CITY OF LA CROSSE COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT GRANT APPLICATION

Please note that previous funding amounts are not a guarantee for continued support and any funding amount may be based on a number of factors including, but not limited to, performance, available City funds, and collaborating efforts by your organization with similar organizations.

Contact Information

Organization
Hope Restores

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Name of contact person
Tashyra Jackson

Proposal Summary

Project Name
Annual Juneteenth Celebration

Total amount of City funds your agency is requesting
$10,000.00

Will any new jobs be created as a result of the project?
○ Yes ◉ No

If so, how many?

What benefit has your organization provided to the La Crosse community, and specifically to the City, in 2024?
In 2024, Hope Restores has played a significant role in enriching the La Crosse community, particularly through its involvement in the Juneteenth Celebration. This event, hosted by four local Black-led organizations, including Hope Restores, serves to celebrate the liberation of enslaved Black people and promotes inclusivity. It creates a platform for diverse communities to come together, celebrate, interact, and learn from each other, fostering a multicultural environment.
The celebration, held on June 22, 2024, at Riverside Park, included free entertainment, food, and activities such as the Youth Fair and a historical trolley tour. This event drew in approximately 2,000 attendees, many from underrepresented groups. Through this celebration, Hope Restores and its partners not only honored Black history but also directly contributed to building social capital by providing a space for meaningful community engagement, education, and celebration.
Hope Restorers' efforts, alongside its partners, also aimed at addressing critical issues like social justice, mental health, and racial equity, all of which have a positive long-term impact on both the City and the broader La Crosse community. This ongoing commitment ensures that marginalized populations are given the tools and opportunities to thrive in a more equitable environment.

What does your organization have planned for the remainder of 2024 (that is of benefit to La Crosse, and specifically the City)?
Hope Restores has several impactful initiatives planned to further benefit the La Crosse community, specifically the City of La Crosse. These initiatives focus on supporting marginalized communities, promoting mental wellness, and expanding community engagement. Key plans include:
Expansion of Comprehensive Community Services (CCS): Hope Restores is in the process of providing expanded support services to individuals in the La Crosse region. This will include comprehensive programs that cater to mental health, social connectedness, and health disparities. The organization aims to become a primary resource provider, assisting those who need help with mental health, substance use, and other barriers to well-being.
Monthly Coffee w/ Hope Restores: Once a month, Hope Restores hosts a community coffee event that brings together community members, agencies, and organizations. This open and welcoming event has been successful in fostering connections and creating a space for individuals to engage in discussions, share resources, and collaborate on local initiatives. It serves as a call to action, promoting the development of a stronger and more inclusive community in La Crosse. The event usually attracts a diverse crowd, helping to bridge gaps between different groups and encourage cross-sector collaboration.

Black Excellence Celebration: In partnership with Black Student Leaders, Hope Restores organizes the "Black Excellence" annual celebration. This event honors and recognizes the efforts and commitments of individuals who have contributed to making La Crosse a more inclusive and vibrant community. It celebrates the achievements of Black individuals and organizations, fostering pride and furthering the goal of building a community that acknowledges and celebrates its diverse contributions.
Continued Community Health Work: Hope Restores is continuing its community health worker to support and educate the public on health disparities. We are focused on enhancing the delivery of healthcare services in underserved areas, particularly those with higher percentages of racial minorities, to ensure better health outcomes.
Youth Engagement and Education: Through partnerships with schools and community groups, Hope Restores will continue to expand its youth programs. These include leadership and life skills programs designed to empower young people, particularly youth of color, by providing them with the tools to navigate social and educational challenges. Hope Restores is committed to fostering positive, supportive environments where these young individuals can thrive.
Fundraising and Community Advocacy: Hope Restores will also engage in continued fundraising efforts to support its programs and advocate for systemic changes in health and social services. These efforts will help build sustainable funding for Hope Restores' ongoing work in reducing health disparities and promoting equity in La Crosse.

What does your organization plan to accomplish with the help of City funding in 2025?

In 2025, with the help of City funding, Hope Restores plans to enhance and expand the Juneteenth celebration, ensuring it continues to be a significant and impactful event for the La Crosse community. The primary goals for the 2025 celebration include:
Expanded Event Programming: City funding will allow Hope Restores and its partners to offer a wider variety of activities. This includes more entertainment, educational sessions, and community engagement activities to ensure the celebration is accessible and meaningful to a broader audience.
Increased Community Involvement: With the help of City funding, Hope Restores plans to engage more community organizations, local businesses, and individuals in the Juneteenth celebration. This could include additional volunteer opportunities, vendor participation, and partnerships with local schools and youth organizations to help foster a sense of ownership and community pride.
Youth Fair and Educational Initiatives: The Youth Fair, which has become a staple of the event, will be expanded to offer even more educational opportunities for young people. City funding will support bringing in additional youth-centered organizations, offering more games, prizes, and activities.
Eco-Friendly and Sustainable Practices: City funding will support the continued commitment to sustainability at the Juneteenth event. This includes implementing more eco-friendly initiatives, such as using sustainable materials for food packaging, promoting recycling, and minimizing waste throughout the celebration.
Wider Outreach and Marketing: With additional funding, we will be able to increase outreach efforts to ensure more are aware of and can attend the Juneteenth celebration. This includes expanding marketing efforts to reach underserved and underrepresented populations, ensuring that all members of the La Crosse community have the opportunity to participate in this important community event.
Ultimately, the goal of using City funding for the 2025 Juneteenth celebration is to build upon the event's success, deepen its impact, and create a lasting tradition that brings the community together in celebration of Black history, culture, and progress toward equity.

