



GEORGE B. HENDERSON FOUNDATION

c/o Hemenway & Barnes LLP

75 State Street, 16th Floor

Boston, MA 02109

www.thehendersonfoundation.com

The Henderson Foundation is accepting proposals for two distinct grant programs in 2026 – their regular grant program and a mini-grant program. See below for details.

2026 Proposal Deadlines (for both regular grants and mini-grants) – Please note these are earlier dates than in prior years.

The Henderson Foundation will hold two grant rounds in 2026.

	ROUND I	ROUND II
Due Date	Friday, February 13, 2026	Friday, September 4, 2026
Decisions	Late March/early April	Late October/early November

Applications must be received through the online grant portal **by 5 pm** on the day of the proposal deadline.

The Designators will host a virtual applicant forum before each grant round:

ROUND I	ROUND II
Thursday, January 15, 2026	Thursday, July 30, 2026

Pre-registration for the Forum is required and open to all potential applicants. The session will be recorded for those who cannot attend “live”.

Click [here](#) to register for the Round I forum. Round II registration will open on June 1, 2026.

REGULAR GRANT CYCLE

The Henderson Foundation’s grants provide support for projects focused on the enhancement of the appearance and preservation of outdoor elements in the city of Boston. The Foundation encourages applications for projects in all neighborhoods of

Boston that concern parks, city streets, buildings, monuments, and architectural and sculptural works.

Projects submitted for the Round I grant cycle must be completed and able to seek reimbursement no later than December 31, 2026 and for the Round II grant cycle be completed and able to seek reimbursement no later than December 31, 2027.

Most grants awarded in the regular grants program will be in the \$20,000-\$50,000 range, but the Designators will consider all projects that fulfill the Foundation's goals and offer outstanding benefit to the community. Grants above \$50,000 are very rare exceptions. If you are applying for more than \$50,000 your application should describe in detail, why you are seeking a larger grant. The Designators discourage first time applicants from requesting more than \$50,000.

Through past grants, the Foundation has supported capital projects such as the restoration of historic buildings; creation of new public sculpture and gardens; restoration of historic monuments; creation of new, public outdoor spaces; and other projects that enhance quality of life and sense of place, while demonstrating design excellence. Grants are made only for projects *within Boston city limits* and to projects that are accessible and visible to the public. Grants are not made to individuals. Grants are made for restoration and preservation activities, but not for routine care or maintenance (as defined by National Park Service technical standards.)

In 2026, the Designators are particularly interested in requests for support of permanent public art projects and projects focused on community-based outdoor spaces. In addition, the Designators are seeking proposals from projects in neighborhoods that have not been well represented in previous grants, including but not limited to East Boston, South Boston, Mission Hill, Allston/Brighton, Charlestown, Chinatown, Mattapan, Hyde Park, West Roxbury, and Roslindale.

MINI-GRANTS PROGRAM

In 2026, The Designators have reserved up to \$40,000 for a mini-grants program. This program will provide grants of up to \$7,500 for immediate implementation of community and neighborhood-based public outdoor space and public art projects. Mini-grants are not available for historic preservation projects (those should apply to the full grants program). Funds may be requested to support purchasing of items or elements for the fabrication of permanent public art (such as murals, sculptures, installations, or other works) or for permanent improvements to outdoor public spaces (such as public or community gardens, parks, roadway islands, publicly accessible rooftop gardens, shade structures, sidewalk furnishings, or other amenities that beautify the public realm).

Please note: the mini-grants program is not intended to support a budget gap in a larger program that would be better suited to applying to the regular grants program.

Design quality and artistic value are important factors in selection, since the goal is to bring beauty to the lives of Bostonians and to Boston's public spaces. Fees for services (such as design fees) are generally not eligible for coverage by the grant. The Designators strongly prefer that their funds support hard costs and will consider funding soft costs only if they are integral to the installed, final product (such as artist's fees). Applications must be for projects within Boston city limits. The Foundation will not make grants to individuals. However, individual artists and designers, community groups, youth groups, faith-based groups, or neighborhood groups may work with a qualified nonprofit as a fiscal sponsor.

