RFP) is focused on our funding priority area: **Building Strong Neighborhoods**. This RFP provides information needed to assemble your request.

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Due Date

Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis through **Friday, April 12, 2024**.

Contact Information

If you have questions about this RFP or your proposed project, please contact:

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ESL Community Impact Overview

At ESL, our purpose is to help our community thrive and prosper. Through our Community Impact initiatives, we aspire to live up to that purpose by building a healthy, resilient, and equitable Greater Rochester region where all residents are well-educated, live in affordable, connected neighborhoods, and have access to quality employment opportunities. We reinvest in our communities in ways that support these areas of impact:

- Expanding Individual Opportunity
- Building Strong Neighborhoods
- Strengthening Organizations & Systems
- Lifting Up Stories

The Building Strong Neighborhoods (BSN) initiatives strive to invest in neighborhoods across the Greater Rochester region to ensure they are prosperous, well-connected, and inclusive. In addition to quality affordable housing efforts, BSN initiatives seek to create a sense of identity, build/grow neighborhood leadership, provide access to amenities and services, and leverage opportunities to improve resident, business, and stakeholder confidence. One method for achieving this is through placemaking.

For more information, visit our website at <https://www.esl.org/community/community-impact>.

Community Engagement through Placemaking

The aim of this RFP is to support urban and rural projects throughout the six-county region that seek to strengthen community connection and neighborhood identity through placemaking. The Urban Institute defines placemaking as the practice of designing spaces that reflect the priorities of the community, foster a sense of belonging, and improve residents' quality of life. Placemaking that enhances public spaces can be a catalyst for building community and connecting neighborhoods, particularly when projects are part of a larger plan to enhance neighborhood identity, improve resident confidence, and engage community members in their planning and implementation.

Research from Urban Institute, Toronto Metropolitan University, and others has shown that placemaking increases a neighborhood's quality of life by promoting personal connection, social cohesion, place identity and a sense of safety; as well as increasing the likeliness to spend time or shop in the area. Locally, placemaking has been identified as a priority for the Rochester community in the [Rochester 2034 Comprehensive Plan \(2019\)](#).

Proposed projects should include physical improvements in public spaces and demonstrate neighborhood engagement in the project's planning and implementation. Examples include but are not limited to public art, pocket parks, decorative bike racks, public safety improvements, street furniture, murals, etc.

Funding Priorities

Requests must demonstrate that they will engage neighborhood residents and community stakeholders in the planning and implementation phases. Additionally, those that include the following will be prioritized:

- Alignment with the [Rochester 2034 Comprehensive Plan \(2019\)](#), particularly: Design at the Pedestrian Scale, Create Beautiful Spaces, Celebrate Assets, and Strengthen Multi-Modal Travel.
- Projects that are part of a larger neighborhood plan to promote a sense of identity, connection, and that develop visible assets that support resident engagement and confidence.
- Collaborative projects or initiatives involving multiple stakeholder groups.
- Projects that evaluate impact. Evaluation could include, but is not limited to, pre- and post-surveys to measure neighborhood confidence, perceptions of safety, vehicle speeds, retail foot traffic, etc.

Funding Request Information

Applicants may request grant funds in one or more of the following areas:

- **Programming/Implementation:** Support for the cost of implementing a neighborhood placemaking project that is part of a larger community plan or strategy.
- **Planning:** Support for developing an implementable neighborhood plan designed to market the neighborhood and build identity.
- **Evaluation:** Support for internal evaluation or the hiring of an evaluation consultant to help evaluate the impact of the proposed project.

Funding may not be used for:

- Large capital campaigns
- Inherently religious activities such as religious worship, religious instruction, proselytization, etc.
- Endowments

Submission Details

Eligibility: 501(c)3 non-profits serving communities in Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, and Wayne that are community based or with demonstrated experience engaging with their community OR community-based groups with a 501(c)3 fiduciary.

Grant Size: One-year requests of \$1,000 - \$100,000 will be considered. We will consider up to 50% of the total project cost and the requested amount must be commensurate with the proposal's scale and scope. We can consider funding 100% of a project budget up to \$10,000 if that amount is less than half of the organization budget.

Funding Cycle: Applications are accepted on a rolling basis through **Friday, April 12, 2024**. Funding decisions will be made within 60-90 days of submission.

Required Documents: Applications should include descriptions of how funds will be used, identify other sources of funds and outline reporting criteria, including demographic information and any key learning. Other required documents are listed in the online grant portal.

How to Apply

All applications must be submitted through the ESL Community Impact grants portal, accessible at <https://eslcf.fluxx.io>. Once in the portal, there are two applications to choose from, based on your total request amount. We recommend using Google Chrome as your web browser.