



Harm Reduction Futures Fund

Round 17 Grant Cycle – Phase 1

Request for Pre-Application Survey

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Executive Summary

The Harm Reduction Futures Fund (formerly the Syringe Access Fund) is a collaborative grantmaking initiative that seeks to reduce the health, psychosocial, and socioeconomic disparities experienced by people who use drugs (PWUD). The Harm Reduction Futures Fund invests in evidence-based and community-driven approaches to prevent the transmission of both HIV and viral hepatitis, reduce injection-related injuries, increase overdose prevention and reversal efforts, and connect people who use drugs to comprehensive prevention, treatment, and support services. The Harm Reduction Futures Fund is a collaborative grantmaking program supported by ViiV Healthcare, Remedy Alliance, and private donors.

The Harm Reduction Futures Fund will award grants in Round 17 to syringe services programs providing direct services. Unlike previous years, there will be only one (1) category of funding that all syringe service programs can apply to.

We are currently not offering advocacy grants. At this time only direct service applications will be accepted.

History of the Harm Reduction Futures Fund

The Harm Reduction Futures Fund (originally the Syringe Access Fund) began in 2004 recognizing that despite support by medical and public health experts, as well as definitive evidence of the efficacy of syringe service programs, many policymakers remain reluctant to support efforts to expand syringe access and public understanding of such efforts is mixed. Multiple funders came together to create the Syringe Access Fund, with AIDS United managing this pooled fund, with a goal to create national leadership and to be part of the solution by funding local syringe exchange programs, as well as providing support to state-level public education projects designed to expand syringe availability in key states with a demonstrated need.

For 22 years, the Harm Reduction Futures Fund has continued under the same principles to broaden public support for syringe exchange programs and policies designed to expand access to sterile syringes. Throughout the years, the Harm Reduction Futures Fund has broadened the scope from state-specific funding to encompassing every state and territory. Priorities have shifted from focusing on advocacy and capacity building to prioritizing direct services in communities most effected by the War on Drugs. Today, we see rises in overdoses reaching peak numbers in 2022 and 2023 with over 100,000 overdose deaths a year.¹ People who inject drugs are twenty-two (22) times more likely to have HIV than the general population and on average account for 1 in 10 new HIV infections.² At its core, the Harm Reduction Futures Fund remains true to the founding principles as a community driven initiative that supports syringe services and expands access to harm reduction tools to improve the dignity and health outcomes for people who use drugs while reducing the rate of HIV.

Purpose

The primary goal of the Harm Reduction Futures Fund is to provide core support for programs that demonstrate an ability to provide high quality syringe and other drug user health services to one or more identified communities.

The Harm Reduction Futures Fund seeks to identify and support organizations across intersecting movements to enhance and coordinate services for people who use drugs. It supports and funds organizations that are led by and/or meaningfully involve and serve networks of people who use drugs, including in the design, delivery, and evaluation of services (for information on meaningful involvement, find on the AIDS United website “[Meaningful Involvement of People Who Use Drugs](#)”).

In Round 17, the Harm Reduction Futures Fund will prioritize support for programs that are led by and serve Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC), as well as those in jurisdictions of high need and low resources. Other compelling factors may include the leadership of current or former sex

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2024, August 14). Provisional Drug Overdose Data. CDC. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss/vsrr/drug-overdose-data.htm>

² People Who Inject Drugs (PWID). (n.d.). International Association of Providers of AIDS Care. <https://www.iapac.org/fact-sheet/people-who-inject-drugs-pwid/>

workers; prevalence of HIV, viral hepatitis, and other blood-borne pathogens in a community; injection drug use prevalence; opioid use; overdose incidence; and availability of local funding.

A community-based review committee will evaluate all Pre-Application Survey submissions and invite up to 40 applicants to submit a full proposal, based on the eligibility requirements below and the factors above. Ultimately, for this grant cycle, AIDS United expects to provide one-year cash grants to a total cohort of 7 to 15 organizations, selected by the same community-based review committee.

Transparency and Use of your Data

AIDS United's Harm Reduction Futures Fund is committed to supporting organizations who center the meaningful involvement of Black, Indigenous, and people of color that use drugs in practices rooted in the ethos of harm reduction. We will prioritize funding for organizations who are led by and for the communities served. We will consider supporting organizations who are committed to reviewing and revising your strategies to meet this objective. We value your trust and take your organization's data safety and anonymity seriously. If you have any questions, contact us.