The projects funded by the mini-grants program must be able to be completed **no later than December 30, 2026 in Round I or June 30, 2027 in Round II.**

Current guidelines as well as a recent grants list are available for download at <http://www.thehendersonfoundation.com>.

Policies for Grants

- Grants are made by the George B. Henderson Foundation in accordance with the Indenture of Trust by Mr. Henderson dated May 21, 1964, as amended.
- The Trust directs that Foundation funds shall be devoted solely to the enhancement of the physical appearance of the city of Boston including projects concerning parks, city streets, buildings, monuments, and architectural and sculptural works. Each project shall be visible by the public, preferably from a public way. If funds are expended for work on building interiors, the building shall be open to the public a reasonable number of hours per day or days in each year.
- The term "physical appearance of the city of Boston" includes all neighborhoods in all parts of the city and includes their identity, sense of place, and quality of life.
- Highest priority is given to requests for grants that would make the most significant and lasting enhancement of the physical appearance of the city of Boston.
- Future maintenance is an important consideration, including durability of design and materials, who will be responsible for ongoing maintenance, and how maintenance will be funded.

- Any requests for public art must be for permanent public art. Requests for temporary or time limited installations will not be considered. Any public art projects on property owned by the City of Boston are required to have secured final approval from the Boston Art Commission before being considered by the Henderson Foundation. Projects which have secured preliminary approval require the Henderson Foundation's approval before applying and will be considered on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the Boston Art Commission. All applications for public art must include images of the final, approved art work. More information on their process can be found at <https://www.boston.gov/departments/arts-and-culture/boston-art-commission>.
- The Trust stipulated that a Board of Designators to make grants be composed of the Director of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; the Dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at MIT; the Director of SPNEA (now Historic New England); the Chair of the Boston Art Commission for the City of Boston; plus three other members, one of whom is a landscape architect and two additional members who reside in the Commonwealth and are not architects or landscape architects. Selection of Designators who are leading figures in the design, artistic, and preservation professions in Boston makes clear the intent that the selected projects must be of highest professional and design quality.
- Grants are made for capital improvements that would not ordinarily be undertaken by public or private bodies. Targeted grants may be made to identifiable elements within a project in circumstances where that element could be a Henderson Foundation project.
- Grants are typically reimbursement funding and are payable upon completion of work for which the grant is made. If a reimbursement-based grant presents a challenge for the applicant, please indicate in the narrative and discuss with Foundation Administrator prior to application submittal. Those applying for mini-grants can indicate whether they wish to receive up-front funding.
- Recognition of the Foundation's contribution will be expected if your project is funded. The George B. Henderson Foundation expects to be recognized through usual marketing and promotion efforts and, where appropriate, permanent signage or markers. Proposals should outline how the applicant will recognize the Foundation on its web site, through social media, in electronic and print

communications or other relevant public materials. Final grant award letters will specify the recognition parameters jointly agreed to by both the Foundation and the grantee. The Foundation's logo is available to grantees upon request for use in promotional materials.

- Grants that have been made but not expended within three years after the grant award date are cancelled.
- Preservation grants are made for preservation and restoration as defined in the National Park Service Technical Preservation Service Standard, but not for routine care or maintenance of distinctive and significant buildings, objects, or features. Mini-grants are not available for historic preservation projects.

PRESERVATION IS DEFINED AS the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity and materials of an historic property. Protection, maintenance and repair are emphasized while replacement is minimized.

RESTORATION IS DEFINED AS the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period.

The Foundation encourages consideration of environmental and sustainable practices whenever applicable.

Review Criteria

The Designators consider the following criteria as part of their grant review:

- Adherence to the mission and guidelines articulated above
- The quality of the project design, the qualification of the contractors or artists completing the work, and the strength of the maintenance plan
- The level of public access to the project
- The relative funding need for the proposed project
- The level of community support for and engagement with the project, as demonstrated in the narrative and in letters of support
- The level of public realm impact
- Project location in a neighborhood of focus in any given year

Eligible Applicants

Applicants must be an exempt organization under IRC section 501(c)(3), or submit using a qualified fiscal sponsor that qualifies under IRC section 501(c)(3). Projects must be within the city of Boston.

