

# Alexandria Fund for Human Services FY 27-29 Request for Grant Proposal: Mini and Incubator Proposals

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*City of Alexandria*

## *Instructions*

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The City of Alexandria, through its Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS), is pleased to invite grant proposals for the newly launched Alexandria Fund for Human Services (AFHS) mini and incubator grant component for the FY 2027 through 2029 grant cycle.

Since its inception, the AFHS has provided funding through a competitive grant-making process for eligible programs and services of nonprofit partners that meet human service needs for the City's most marginalized residents across the lifespan.

To ensure that AFHS is responsive to the growing and changing needs of the community, Alexandria's City Council requested an independent evaluation of the program. The 2025 evaluation recommended restructuring AFHS to focus competitive grants on programs and services that promote stabilization and foster thriving within communities, using a spectrum-based approach to Essential Human Services (EHS). Based on these recommendations, the FY 2027-2029 grant cycle introduces five refined grant priorities aligned to the EHS framework. Additionally, AFHS now offers two new grant categories, mini grants and incubator grants, to create accessible entry points for emerging organizations and reduce barriers to funding for focused, smaller-scale initiatives.

The evaluation developed five EHS criteria to guide funding decisions. Organizations interested in applying for a FY 2027-2029 grant award must demonstrate an ability to impact one of five grant priorities with programs and services that promote stabilization and foster thriving within communities:

- Basic Needs Fulfillment
- Vulnerability and Equity
- Health and Safety
- Economic Stability and Support
- Social Functioning and Cohesion

### **Essential Human Services Definition**

*Essential Human Services (EHS) are those that meet the fundamental needs necessary for*

*survival, stability, and well-being. Rather than a dichotomous classification of essential or not, services exist on a spectrum. At the most basic level, they ensure survival by addressing the immediate bare needs of food, water, shelter, and safety. The next level supports continued survival or **stability** by preventing harm, promoting health, and enabling economic and social participation. At the highest level, they foster mobility, resilience, and community engagement — collectively known as **thriving**. Rather than a fixed set of services, EHS depends on contextual factors such as geography, culture, and societal conditions.*

The FY 2027-2029 AFHS grant cycle offers two new award categories designed to support smaller-scale programs and services. Organizations may submit multiple applications and may apply as a single organization or in partnership with other organizations through a joint application. Mini and Incubator grants will be awarded for the period covering July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2029.

- **Mini Grants:** This grant type supports existing and new smaller scale programs or services. This funding may be used to defray discrete program or service expenses, implement focused activities, or address immediate needs.
- **Incubator Grants:** This grant type is intended to provide flexible low barrier funding that empowers the successful applicant to develop and test a **new, innovative, or developing** program or service that will advance or promote **stability** and foster **thriving** in the City of Alexandria communities. These grant requests may also be used for early-stage implementation of programs or services that may not have an extensive track record or formal infrastructure. The goal of an AFHS Incubator Grant is to:
  - Encourage **creative problem-solving** to respond to key trends and emerging issues
  - Support **grassroots or community-driven solutions**
  - Provide an **opportunity** to explore promising models
  - Help build capacity and generate **evidence of impact** for future scaling or long-term funding

### **Funding Amount**

Mini and incubator grant awards will range from \$7,000 to \$10,000 per year for the three-year grant cycle (FY 2027-2029). The actual amount of each grant award will be confirmed once funds are appropriated by City Council through its annual budget proceedings and adoption of the FY 2027 budget. Approved grant award amounts will remain the same for the two subsequent years in the grant cycle and are contingent upon City Council's annual AFHS appropriation and satisfactory performance of the grantee.

### **Application Submission Requirements**

Each application—whether single or joint—must:

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- Address **only one** of the five grant priorities
- Focus on either **stabilizing** or **thriving** outcomes (not both)
- Serve one or more of the designated focus populations

**Joint Applications**

Organizations submitting a joint application must include an executed agreement or letter of commitment from all prospective partner(s) that outlines the specific roles and commitments of each partnering organization.