We are committed to supporting organizations that strive to reach and include populations most affected by drug use and meaningfully incorporate people with lived experience within their staff and Board of Directors. Complete all questions related to the demographics of your staff, board, volunteers, and the people you serve. We understand there are limitations to data collection and that some of the information requested includes data you may not have, and/or may be unable to collect formally. *Share your best estimate.* The goal of these questions is to better understand your agency's current state of inclusion of populations you seek to serve at all levels of the organization, and to identify current efforts being taken for ensuring meaningful inclusion and representation.

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for funding, applicants are required to have a syringe service program and meet **one or both** of the following criteria.

- **Racial Equity** – Applicant organizations led by **and** serving a majority of people of color.
 - AIDS United is defining “BIPOC-led organizations” as those with 1) a self-identified BIPOC executive director/highest paid staff or equivalent (or 50%+ if a Co-Director/flat leadership model), 2) 51%+ self-identified BIPOC in senior leadership, **and** 3) 51%+ self-identified BIPOC among staff
 - AIDS United is defining “BIPOC-serving organizations” as those serving 51%+ of participants who self-identify as BIPOC
 - *Note: We recognize that these definitions are imperfect. We are committed to continued learning, updating our language, and being cognizant of the ways in which race and power operate.*
- **Areas of High Need/Low Resource** – Programs in this category and/or the jurisdictions in which they serve can be defined as *but not limited to*:
 - SSPs are not sanctioned in the area you serve

- SSPs are highly restricted in the area you serve
 - Zoning Laws
 - Challenging to get sanctioned
 - Mandated one-for-one services
- Newly established
- Primarily LGBTQIA2S+-serving
- No or very little state or local financial support for supplies
- Demand far outweighs supply
- Harm Reduction and/or drug use supplies highly criminalized
- Limited or no access to needs-based SSPs outside of the applicant organization
- Serving a large geographic area
- Small program with high volume distribution
- Limited access to supplies
- Serving communities not reached by other service providers or SSPs

Applicants must also meet all the following criteria:

- **Budget** - Applicants must have a total organizational budget of *less than* \$1,000,000.
Note: Applicants with fiscal sponsors should use their own budget amount, not their fiscal sponsors, to determine eligibility.
- **Geographic Location** – Applicants must be located and perform work within the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Native American Reservations/Tribal Lands, American Samoa, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico, or the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- **Non-Profit Status** – Applicants must be non-profit, tax-exempt organizations, per the guidelines set forth by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) with proper 501(c)(3) status. Verification of this federal status will be undertaken by AIDS United before final grant decisions are made. Organizations or coalitions that do not hold 501(c)(3) status must have a fiscal sponsor that does. *Note that 501(c)4 designation is not the same. While it is possible for an organization to have both IRS (c)3 and (c)4 status, AIDS United will verify that each applicant organization has a (c)3 designation.*
- **Financial Stability** – Organizations should be fiscally stable and viable prior to submission of the funding application, meaning organizations should have the financial ability to operate for the duration of the grant period.
- **Programmatic Requirement** – Proposals must be submitted by a syringe services programs providing direct services
- **Good Standing** - Current or previous grantees of any AIDS United funding portfolio must be in good standing with regards to reporting and all other grant requirements.
- **Grant Period** – Applicants must be able to utilize the funds within a 12-month period beginning February 1, 2027 and ending January 31, 2028.
- **Relationship to AIDS United** – Current AIDS United grantees are eligible to apply. Organizations who have not been funded by AIDS United before are also eligible to apply. Current grantee status does not affect decisions.
- **Required Meetings:** All organizations awarded funding must participate in quarterly technical assistance and capacity building virtual meetings with AIDS United staff.

Grant Considerations and Maximum Award Amounts

The Harm Reduction Futures Fund offers grant support only to syringe services programs providing direct services. Organizations are invited to submit proposals for \$10,000 to \$25,000 for one year. AIDS United anticipates 7-15 programs will receive funding.

Restrictions

Grant funds may not be used for: medications or purchasing of medications; direct medical expenses, including lab expenses; existing deficits of Grantee; basic biomedical research, clinical research, or clinical trials; projects that directly influence or advance pharmaceutical business, including purchase, utilization, prescribing, formulary position, pricing, reimbursement, referral, recommendation or payment for pharmaceutical products; individuals with prescribing authority, individual health care providers, or physician group practices; events or programs that have already occurred; indirect expenses outside of the percentage noted in grantees' approved budgets; and/or direct or grassroots lobbying. An in-depth description of direct and grassroots lobbying can be [accessed here](#).

Organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity or expression are not eligible to apply.

Deadline and Submission Information

The application process for the Harm Reduction Futures Fund will begin with a Pre-Application Survey, which should be submitted via AIDS United's online [application form](#) and are **due by 5:00 p.m. ET on September 25, 2026**.