Exclusions

Grants are not made for general fund drives, endowments, operating or staffing costs, planning or design studies, or construction of playgrounds or tot lots.

How to Apply

All applications should be submitted through the Hemenway & Barnes online application portal at <https://goapply2.akoyago.com/hembar/>. Click here for detailed instructions as to [how to create an account](#) and for [password assistance](#). Once you log in you will be required to choose an application type – regular grants program or mini-grants program.

REGULAR GRANTS PROGRAM – Requires a Full Application

Proposals to the regular grants program must include:

1. Cover Form

Please note in the online application, you will fill out the cover form for the following sections of the outline below.

- a. Personnel/contact
 - i. Name, address and web site of applicant. If using a fiscal sponsor provide the information for the fiscal sponsor.
 - ii. Name, address, phone and email of Executive Director and/or primary contact person
 - iii. Name and affiliation of your project supervisor if known at the time of your proposal
 - iv. Identify the specific architect, landscape architect, or other design professionals, artists, fabricators, or restoration specialists responsible for or involved in your project. Include resumes or bios if available.
- b. Name of project for which support is requested, along with a one sentence summary of the project;
- c. Amount requested;

2. Proposal Narrative: The proposal narrative will be submitted as a file upload named "Proposal Narrative – [name of applicant]". The narrative should include the following sections of the outline below (5 page maximum).

- a. Project description including specifics of proposed project;
- b. Description of entire project if requested portion is part of larger project;
- c. Significance of proposed project to the community and the city of Boston;
- d. Schedule
 - i. Please include a detailed timeline, which includes the anticipated completion date of project overall, and/or specific project element for which funds are being requested;
 - ii. If you are awarded a grant, indicate how soon after an award you will begin to incur costs for your project.

- e. Plan for maintenance and maintenance funding – Please submit a copy of the maintenance plan if available. It will not count towards the 5 page narrative limit);
- f. Indicate how the contribution of the Henderson Foundation will be credited for the project, in media and other acknowledgements, both during the work phase and following project completion. Please include information about permanent recognition if applicable.
- g. Indicate any public approvals your project has received or is pending. For public art projects on land owned by the City of Boston, you must demonstrate that you have secured *final* approval for the project from the Boston Art Commission. If you have secured *preliminary* approval from the Boston Art Commission, please contact the Henderson Foundation staff before submitting your application.
- h. Please detail whether you own the property or building where the project is to take place. If you own the property or building, please supply a copy of the deed. If you do not own the building, please indicate whether you have site control for the project and if not, when control is expected. Please submit a copy of the lease or other agreement, as appropriate. Deed or lease will not count towards 5 page maximum.
- i. Indicate any previous grants your organization or project has received from the Henderson Foundation.
- j. The Designators have asked all applicants to address the following regarding their community process in the narrative:
 - i. For public art and public space projects:
 - 1. Please share the process you undertook in the community where the project is sited.
 - 2. Why was this neighborhood and site selected?
 - 3. What is your organization's relationship to the building, location, and/or community?
 - 4. What community process did you engage in to share and get feedback about your proposed project? (For example, attending community meetings, talking with abutters, etc.)
 - 5. How many meetings did you have with community members?
 - 6. What was the attendance at those meetings?
 - 7. Was community feedback incorporated into your final proposal? If so, please describe.
 - ii. For all project types:
 - 1. Please share examples of marketing and outreach that you do to attract a diverse range of visitors to your building, site, and

programs.

2. Do you have an attendance analysis that includes locational information of visitors (this may include zip codes, city, towns, etc.)? If yes, please share how that information is collected and used in program planning.
 3. Please address any challenges to the physical access of your building or site.
3. **Budget:** The program budget will be uploaded as a separate file and should include the following sections of the outline below. Please upload as a PDF (not Excel or Word) using the file name "Program Budget – [name of applicant].
- a. Expenses: Include a line-item breakdown showing expense details of requested amount (and full project expenses if part of a larger project) and what specifically the George B. Henderson Foundation will be funding. Indicate expenses for fabrication, installation, restoration, as well as expenses for personnel to complete the work (architects, restorers, artists, contractors, etc.)
 - b. Revenue: Include a funding plan that outlines amount raised to date, all other funders who are reviewing your proposal at the time of submission to the Henderson Foundation, and the amount they are considering. Please also note contingencies if other pending funding is not approved (especially for pending CPA requests or other requests representing a large percentage of the revenue plan).
4. **Proposal Exhibits:** Exhibits must include visual representation of the proposed project and/or site, including but not limited to plans or other visual materials directly relevant to your project, sufficient to give reviewers an understanding of the current conditions at the site and what will be accomplished and changed through the proposed project.
- a. Provide images of existing conditions at the project site, including its surroundings to show the site and explain the neighborhood context, including how the neighborhood will be affected by the project.
 - b. Provide plans, elevations, and renderings, or if these are not yet available, concept sketches showing what the project will look like. Include information on materials to be used.
 - c. Provide at least one but not more than three letters of support from community leaders, organizations, or affected individuals. Letters should address the specific benefits of the proposed project and the level of

community support, not a general statement about the applicant organization.

In the online application, you may upload three proposal exhibits, and one document containing up to three letters of support. Proposal exhibit files are often large and should be compressed before uploading. Maximum file size is 15 MB. If your file size exceeds 15 MB please contact us directly for other ways to submit very large documents. Please name file "Exhibit A (B, C) – [name of applicant]" for exhibits and "Letters of Support – [name of applicant]" for support letters.

5. **Proposal Attachments** - You may upload these attachments in the noted attachment section of the online application portal.
 - a. The most recent audited financial statement for the applicant organization (or fiscal sponsor), including that of any parent organization if the applicant is a subsidiary or support group of a larger nonprofit. If the organization does not conduct an audit or financial review, please submit a copy of the organization's IRS Form 990 and a Profit & Loss statement from your most recently completed fiscal year. Please name the file "Financials – [name of applicant]"
 - b. The most recent organizational budget with year-to-date financials. Please name the file "Organizational Budget – [name of applicant]"
 - c. List of Board of Directors including affiliations and city of residence. If using a fiscal sponsor please include the Board list of the fiscal sponsor. You may also include a listing of any informal Advisory Boards. Please name the file "Board List – [name of applicant]"
 - d. Philanthropy Massachusetts Demographic Data Form (click [here](#) for a copy of the form). Please name the file "Demographic Data Form – [name of applicant]" If your organization does not collect demographic data, please include in the narrative and explanation of how the organization knows who is in their community.

Mini-Grants Program Application

For the mini-grants program, the Designators have designed a streamlined application process. Applicants interested in a mini-grant should complete an initial application with the following information. The Designators will review initial application and concept outline and may request detailed documentation before awarding funds. The mini-grant application process should include the following:

1. **Cover Form:** Please note in the online application, you will fill out the cover form which asks for the following information:
 - a. Personnel/contact
 - i. Name, address and web site of applicant. If using a fiscal sponsor provide the information for the fiscal sponsor.
 - ii. Name, address, phone and email of Executive Director and/or primary contact person
 - iii. Name and affiliation of your project supervisor if known at the time of your proposal
 - iv. Identify the specific architect, landscape architect, or other design professionals, artists, fabricators, or restoration specialists responsible for or involved in your project.
 - b. Name of project for which support is requested, along with a one sentence summary of the project;
 - c. Amount requested.
2. **Proposal Narrative:** The proposal narrative file upload should be named "Proposal Narrative – [name of applicant]" and include the following of the outline below, with a maximum of 5 pages.
 - a. Project description including specifics of proposed project;
 - b. Description of entire project if requested amount is part of larger project;
 - c. Significance of proposal project to the community and the city of Boston;
 - d. Please share the process you undertook in the community where the project is sited, discussing why this neighborhood and site was selected; your organization's relationship to the building, location, and/or community; and the community process you engaged in to share and get feedback about your proposed project and whether that feedback was incorporated into your project in any way.
 - e. Schedule - note all projects seeking mini-grants should be able to be completed by December 30, 2026 in Round I or June 30, 2027 in Round II.

- i. Timeline for the project, including anticipated completion date of project overall, and/or specific project element for which funds are being requested;
 - ii. If you are awarded a grant, indicate how soon after an award you will begin to incur costs for your project. Indicate if the project would require up-front funding (as opposed to reimbursement funding);
 - f. How will the project be maintained and/or who will be responsible for upkeep and funding for maintenance? Is there an endowment or other dedicated funding for maintenance? A maintenance plan may be required before a final grant is made.
 - g. Indicate how the Henderson Foundation will be credited for funding the project, in media and other acknowledgements, both during the work phase and following project completion. Please include information about permanent recognition if applicable.
 - h. Indicate any public approvals your project has received or is pending. For public art projects on land owned by the City of Boston, you must demonstrate that you have secured *final* approval for the project from the Boston Art Commission. If you have secured *preliminary* approval from the Boston Art Commission, please contact the Henderson Foundation staff before submitting your application.
 - i. Please detail whether you own the property or building where the project is to take place. If you do not own the building, please indicate whether you have site control for the project and if not, when control is expected. If your concept is approved, you may need to supply a copy of the lease, deed, or other site agreement.
 - j. Indicate any previous grants your organization or project has received from the Henderson Foundation.
3. **Budget:** The program budget may be uploaded as a separate file named "Program Budget– [name of applicant]" and include the following sections of the outline below:
- a. **Expenses:** Include a line-item breakdown showing expense details of requested amount (and full project expenses if part of a larger project) and what specifically the George B. Henderson Foundation will be funding. Indicate expenses for fabrication, installation, restoration, as well as expenses for personnel to complete the work (architects, restorers, artists, contractors, etc.)
 - b. **Revenue:** Include a funding plan that notes the amount raised to date and

other funders who are reviewing your proposal at the time of submission to the Henderson Foundation and the amount they are considering. Please also note contingencies if other pending funding is not approved (especially for pending CPA requests or other requests representing a large percentage of the revenue plan).

- 4. Proposal Exhibits:** Please include a visual representation of the proposed project and/or site, including but not limited to photos, plans, or other visual materials directly relevant to your project, sufficient to give reviewers an understanding of the current conditions at the site and what will be accomplished and changed through the proposed project.
- a. Provide images of existing conditions at the project site, including its surroundings to show the site and explain the neighborhood context, including how the neighborhood will be affected by the project.
 - b. Provide plans, elevations, and renderings, or if these are not yet available, concept sketches showing what the project will look like. Include information on materials to be used.
 - c. Provide at least one but not more than three letters of support from community leaders, organizations, or affected individuals. Letters should address the specific benefits of the proposed project, not a general statement about the applicant organization.

In the online application, you may upload three proposal exhibits, and one document containing up to three letters of support or individual letters of support, as needed. Proposal exhibit files are often large and should be compressed before uploading. Maximum file size is 15 MB. If your file size exceeds 15 MB please contact us directly for other ways to submit very large documents. Please name file "Exhibit A (B, C) – [name of applicant]" for exhibits and "Letters of Support – [name of applicant]" for support letters.

Application Tips

General

- If any of these materials are challenging to develop, please contact the Henderson Foundation's administrator to discuss. If completing the grant application via the online portal presents a barrier, please contact the Foundation's administrator for alternative arrangements.
- Application materials need not be elaborately formatted.
- The Foundation expects that professional planning for the project will have taken place prior to the application. The professional expertise of those responsible for the project is an important consideration that will be evaluated. For example, a preservation project is expected to involve a qualified preservation architect; a conservation project is expected to involve a well-qualified conservator; a landscape project is expected to be designed by a qualified landscape architect; contractors performing the work should have prior experience with similar professional projects of recognized high quality.
- The Foundation welcomes applications from nonprofits of all sizes. The Designators will hold an Applicant Forum before each grant cycle so that applicants may meet with the Foundation and learn more about its giving priorities. Should you need assistance with proposal writing, there are many resources available in Boston, including but not limited to Philanthropy Massachusetts (philanthropyma.org) and the Massachusetts Nonprofit Network (massnonprofitnet.org).

