

## Legacy Fund for Boston Grant Guidelines – 2026

### History

The Legacy Fund for Boston (LFB) was established in 2018 with the sole purpose of managing charitable funds for the benefit of the City of Boston and its residents. The principal activity and purposes of LFB are to receive and distribute funds to enhance and preserve the character, sense of community and space, and cultural aspects of the City of Boston, with a particular focus on historic preservation. More specifically, LFB's efforts would result in Boston's continued presence as a vibrant, diverse, world-class city that respects, protects, and celebrates its historic resources coincident with enlightened development and change. LFB was incorporated as a public charity in 2022 as it began to receive charitable funds. It made its first grants in 2024.

### Mission

The Legacy Fund for Boston is a public charity which supports the endurance of places and spaces that are meaningful to Bostonians and the historic character of the entire city of Boston.

### Eligibility to Apply

- Applicants must be qualified nonprofit organizations.
- Projects must be located within the City of Boston.
- Projects must relate to and/or promote historic preservation.

### Focus Areas for Grants

In 2026, Legacy Fund for Boston grants will support planning, research, and educational projects that advance historic preservation efforts in Boston. LFB will make grants in 2026 to support strategic efforts that help organizations prepare for or move closer to capital projects or other long term preservation goals.

Grants will be awarded to projects that focus on one or more of the following:

- Conducting research, studies, surveys, or reports that inform or advance a preservation effort
- Developing preservation, interpretation, or planning documents, including strategic plans, feasibility studies, or condition assessments
- Identifying and addressing gaps in historic preservation efforts, especially in historically underrepresented communities
- Creating or improving public-facing education, interpretation, or awareness initiatives around Boston's built environment and cultural history.
- Raising awareness about the importance of historic preservation
- Funding professional services for planning and design phases of preservation-related work

- Preparing for future capital projects through project planning, documentation, or early-stage design work
- Projects that are accessible and/or visible to the public or in the public realm
- Projects not able to be funded via other sources where a LFB grant would help to complete the project budget and allow work to move forward within the next calendar year

LFB is soliciting proposals in a two-step application process, with an initial letter of inquiry, after which full proposals would be invited (as outlined in greater detail below).

All applications must meet the eligibility requirements and be in furtherance of one or more of the focus areas noted above.

Sample uses of funds could include:

1. Needs assessment, feasibility studies, or technical surveys to inform preservation priorities
2. Creation of planning documents, historic structure reports, or site-specific preservation strategies
3. Conceptual or schematic design work to prepare for capital fundraising or permitting
4. Community-based history projects that lead to future interpretation or preservation
5. Research that identifies and documents historically significant places at risk
6. Engagement strategies to build local support for preservation efforts
7. Partnerships with public agencies or organizations to address fundamental needs for preservation in Boston
8. Programming, interpretation, or education programs related to Boston's diverse history

**The maximum grant request for 2026 is \$15,000. LFB will fund a range of project sizes.** LFB will accept requests for single year grant awards.

In this round, LFB will not accept proposals for:

- Capital projects
- Support for individuals, including scholars pursuing academic research
- Support for legislation, lobbying, or other political activity
- Research not connected to a specific preservation, restoration, advocacy, or educational project

## How to Apply

LFB will review grants in a two-step application process.

1. Letters of Inquiry (LOI) are due by **September 1, 2026** and will be reviewed by the current LFB Directors. See below for LOI details.
2. Full Proposal: A smaller number of projects will be invited to submit full proposals. Full proposal guidelines will be sent to those invited to the next round of review at the time they are notified. Applicants will be notified by early October, with full proposals due in November and funding decisions made in December.

Please review all eligibility requirements and guidelines thoroughly to determine if your project is a good fit with this round of funding.

Applicants at the LOI stage will be required to complete an online application requesting the following information. Please visit <https://goapply2.akoyago.com/hembar> to apply. The application portal will open on July 15, 2026 for submissions.

Fillable online form with the following questions:

1. Applicant organization or fiscal sponsor legal name, federal tax ID#, primary contact and mailing address, website, and address of project site, if different
2. Brief description of applicant organization, its mission, history, and current programs/services (one paragraph in online form)
3. Amount of current fiscal year organization operating budget
4. Requested amount
5. Program area: design, planning, education/outreach, advocacy, or other
6. Title of Program/Project
7. Program/Project summary
8. Total project budget amount and amount raised to date for this request

## Uploads

1. Please submit a letter, to be uploaded as an attachment, which should not exceed two pages, which includes the following:
  - a. How the project meets the LFB mission and focus areas.
  - b. How you define the historic significance of your project, project site, or structure.
  - c. How the project contributes to the character and sense of place of your neighborhood or surrounding community.
  - d. Project timeline
  - e. Please also indicate whether any permits or other public agency approvals must be secured for the project, whether they have been

secured, and what the timeline is for consideration of any permit applications.

2. Optional:

- a. Images related to the proposed project, if applicable
- b. Project timeline (if more detailed than can be accommodated in 1(d) above)

## **Definitions**

All applications must have a goal or focus on historic preservation.

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.

REHABILITATION IS DEFINED AS the process of returning a building or buildings to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient use while preserving those portions and features of the building and its site and environment which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values.

## **FAQs**

### **How is LFB different from the Henderson Foundation or CPA?**

LFB is a relatively new funding source in its second year of making grants. The 2026 grants will continue the 2025 focus on planning, educational projects, or advocacy efforts.

### **How is LFB funded?**

LFB is a public charity which receives charitable contributions and grants from City and State agencies and private developers to mitigate adverse impacts from private development in Boston. LFB is not an endowed foundation. It sets an annual grants budget based on available funds.

**Will the Fund make unrestricted, general operating grants?** Not at this time.

**What criteria will be used to choose organizations to advance to the second stage of review?**

LFB Directors will select applicants whose projects most closely adhere to the mission and focus areas articulated above. Projects that present a clear program and plan, timeline, and articulation of how LFB funding can help complete a project or advance project goals will be prioritized.

**Can we apply for a grant that is smaller than the maximum amount?** Yes

**What are the full proposal guidelines if we are selected to advance past the LOI stage?** LFB will invite a selected number of applicants to submit a full proposal. Full proposals will require a more detailed project plan, timeline, and documentation.

**If our organization is not an incorporated nonprofit, are we eligible to apply?** Organizations that do not have IRS tax exempt status may apply through a qualified public charity fiscal sponsor.

**Will the Fund be able to support small businesses or other private/for-profit entities?** No

**Contact Information**

**LFB Directors**

Deneen Crosby, LFB Director

Katherine Davis-Wheeler, Boston Preservation Alliance, LFB Director

Carissa Demore, Historic New England, LFB Chair and Director

Dakota Jones, Historic Boston Inc., LFB Director

Julian Phillips, LFB Director, Treasurer

Byron Rushing, LFB Director

Gerald Ward, Museum of Fine Arts, LFB Director

LFB grantmaking is managed and administered at Hemenway & Barnes LLP. Please direct any questions on the application process to:

Gioia Perugini, Director of Philanthropic Services

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[The Legacy Fund for Boston](#)