Organization Details

Legal status of organization
Private, Non-Profit

Federal Tax Identification Number
85-3904972

What was your organization's total operating budget for the past year?
$460,000.00

Has your organization received City funds in the past?
(●) Yes ( ) No

If yes, how much has your organization received and how many years has your organization participated in the program?
$10,000

Note: our 2024 financials are not complete. The accountant is still wrapping up Q4. I included the most recent financials. I'm noting it in this section because it's the only place to note it.

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Organization Structure

Attach the following documents (check off as you upload each file below)

- [x] Concise organization chart showing your agency's major administrative structure
- [x] Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws
- [x] List of Board of Directors
- [x] Current agency budget
- [x] Current project activity budget if currently funded
- [x] Other financial forms: Form 990, Income Statement, Balance Sheet, et al.

File Upload

Hope Restores articles of incorporation.pdf	2.11MB
Hope Restores 2023 Tax 990.pdf	130.53KB
2025 Projected Budget.xlsx - 2025 Projected Budget.pdf	106.92KB
Hope Restores Organizational Chart.pdf	48KB
Hope Restores Bylaws New.pdf	76.39KB

Hope Restores 2024 List of Current Members.pdf	186.62KB
2025 Projected Budget.xlsx - 2025 Projected Budget.pdf	106.92KB
09 Sept Financial Statements.pdf	106.79KB

What is your agency's primary funding source(s)?

Grants, donations and contracts

What percent of your anticipated total project budget does this City request represent?

31%

What other source(s) of funds could your organization pursue? Does your organization receive similar funding from other municipalities?

So far, we have raised $5,500 in grants and donations and we'll continue to apply for grant funding. We also applied for a mini grant through La Crosse Community foundation for $7,500. We estimate $3,000 from tabling organizations and $1,000 from T-shirt sales. There are no other municipalities we are receiving funding for.

Proposal Details

Provide an overview of the program (this pertains only to the activity for which you are seeking funds).

The Juneteenth Celebration is an event that creates spaces and activities for people of different backgrounds/cultures to celebrate, interact, and learn together. The human connections nurtured, and learnings will extend beyond the days' activities and increase the capacity of attendees to engage in the work of anti-racism and to build a healthier multi-cultural community.

The work of creating a healthier, multicultural community requires the centering of historically marginalized and underrepresented populations and people.

Four Black-led and Black-centered organizations are leading this effort in partnership with numerous local organizations and individuals of diverse backgrounds.

Specifically state how the requested funds will be used.

The City funding for the 2025 La Crosse Annual Juneteenth Celebration will be used to support the following specific areas:

Event Programming: The funds will be allocated to provide FREE entertainment, including live music performances by Black artists and a Black DJ, to ensure that the celebration remains an accessible and vibrant cultural event for all attendees.

Youth Fair Activities: City funding will support FREE games and prizes at the Youth Fair, offering children and youth engaging activities while learning about Black history. This ensures that the next generation has a fun and educational experience while fostering a sense of community and inclusion.

Food and Meals for Attendees: The funds will cover the costs of FREE meals for 600 attendees, making the event accessible to people from all economic backgrounds and ensuring that no one is excluded based on financial limitations.

Eco-Friendly and Sustainable Practices: A portion of the funds will be used to implement eco-friendly and sustainable practices during the event. This includes sourcing environmentally responsible food vendors, reducing waste by providing sustainable packaging and materials, and promoting recycling throughout the event. The celebration will model these practices as part of the broader social justice message, recognizing that environmental sustainability intersects with racial equity.

Operational Costs: The funding will assist in covering other event-related costs, such as venue arrangements, materials for activities, vendor fees, and necessary supplies to ensure the event runs smoothly and is accessible to everyone.

These funds will ensure that the Juneteenth celebration is not only an inclusive and celebratory occasion but also an event that honors the cultural contributions of Black people while providing a meaningful and enjoyable experience for the entire La Crosse community.

State the specific local needs and problems that your proposal intends to address.