AIDS United's community review committee will review Pre-Application Survey submissions and invite a maximum of forty (40) eligible organizations with compelling requests to submit a full proposal.

Late, incomplete, mailed, express-delivered, or faxed Pre-Application Survey responses will not be accepted.

Assistance throughout the Pre-Application Process

AIDS United is committed to assisting applicants with the preparation of a complete and responsive Pre-Application Survey to the Harm Reduction Futures Fund. Our staff will be available to answer any questions and provide technical assistance. We prefer that you submit questions and requests for assistance to our dedicated email address: harmreduction@aidsunited.org.

 **Optional one-on-one technical assistance office hours, where AIDS United staff will be available to assist with any questions you might have**, will be held at the following times during the open application period. If interested, sign up for a 15-minute slot at the links below.

Office Hour scheduling link for the days and times below: [Use this link to schedule](#)

- September 14 – PAS Office Hours 1-3 pm ET
- September 15 – PAS Office Hours 2- 4 pm ET

- September 18 – PAS Office Hours 1-3 pm ET
- September 22 – PAS Office Hours 1-2 pm ET
- September 23 – PAS Office Hours 4-6 pm ET
- September 24 – PAS Office Hours 2-4 pm ET

Additional days and times may be added if needed

! Additionally, a webinar will be held on the following date for the purpose of providing clarification about the grant announcement and key application submission tips. The TA webinar includes information about submitting the proposal online. All application submissions will be sent via AIDS United’s online [application form](#).

- Thursday, September 10, 2-3 pm ET
- Register at:

https://aidsunited-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/1tfYrzCYT4-E1ST5UjDI_g

Thank you for your interest in the Harm Reduction Futures Fund and for your work in improving drug user health in your community.

Timeline

The following outlines key benchmarks for the initiative:

September 1, 2026	Request for Pre-Application Surveys Released
September 10, 2026	Pre-Application Survey TA Webinar at 2:00 pm ET
September 25, 2026	Pre-Application Survey Due at 5:00 pm ET
November 9, 2026	Notification of Full Proposal Invitation Decisions
November 16, 2026	Request for Proposals TA Webinar at 3:00 pm ET
December 3, 2026	Full Proposals Due at 5:00 pm ET
January 13, 2027	Notification of Funding Decisions
February 1, 2027	Grant Period Begins
September 1, 2027	Interim Report Due
January 31, 2028	Grant Period Ends
March 1, 2028	Final Report Due

Pre-Application Survey Questions

Pre-Application Survey responses should address why your organization is best suited to advance the goals of the Harm Reduction Futures Fund in this Round. **Each Pre-Application submission must be sent via AIDS United’s online [Application Form](#).** It should include:

Organizational Information

- Organization name
- Organization EIN
- Organization address, city, state, zip code, website
- Contact Information: Primary contact name, title, email address, and phone number.
- Fiscal Sponsor Information, if applicable: Organization Name, Address, Employer Identification Number (EIN), website, and contact person name, title, email, and phone number.

Organizational Leadership

AIDS United seeks to understand the leadership and staff of the organizations we fund, as well as the communities they serve.

We recognize that these labels are imperfect. We are committed to continued learning, updating our language and being cognizant of the ways in which HIV status, race, gender identity, and sexual orientation impact people's access to power.

People of color can include anyone who self-identifies as any ethnicity and/or race that does not fit within the United States definition of "white" There will be some duplication with other race and ethnicity questions.

Nonbinary people can include agender, genderfluid, and gender non-conforming people.

- Approximately what percentage of your organization's leadership identifies as part of the following groups? Feel free to include the Executive Director, Board of Directors, and other senior leaders as may apply to your organization's structure. *If your organization does not collect data needed to answer these questions, select "unsure."*

	0-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76%+	Unsure/prefer not to answer
People living with HIV					
People of color					
Asian, Asian American, East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, Southwest Asian, and Central Asian people					
American Indian, Native American, or Alaska Native people					
Black/African American/African/Afro Caribbean people					
Latino/Latina/Latinx/Latine/Hispanic people					

Native Hawaiian people or other Pacific Islanders					
White or Caucasian people					
Lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, aromantic, and same-gender-loving people					
Heterosexual people					
Women of trans experience					
Men of trans experience					
Cisgender women					
Cisgender men					
Nonbinary people					
People who use drugs					
Sex workers					
People who are or have been unhoused/unstably housed					
People with a history of incarceration					
People aged 24 and under					
Dandelions/Lifetime Survivors					
People with other relevant lived experience (please specify)					

- Approximately what percentage of your staff identify as part of the following groups? If volunteers conduct a significant portion of your activities, feel free to include them. *If your organization does not collect data needed to answer these questions, select "unsure."*

	0-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76%+	Unsure/prefer not to answer
People living with HIV					
People of color					
Asian, Asian American, East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian, Southwest Asian, and Central Asian people					
American Indian, Native American, or Alaska Native people					

Black/African American/African/Afro Caribbean people					
Latino/Latina/Latinx/Latine/Hispanic people					
Native Hawaiian people or other Pacific Islanders					
White or Caucasian people					
Lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, aromantic, and same-gender-loving people					
Heterosexual people					
Women of trans experience					
Men of trans experience					
Cisgender women					
Cisgender men					
Nonbinary people					
People who use drugs					
Sex workers					
People who are or have been unhoused/unstably housed					
People with a history of incarceration					
People aged 24 and under					
Dandelions/Lifetime Survivors					
People with other relevant lived experience (please specify)					

- Approximately what percentage of your clients or beneficiaries identify as part of the following groups? *If your organization does not collect data needed to answer these questions, select "unsure."*

	0-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76%+	Unsure/prefer not to answer
People living with HIV					
People of color					
Asian, Asian American, East Asian, South Asian, Southeast Asian,					

Southwest Asian, and Central Asian people					
American Indian, Native American, or Alaska Native people					
Black/African American/African/Afro Caribbean people					
Latino/Latina/Latinx/Latine/Hispanic people					
Native Hawaiian people or other Pacific Islanders					
White or Caucasian people					
Lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, asexual, aromantic, and same-gender-loving people					
Heterosexual people					
Women of trans experience					
Men of trans experience					
Cisgender women					
Cisgender men					
Nonbinary people					
People who use drugs					
Sex workers					
People who are or have been unhoused/unstably housed					
People with a history of incarceration					
People aged 24 and under					
Dandelions/Lifetime Survivors					
People with other relevant lived experience (please specify)					

- Explain any disparities between your organizational composition and the communities it serves. Describe your efforts to address such disparities, including plans, timelines, and responsibilities for those plans.
- Explain any challenges you experience when collecting this data. Note that estimates are fine.

Budget Information

- What is your organization's annual operating budget for 2026? *Do not provide your fiscal sponsor's budget for this question.*
- Current budget start & end dates
- Provide the amount requested. You may request up to \$25,000

Conflicts of Interest

- Are you or any member of your organization an employee of AIDS United, a member of AIDS United's Board of Trustees, or the Public Policy Council (PPC)?
 - If yes, provide the person's name(s) & role (Employee, Board of Trustees, Public Policy Council)
 - No
- If the answer was "yes" to the question above, do you attest that this person will recuse themselves from any involvement in the application process and/or financial decisions associated with this opportunity?
 - Yes
 - No

Project Information

- Project title
- SSP (*yes or no*)
- Eligibility requirements (*select one or both*)
 - BIPOC Serving/Led
 - High Need/Low Resource
- I would describe my organization as... (*check all that apply*)
 - All Volunteer-Led
 - An SSP with One-to-One exchange
 - An SSP with One-to-One Plus/Needs-based with Restrictions exchange
 - An SSP with Needs-Based exchange
 - An Underground SSP
 - None of the Above
- Geographic Area (*Check all that apply*)
 - Urban
 - Suburban
 - Rural
 - Reservation
- Geographic Scope (*Check all that apply*)
 - Local
 - Statewide
 - Regional
 - National
- Describe Location (e.g., "Baltimore, MD" or "Texas")
- What services or programming will be supported by this grant? (*Check all that apply*)
 - Prevention
 - Linkage to care services
 - HIV care and treatment (directly provided by your organization)

- HIV care and treatment (referrals to other providers)
- Retention in care services
- Social services (directly provided by your organization)
- Social services (referrals to other providers)
- Digital campaigns and events
- Harm reduction
- Training and leadership development
- Advocacy
- Additional services or programming
 - Please specify

Narrative and Description

- Brief description of your organization (150 words max)
- Brief description of your proposed project (150 words max)
- If you are applying as a high need/low resource SSP, provide a brief description as to why you fit this category (100 words max)

Questions

If you have any questions about **this funding opportunity or the content of your Pre-Application Survey**, reach out to the Harm Reduction Futures Fund team at harmreduction@aidsunited.org. If you have any questions about **navigating our online application form or the submission of your survey**, contact grants@aidsunited.org.

Pre-applications due by 5:00 pm ET on September 25, 2026

All pre-application submissions must be sent via AIDS United's online [Application Form](#)