The AFHS Request for Grant Proposals Guidelines for Mini and Incubator grants are available at: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/dchs/alexandria-fund-for-human-services>

**A Virtual Pre-Proposal Training Session for these new AFHS grant opportunities will be hosted via Zoom on January 15, 2026, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.**

This optional session will provide an overview of the AFHS grant application process and requirements, as well as an opportunity to preview the online grant application portal. Attendance is strongly encouraged, particularly for first-time applicants and organizations new to the Foundant platform.

*For reasonable disability accommodations, contact [Danelle.johnson@alexandriava.gov](mailto:Danelle.johnson@alexandriava.gov) or call 703.746.5791 or Virginia Relay 711.*

**The application submission deadline is Monday, February 16, 2026 at 5:00 p.m. EST. Submissions will only be accepted via the Foundant Technologies. Grant applications may not be submitted in person, by U. S. Postal Services, courier, email nor facsimile.**

To reduce errors, applicants are strongly encouraged to carefully review both the grant guidelines and the online application instructions before entering any responses. Most application sections include character limits. Applicants are advised to draft their responses in a word-processing program and then copy and paste the finalized text into the appropriate sections of the online application grant application portal. **Required questions are marked with an (\*) asterisk.**

**AFHS FY 2027-2029 Mini/Incubator Grant Application Timeline**

Virtual Pre-Proposal Training for Prospective Mini or Incubator Applicants	January 15, 2026
Dedicated Technical Assistance Office Hours (Office hours on February 13 will be reserved for technical/portal access issues only)	Jan. 22, 2026 – Feb. 13, 2026

Deadline for Grant Proposal Questions	February 12, 2026
Grant Proposal Submission Deadline	February 16, 2026
Grant Application Certification	February 17-27, 2026
Grant Proposal Review Period	Mar. 2, 2026 – Apr. 10, 2026
Grant Award Recommendations Presented to City Council	May 2026
Grant Award Notice and Grant Agreements Issued to Successful Applicants	June 2026

### **COPY FUNCTION**

*To copy responses that correspond to identical questions on additional applications, click the blue "Copy Previous Answers" button at the top right of any subsequent applications you complete.*

Each of our applications has similar or identical questions. To save you time, you can use the Copy Answers tool on subsequent applications.

1. After completing your first application, submit the application by clicking "Submit Application" at the bottom of the form.
2. From your Applicant Dashboard, click the Apply button at the top of the screen.
3. For the next application, click Apply.
4. Click the Copy Previous Answers button on the top right of the screen.
5. Select the request you would like to copy answers from, and this will copy all answers into identical questions on the new application.

### **Video Tutorial 1:49**

### **Collaborate Feature**

Applicants wishing to invite others to assist with preparing this submission, please use the Collaborate button at the top of the page.

- From the Collaborate pop up, enter the email address of the person you wish to help you with the request.
- Set the Permission to either View (the collaborator can only view forms in the request), Edit (the collaborator can view and edit the request), or Submit (the collaborator can view, edit, and submit the request)
- Include a message about what you are asking your collaborator to do for you and select Invite.
- You can revoke permission at any time.

An email will be sent to the collaborator containing your message, their username, and a link to the log-on page. After clicking this link, they will be brought to the log-on page. If this is their first time logging onto the system, they will be asked to create a password.

After logging onto the system, the collaborator will see this request under the Collaboration Requests tab of their Applicant Dashboard. Here they can select the Edit Application link and complete your instructions.

For additional information, please click on the tutorial video below.

### **Collaborate Video Tutorial (1:37)**

## *Application Cover Page*

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### **Date of Board of Directors Approval of this Grant Application Submission\***

*Character Limit: 10*

### **Name of the Proposed Program or Service (not the organization)\***

Enter the name of the proposed program or service.

