

# POLK BROS FOUNDATION

## Letter of Interest (LOI): Next Generation Power-Building

<b>LOI Release Date:</b>	May 4, 2026
<b>Information Session:</b>	May 11, 2026 at 4:00 p.m. (CST)
<b>LOI Submission Deadline:</b>	June 5, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. (CST)

### Grantmaking Criteria

PBF is seeking proposals for youth-led collective action initiatives that address specific issues of significance to young Chicagoans (ages 26 and under). Eligible projects may include community organizing, non-legislative policy advocacy, mutual aid, and other power-building strategies, but must clearly demonstrate authentic youth voice, agency, and self-determination.

To be considered for this RFP, applicants **must articulate a clear civic goal or objective** that is connected to Chicago and describe how it was identified, as well as how it continues to reflect the priorities of the young people leading the work and how the young people articulate its contributions to affecting change in their neighborhoods.

Preference will be given to proposals that include one or more of the following elements:

- Policy and/or systems change objective(s) that are aligned closely with PBF's strategic goals: Building Community Wealth Across Generations, Closing the Life Expectancy Gap, and Fostering Participatory, Multiracial Democracy
- Narrative-shifting work that centers youth as leaders and valued community assets
- A multigenerational strategy that also engages younger and/or older community members
- Cross-community solidarity principles intentionally embedded in program design and delivery
- Arts-focused activities or initiatives that serve as a catalyst for civic engagement
- Alignment with FCYO's [Power to Win](#) framework

Note: Projects may not be used for any activities prohibited by laws governing the work and grants of private foundations, lobbying or electioneering activities as defined by Section 501(c)(3), or any activities that incite political violence. Proposed activities must be structured in a way to avoid private benefit or inurement.

Organizations that meet the eligibility criteria and see alignment with this opportunity are invited to apply through a two-phase application process.

### **Phase I:** Open Call – Letter of Interest (LOI) – Two pages maximum – size 11 font minimum

All eligible organizations may submit a Letter of Interest (LOI) that includes the components below. The LOI for this funding opportunity will be evaluated based on the level of alignment with the priority activities described in this RFP and Polk Bros. Foundation's strategic goals. To capture the information needed to evaluate the submitted LOIs, please provide a short response that addresses all the components listed below.

- **Organizational Overview:**
  - Mission – include the organization's mission statement
  - Organization Description – include a few sentences on the description of the organization's history and core work

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- **Grant Request Information:**
  - Overview - provide a concise summary of this grant request, clearly identifying the issue to be addressed and highlighting your organization's track record of centering youth voice and leadership
  - Description of Activities - detail the power-building tactic(s) employed by the youth you work with to advance their civic goals, and explain why these approaches are the most effective use of your organization's people power
  - Neighborhoods Served - identify the Chicago neighborhood(s) in which your organization operates and describe what makes these communities well-positioned for youth-led power-building efforts
  - Demonstrated Experience - cite key campaign victories and/or progress to date
- **Additional Requested Documents** (not counted toward two-page limit):
  - Organizational Budgets – include 1) last full year's itemized revenue and expenses, as well as 2) current fiscal year's budget with itemized revenue and expenses
  - If a program or organization is fiscally sponsored, the fiscal sponsor must be the applicant submitting the LOI and provide required information. This will include a copy of the fiscal sponsorship agreement between the sponsor and the sponsored project.

Once reviewed and evaluated, organizations may be invited to submit a full proposal. Not all organizations will advance to Phase II. Those selected to submit a full proposal in Phase II will be based on qualifications of the organizations and the work proposed within this LOI.

LOI submissions must not exceed two full typed pages single space size 11 font or larger; each question may take up more or less than a full page, so long as the total submission is no more than two pages.

**Letter of Interest (LOI): Next Generation Power-Building**

Please provide an overview of your organization, including your mission and description of the core work:

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Please describe the grant request, including an overview of the work, description of key activities, identification of neighborhoods served, and any key campaign victories and/or progress to date: