

Please note that Groundwork recently concluded its 2022 pilot run of KPYO in Massachusetts, as outlined below. Stay tuned in 2023 for information on the program's continued development and future grant opportunities. Feel free to reach out to Matt Kearney, Groundwork's Massachusetts Organizing Director, at matt@groundworkproject.com, with any questions.



KEEP PAYING YOUR ORGANIZER FUND

What:

A brand new pilot program for civic engagement and advocacy organizations in Massachusetts to help keep an existing organizer employed for a period of time after the election cycle ends.

Grantees will receive funds to match an organizer's current salary up to \$4,000/mo for a period of four months (November 2022 through February 2023). In this pilot year, Groundwork plans to award three KYO awards in Massachusetts + awards will be limited to one per applying entity.

Any 501c3 or 501c4 organization doing year-round organizing and/or civic engagement work in the following communities is eligible to apply for KYO funding: Springfield, Lawrence, New Bedford, Chelsea, Holyoke, Lowell, Fall River, Southbridge, Brockton & Lynn.

Please note that awards must be spent to continue the employment of an existing organizer.

Why:

A lack of investment in year-round community organizing is one of the most chronic challenges facing political infrastructure in our communities of color and Gateway Cities. Having faced generations of disenfranchisement, oppression and neglect by our political system, the boom-and-bust, election-centric approach to political engagement is particularly inadequate in these communities, where voters need – and deserve – sustained education, engagement, access and trust-building.

Today, organizations across Massachusetts invest an enormous amount of time, sweat, and money into voter engagement around an election. But resources dry up after election day, and not only does the organizer lose employment – the community loses the expertise, relationships and trust that organizer has built. That's not how you build a best-in-class workforce. And, it's a significant waste of money, as any returns on an electoral investment disappear after a candidate wins or loses.

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Why (cont'd):

Imagine the difference it would make if the organizing work continued, long after a campaign shuts down, so that local civic engagement efforts continued to build on each other, rather than being forced to start in square one every election cycle.

At Groundwork we know that investing in year-round organizing infrastructure is investing in the community itself – something far more likely to pay dividends and yield durable political power than candidates who come and go.

Who:

We will prioritize organizations that meet the following criteria:

- Geographically based in one of the following ten MA communities, which saw the lowest voter turnout rates in the state last cycle: Springfield, Lawrence, New Bedford, Chelsea, Holyoke, Lowell, Fall River, Southbridge, Brockton & Lynn;
- Hyperlocal groups that are trusted messengers within their community & focused on a specific region, city, town or neighborhood;
- Year-round organizing programs, networks and footprint;
- Programming related to civic engagement, direct voter contact, issue advocacy or electoral work;
- Programming that builds political power for historically underrepresented communities;
- 501c3, 501c4 or PAC status;
- BIPOC, women and/or queer leadership;
- Measurable impact of efforts to date & clear strategy for growth;
- Compelling plan for organizer's job description during GWP funding period - priority to those focused on ongoing civic engagement, base building, direct voter contact, narrative and political education projects, or specific issue campaigns.

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Who (cont'd):

We will prioritize organizers who meet the following criteria:

- Have worked part-time or full-time with the host organization for at least the last three months;
- Demonstrated commitment to community organizing as a career path;
- Have lived in or have strong connections to community in which they are organizing;
- Demonstrated ability to execute creative organizing strategies that build power for historically excluded communities;
- Oriented towards collaboration, with experience bringing a diverse group of people together towards a common goal;
- Women, BIPOC, low-income, and queer organizers are especially encouraged to apply.

How:

Organizations wishing to apply for funding in KPYO's pilot year can [fill out the application form here](#). Please note that applications are due by October 7, 2022.

Applicants being considered will be contacted by the Groundwork team for an interview in mid-October. Decisions will be made and awardees notified by the end of October.

Please reach out to Groundwork's Massachusetts Organizing Director, Matt Kearney, with any questions – matt@groundworkproject.com.

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Additional Info:

Requirements for grantees:

- For the organizer:* Monthly check-in as a cohort about the status of their work and challenges/opportunities they are facing (3 total, 1 in-person if possible);
- For the organizer:* 500 word written personal reflection at end of funding period describing how they spent their time;
- For the organizer:* One social media appearance on GWP social pages (if comfortable);
- For the host organization:* Brief feedback form at the close of the program as to whether the program was helpful and how it could be improved.

Opportunities for grantees:

- Community-building via access to intimate cohort with other MA organizers;
- 1:1 meeting & support from Groundwork founder Joe Kennedy;
- Access to career coaching and other support via Groundwork's Massachusetts Advisory Board, a preeminent group of 20+ organizing and political leaders in the state;
- Job search support from Groundwork Team, MA Advisory Board, and larger network.