*Character Limit: 250*

### **Address of the Proposed Program /Service\***

Please specify the physical address(es) where in-person services will be provided. If services are offered virtually or in a hybrid format, describe the physical location(s) supporting service delivery.

*Character Limit: 1500*

### **Name of Grant Administrator\***

**Grants Administrator: Individual responsible for handling reports, compliance and coordination.**

*Character Limit: 200*

### **Email of Grant Administrator\***

*Character Limit: 254*

### **Is your organization a new AFHS applicant?\***

#### **Choices**

Yes

No

**Has your proposed program/service received AFHS funding in previous grant cycles?\***

**Choices**

- Yes
- No

**AFHS Previous Funding Years**

If "yes" please indicate the number of years your program/service has received funding (including this year if applicable)

*Character Limit: 250*

**AFHS Previous Funding Amount**

Please provide the total amount awarded

*Character Limit: 20*

**Organization's FY 2025 Total Operating Budget\***

*Character Limit: 20*

**Organization's Fiscal Year Start Date**

*Character Limit: 10*

**Annual AFHS FY 2027-2029 Grant Request\***

Indicate the **total annual grant amount** requested to support implementation of the proposed program or services. The amount entered in this section must match the proposed funding amount listed in the Excel budget spreadsheet. Approved grant award amounts will remain consistent for the subsequent two years of the grant cycle, contingent upon City Council's annual AFHS appropriation and the grantee's satisfactory performance.

*Character Limit: 20*

**Is this a joint Application?\***

**Choices**

- Yes
- No

**Grant Category\***

Which grant category is this proposal being submitted under? (Select one.)

**Choices**

- Mini Grant
- Incubator Grant

## Proposed Focus Population Addressed by Grant Priority Areas\*

Proposed programs or services must benefit one of the following:

- Children and youth (including ages 0-5).
- Individuals with low incomes and low wealth.
- Individuals with dental, physical health, mental health, vision care needs, and for those who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Individuals facing crises.
- Survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault.
- Older Adults.
- Historically marginalized communities: This population includes, but is not limited to Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), immigrant populations (including those who lack documentation or families with mixed status), Justice involved individuals, LGBTQIA+, Persons with disabilities across the lifespan to include support for care givers, Individuals with Limited English proficiency, Unhoused /Housing Insecure /Housing Cost Burdened.

Please **select one** focus population(s) your proposed program/service will support:

### Choices

Children and youth (to include birth-5)

Individuals with low incomes and low wealth

Individuals with dental, physical health, mental health and vision care needs

Individuals facing crises

Survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault

Older Adults

Historically marginalized communities

### Grant Funding Focus Areas

Organizations interested in an AFHS FY 2027-2029 Mini or Incubator Grant must propose an initiative, program or service that aligns with one of the EHS *stabilizing* or *thriving* focused grant priorities as described below. One grant application per grant priority may be submitted. Applications combining grant priorities will not be considered.

Choose **one** grant priority and continuum of care for which your proposed program/service will address from the drop-down menu below. Leave the other grant priority questions blank.

**1. Basic Needs Fulfillment - Criteria:** Services that promote wellbeing.

#### Essential Human Services Being Met

- **Stabilizing:** Provides consistent access to basic needs with some security (examples include but are not limited to, housing stability efforts, link individuals to primary healthcare, access to early care and education support, promotes access or delivers needed services in the community to improve the human condition).

- **Thriving:** Promotes long-term individual or family well-being and self-sufficiency beyond immediate needs (examples include but are not limited to, nutrition education, preventive healthcare).

## Essential Human Services Spectrum

### Basic Needs Fulfillment (Select one from the drop down options)

#### Choices

Stabilizing: Provides consistent access to basic needs with some security.

Thriving: Promotes long-term individual/family well-being/self-sufficiency beyond immediate needs.

**2. Vulnerability and Equity - Criteria:** Program or service that addresses systemic inequities or support historically marginalized communities as noted in the focus population.