Narrative

- The need for the project should be clearly stated, and the case for how the proposed project will meet community needs or aspirations should be succinctly presented.
- If there is a specific or noteworthy history to your building or facility, please share that history in your application.
- Do not assume that your organization, the project, or project location are known to reviewers; all requested information and attachments should be provided, even for repeat applicants.
- The Foundation requires projects to be "visible to the public, preferably from a public way." Applicants should provide detail as to the level of public access to both the building in question as well as to the specific project component. If the building is open limited hours, please specify the times it is open to the public. Please also specify whether there is an admission cost to your building.
- If your organization or project has been previously supported by the Foundation, please discuss your efforts to expand your fundraising from other sources.

- Recognition of the Foundation's contribution may be made in newsletters, press releases, media announcements, annual reports, on the organization's web site or through social media channels; by invitation of the Board of Designators to attend project events; and on plaques or other long-term recognition if those are planned for the project. The level of recognition is expected to be proportionate to the scale of the Foundation's contribution to the full project budget. Grant expectations and guidelines will be sent with the award letter.

Supporting Materials

- In order to better understand the project and its neighborhood context, illustrations or renderings that show the project from the pedestrian point of view are welcome.
- Project funding sources must be identified, whether received or proposed. Reviewers will consider whether the funding plan is thorough and realistic given the Foundation's knowledge of funding sources, the applicant's budget and resources, and the history of fundraising by the applicant.
- Project expenses should be clearly delineated in the project budget. A contractor's estimate does not substitute for a line-item budget.
- The project budget should indicate both hard costs for construction, fabrication, and materials, as well as soft costs for architects, planners, artists, contractors, etc. It should also clearly indicate the portion of expenses you are requesting from the Henderson Foundation. The Designators strongly prefer that their funds support hard costs. Soft costs will be considered only if they are integral to the installed, final product (such as artist's fees or contractor installation). Please reach out to Henderson Foundation staff if you are unsure about how to present soft costs.

Submissions/Portal

- Requests must be submitted by 5:00 PM Eastern Time on the posted deadline date. Late submissions are not accepted unless pre-approved. If you encounter a problem and it is close to the deadline, please email us and we can correct the error the following business day. We encourage all applicants to start their application early in the day, even if you have written the responses offline and just need to upload to the site. Build in extra time for troubleshooting if necessary and avoid end-of-day urgency.
- To submit an application using the online portal, you must register as an organization, not an individual. Please visit the application site and select "Register a new account." Choose "Organization" and provide your institution's name, department, and contact details.
- If you cannot see the grant opportunity after logging in to the portal, go to the "Opportunities" tab and click the "View" button next to the Henderson Foundation listing. Do not click the guidelines link—it will redirect you to the website. If you still

don't see the opportunity, your account may be pending approval or incorrectly set up.

- Required Fields: Make sure all required fields (marked with an asterisk *) are completed and any necessary files are uploaded.
- Correct Format: Ensure that any number-based or data-based fields follow the correct format. All numbers and dollar amounts must be entered as whole numbers—no decimals or special characters.
- Plain Text Only: If you're pasting content from another source, please paste it as "plain text." Special formatting may cause compatibility issues.
- File Upload Issues
 - Avoid uploading encrypted or password-protected files.
 - Extremely large files may fail—try resizing or re-saving before uploading again.
 - The total size of all attachments combined must not exceed 20 MB.
 - PDF files are preferred.
 - Visual materials should be optimized for on-screen viewing—high resolution is not necessary.
 - Excel spreadsheets must contain only one tab; if you upload a multi-tab file, only the first tab will be visible.

Please direct any questions to Gioia Perugini, Foundation Administrator at gperugini@hembar.com or 617.557.9777.

Technical questions on the grant application portal should be directed to Rita Goldberg, Senior Grants Manager, at rgoldberg@hembar.com or 617.557.9774.