Our country's divide has worsened with a backlash felt especially by individuals who belong to marginalized groups & by the organizations & programs which promote diversity. This is demonstrated by the 2023 dismantling of DEI programs in the UW system, banning of diversity books in schools/libraries, & the pushback for teaching subjects which accurately portray our country's history. Uncivil discourse is becoming normalized in social media and the news. In a Feb. 2024 La Crosse Tribune article Walfsty Pierre,a La Crosse school social worker, states, "It's challenging for students in our area to find positive influences, especially amid the negativity on social media" & ".....the Juneteenth festival, play an important role in building social capital."

The negative impacts of our country's divide is mirrored in education, health care, the criminal justice system, & government.

In schools, students of color receive unequal disciplinary treatment. Between 2008 and 2012, the Juvenile Justice Arrest & Disproportionate Minority Contact Inter-Agency Task Force found that Black youth were nine times more likely to be referred to the juvenile justice system than their white counterparts. Locally, racially-charged incidents have been documented at G-E-T & Holmen High Schools. The 2021 La Crosse County Youth Risk Behavior Report indicates students of color "report fewer protective factors, more risks and more challenges".

In 2022, the La Crosse Tribune reported a hate crime perpetrated by white people against a local Black-owned business when merchandise was tossed on the floor & the owner was subjected to racial slurs.

On a state level, the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reported that "Wisconsin again has the worst gap in academic achievement between its black & white students" (October 2019). Additionally, "Wisconsin incarcerates non-white persons at far higher rates than whites & at rates of disparity far above the national average" (WI Bar Ass., April 2018). Wisconsin is, by many research measures, the worst place to grow up African American (pbs.org/newshour/nation/why-is-milwaukee-so-bad-for-black-people).

Nationally, health disparities widen the gap of disease & death along racial lines. Despite nearly identical rates of Covid infection, the hospitalization rate for the Black population was 2.4 times higher and the mortality rate 1.7 times higher than the white population (CDC 2022 report). In November 2019, the Kaiser Foundation reported disparities "in teen birth rates, infant mortality rates, and HIV or AIDS diagnosis and death rates were particularly striking for Blacks……"

Racial disparities & bigotry remain an enigma for many well-intentioned white people. Our lack of historical knowledge & our hyper-segregated communities impede our understanding of systemic racism & the struggles of Americans of color and hobble our ability to work effectively across racial lines.

HOPE! Over the last several years, La Crosse area residents have demonstrated their hunger for tackling social justice issues by their engaging in anti-racism education & group discussions, the passage of the County Board resolution-Racism is a Public Health Crisis, the Waking Up White Collaborative's successful book reads & presentations, White Privilege Symposium & the leadership attendance at Creating A Healthier Multicultural multi weekend program. Still La Crosse area residents have expressed they feel stymied, hesitant, & even fearful about how to put their new learnings into action.

Exposing our community to historical events such as Juneteenth brings a more complete understanding of the importance of Black people in US & local history. The Juneteenth Celebration creates spaces & activities where people of different races can celebrate, interact, & learn together. Here human connections are made, relationships nurtured, & a healthier multicultural community can emerge.

Identify the project target population your proposed program or activity will serve. Include unique characteristics such as: ethnicity/race, age, disability, income level.

Children (ages 0-12)

Youth/Teens (ages 13-18)

Adults (ages 19-64)
Seniors (ages 65+) People with disabilities
Historically excluded and/or marginalized groups People with low or no incomes

Describe methods used to measure success in achieving objectives and specifically meeting needs of the target population.

Evaluating the success of the Juneteenth Celebration will be measured by (1) the number of individuals and organizations who contributed financially, (2) the total financial contributions received, (3) the number of people in attendance, (4) the number of organizations that tabled, (5) the number of volunteers, (6) the effort of the food vendors to provide eco-friendly serving containers, and (7) the reduction of waste from garbage to increased use of the recycling bins.

If more than one agency within the La Crosse area deals with similar problems or clients that you have identified, describe how your agency coordinates tasks and responsibility with these other agencies and how duplication of services will be avoided.

For the Juneteenth celebration, Hope Restores actively encourages and fosters collaboration with other organizations in the La Crosse area. Rather than working in isolation, we invite local agencies, businesses, and community groups to join in strengthening the event and making it a more inclusive, vibrant celebration of Black culture and history.
Through coordination with partner organizations, we ensure that each entity contributes to different aspects of the celebration, such as entertainment, youth activities, food, historical education, and community engagement. This collaborative effort allows us to pool resources, share responsibilities, and bring a diversity of perspectives and skills to the event. For example, local groups may provide volunteers, sponsor youth-focused games, or share knowledge through educational booths and activities.
By bringing together various partners, we create a more robust and engaging experience for attendees. This cooperation also allows for a broader reach, ensuring that more people from different backgrounds and communities can participate and enjoy the celebration. The collective involvement of multiple agencies helps foster a stronger sense of community, promotes the values of equity and inclusion, and ultimately creates a Juneteenth celebration that reflects the shared values of La Crosse.