### Essential Human Services Being Met

- **Stabilizing:** Addresses disparities by providing ongoing support that reduces vulnerability (examples include but are not limited to, disability assistance, employment and training efforts).
- **Thriving:** Promotes systemic change and structural equity, ensuring all communities have opportunities for prosperity (examples include but are not limited to, programs or services that promote policy reforms, economic mobility efforts, equitable healthcare access).

## Essential Human Services Spectrum

### Vulnerability and Equity (Select one from the drop down options)

#### Choices

Stabilizing: Addresses disparities by providing ongoing support that reduces vulnerability.

Thriving: Systemic change/structural equity/ensures communities have opportunities for prosperity.

**3. Health and Safety - Criteria:** Program or service that contributes to public level health and community safety.

### Essential Human Services Being Met

- **Stabilizing:** Strengthens protective factors to prevent crises and improve resilience (examples include but are not limited to, contributes to client access to community health clinics and other services, supports mental health/substance use disorder support programs, out of school time programs, and prevention efforts for domestic violence).
- **Thriving:** Builds sustainable, health-promoting systems that enhance long-term public well-being (examples include but are not limited to, programs/services that promote access to healthcare, public health education, promote nutrition education)

## Essential Human Services Spectrum

### Health and Safety (Select one from the drop down options)

#### Choices

Stabilizing: Strengthens protective factors to prevent crises and improve resilience.

Thriving: Builds sustainable, health-promoting systems that enhance long-term public well-being.

**4. Economic Stability and Support - Criteria:** Programs or services that supports financial security for individuals and communities.

#### Essential Human Services Being Met

- **Stabilizing:** Enhances financial security and mobility through structured programs (examples include but are not limited to, job training, financial education, connecting residents to affordable early care and education supports and childcare).
- **Thriving:** Promotes long-term economic independence and prosperity (examples include but are not limited to small business grants, wealth-building initiatives or economic mobility).

### Essential Human Services Spectrum

**Economic Stability and Support (Select one from the drop down options)**

#### Choices

Stabilizing: Enhances financial security and mobility through structured programs.

Thriving: Promotes long-term economic independence and prosperity.

**5. Social Functioning and Cohesion-Criteria:** Programs or services that support societal stability, prevent displacement, and fosters community well-being.

#### Essential Human Services Being Met

- **Stabilizing:** Encourages inclusive participation and community support (examples include but are not limited to community-wide programs that promote social engagement and participation to include but are not limited to civic engagement, volunteering, mentorship programs).
- **Thriving:** Builds long-term social resilience, belonging and civic engagement (examples include but are not limited to leadership development, cultural programming, initiatives promoting collective well-being).

### Essential Human Services Spectrum

**Social Functioning and Cohesion (Select one from the drop down options)**

#### Choices

Stabilizing: Encourages inclusive participation and community support.

Thriving: Builds long-term social resilience, belonging, and civic engagement.

### Proposed Zip Codes\*

Please select the zip codes your proposed service/program will support.

Check all that apply:

#### Choices

22206

22301

22302  
22304  
22305  
22311  
22312  
22314

### **Additional Required Attachments to Support the Grant Application**

#### **IRS Letter of Nonprofit Determination\***

*File Size Limit: 12 MB*

#### **Most Recent External Audit\***

**NOTE** - Agencies with an annual operating budget of \$750,000 or less, may upload the most recent Board approved year-end financial statement or most recent IRS Form 990.

*File Size Limit: 12 MB*

#### **Organization's FY 2025 Operating Budget\***

*File Size Limit: 12 MB*

#### **Organization's Most Recent Annual Report**

*File Size Limit: 12 MB*

#### **Board of Directors Roster\***

*File Size Limit: 12 MB*

#### **Evidence of Participation in Virginia Quality Birth to 5 (VQB5)**

**NOTE** This is a required attachment for Applicants seeking funding for child care services/programs.

*File Size Limit: 12 MB*

#### **Grant Application Attestation\***

By clicking "yes" I declare that I am authorized to act for the above applicant and submit this grant application to the City of Alexandria, Virginia. I further declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the information contained herein is accurate.

#### **Choices**

yes

## Application Narrative

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### Statement of Need\*

Provide a description of the specific issue of the proposed initiative, program or service seeks to address, with a particular emphasis on the following:

- Use of **Alexandria-specific data** to demonstrate need, including relevant statistics and findings from local reports or community assessments.
- A description of the **geographic area** to be served and any **documented gaps** in existing services.
- Key **demographic and socioeconomic characteristics** of the population of focus.
- Evidence of **unmet needs**, disparities, or barriers faced by the community.
- An explanation of why an incubator or mini grant is appropriate, and why a **small-scale funding award** is the right solution to address this need. Emphasize the potential for **immediate, visible, or measurable impact**.
- Drawing on the **Essential Human Services (EHS)** definition, explain how the proposed initiative, program, or service will provide a coordinated and comprehensive set of interventions designed to assist individuals and families as they move from initial stability toward long-term self-sufficiency and overall well-being.

*Character Limit: 5000*

### Alignment with Grant Priorities\*

Provide a description of the core activities and strategic approaches the proposed initiative, program or service will undertake to address the selected grant priority. The response should demonstrate how the initiative aligns with the defined grant criteria and addresses an identified Essential Human Service (EHS) need, promoting either **stabilization** or **thriving outcomes** for individuals and/or families. Responses should also address the following:

- **Approach, Design and Implementation:** Specific activities, services, or interventions that will be implemented to address the selected grant priority effectively.
- **Incubator Grant Proposals only:** Include a description of how this funding supports early-stage or pilot programs designed to test innovative solutions, pilot new approaches, or fill critical gaps in existing services.

*Character Limit: 5000*

### Outcome Measurement and Data Collection\*

In this section define **two (2) key outcome measures** that will be tracked over the course of the three-year grant period. These measures should reflect the intended impact of your proposed program or service and align with the goals of the selected grant priority area. Also describe how each outcome will be measured. Include the tools, metrics, or indicators that will be used

to assess progress (e.g., pre/post surveys, case management data, participant tracking systems).

- **Data Collection Methods:** Explain the methods, tools, and sources you will use to collect data, such as interviews, surveys, administrative records, or third-party evaluations.
- **Baseline Data Collection Capacity:** Describe your organization's capacity and systems for collecting and reporting the required baseline data throughout the grant cycle including:
  - The **number of individuals or households served**
  - The **ZIP code** where services are delivered, or where participants reside (for home-based services)
  - **Demographic information**, including race and ethnicity
  - The **language(s)** spoken by participants supported

*Character Limit: 5000*

### Outcome Measures Over the 3-Year Grant Period

Identify and define two (2) key outcome measures that will be tracked over the course of the three-year grant period. The proposed outcome measures should align with the specific services being provided by the proposed program.

<b>Outcome Measure 1</b>	
<b>Outcome Measure 2</b>	

### Proposed Number of Individuals to be Supported FY 2027-2029

Provide the projected number of unduplicated individuals to be served in each year of the three-year grant cycle. If projections differ by year, enter the corresponding figures in the sections below.

<b>Proposed Number of Individuals Supported in FY 2027</b>	<b>Proposed Number of Individuals Supported in FY 2028</b>	<b>Proposed Number of Individuals Supported FY 2029</b>

### Proposed Number of Households to be Supported FY 2027-2029

Provide the projected number of unduplicated households to be served in each year of the three-year grant cycle. If projections differ by year, enter the corresponding figures in the sections below.

Number of Households Supported FY 2027	Number of Households Supported FY 2028	Number of Households Supported FY 2029

### Fiscal and Organizational Management\*

Applicants must provide a description of the organization’s capacity to effectively manage public funds and deliver services with fiscal integrity and strong organizational oversight. This section should also provide a clear overview of the organization’s **governance structure, financial management systems, and leadership qualifications**, as well as the experience in managing grants of similar scope or complexity. As appropriate the response should also address:

- **Leadership and Governance** - qualifications and experience of the senior leadership team and governing board. Include information on Board oversight responsibilities, relevant expertise, and how governance structures support the mission and fiscal health of the organization.
- **Fiscal Accountability** - financial management practices, including budgeting processes, internal controls, and use of accounting systems. Describe the organization’s approach to financial reporting, monitoring, and compliance with funder requirements.
- **Audit and Financial History** - Highlight the quality and reliability of the organization’s audit and financial review processes. If available, reference recent audit results, internal audit mechanisms, and actions taken to address any past findings.

*Character Limit: 5000*

### Proposed Budget – Mini and incubator grant requests must fill out the simplified budget below

Allowable expenses include:

- Personnel Cost by Position
- Fringe Benefits
- Payroll Taxes
- Operating Costs (Program related expenditures, Audits, Copying/Printing, Equipment, Insurance, Office Supplies, Postage, Space/Rent, Technology, Training, Travel, and Other related expenses)

- Direct Client Assistance

NOTE: Only administrative costs directly related to the proposed program are to be included within the request.

Proposed Line Item: List all costs covered by this funding to include personnel	Requested Amount	Brief Explanation of the Proposed Expense

**Additional Budget Information\***

In this section applicants should describe:

- **Other resources/revenue streams** that will be leveraged or are being sought (type, source and use restrictions) to help sustain the proposed initiative, program or service.
- **Estimations of in-kind support.** The value of volunteer hours should be calculated using the Independent Sector <https://independentsector.org/blog/new-value-of-volunteer-time-2025-released/> \$34.79 per hour rate. If volunteers will donate skills valued at higher in-kind hourly rate, include a rationale in the budget justification.
- **Joint applicants** should identify areas of shared costs or distribution of costs among participants in the budget narrative.
- **Impact of partial funding** on the delivery of the proposed initiative, program or service and effectiveness and include the minimum acceptable level of funding.
- **Plan for sustaining** the project after the FY 2027-2029 grant cycle.

NOTE: Successful applicants will be required to submit a full budget prior to the execution of the FY 2027-2029 grant agreement. Approved grant award amounts will remain the same for the two subsequent years in the grant cycle and are contingent upon City Council’s annual AFHS appropriation and satisfactory performance of the grantee.

*Character Limit: 2500*

## Supporting Documents

**Note:** Though not required you may upload three (3) documents that validate collaboration, program support or endorsement.

*File Size Limit: 7 MB*

## Joint Applications

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### For Joint Applications

All joint applications must include a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Letter of Commitment from formal partners that outlines clearly

- the nature of the partnership,
- the scope, responsibilities, and commitments of each participating organization,
- and how the collaboration contributes to achieving the proposed outcomes and strengthens the City's overall human service delivery system.

### Partner Agency 1 Name\*

*Character Limit: 200*

### Partner Agency 1 Contact\*

*Character Limit: 200*

### Partner Agency 1 Contact Email\*

*Character Limit: 254*

### Partner Agency 2 Name

*Character Limit: 200*

### Partner Agency 2 Contact

*Character Limit: 200*

### Partner Agency 2 Contact Email

*Character Limit: 254*

### Partner Agency 3 Name

*Character Limit: 200*

### Partner Agency 3 Contact

*Character Limit: 200*

## Partner Agency 3 Contact Email

*Character Limit: 254*

## Joint Applications Evidence of Collaboration

Efforts should be made to link with other programs that serve the same population and to submit a joint application. If applying as a joint applicant, be certain to mark this in the Cover Sheet section and use this section to summarize how the proposed program/service will be achieved.

**NOTE:** A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or a Letter of Commitment confirming the roles and responsibilities of partnering organizations is a required upload for joint applications.

*File Size Limit: 3 MB*