

Alexandra Hallock Capacity Building Grant for Small Nonprofits

Request for Proposals

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BACKGROUND

The Alexandra Hallock Capacity Building Grant for Small Nonprofits, established in 2024 to honor the extraordinary life and legacy of Alexandra Hallock, is dedicated to supporting small nonprofit organizations whose mission and work champions human rights, girls' and women's empowerment, and LGBTQ+ causes.

Alexandra Hallock, affectionately known to many as “Allie,” was a tireless advocate for nonprofit organizations in the United States and charities in the United Kingdom. Before her untimely passing at the age of 37 from NUT carcinoma cancer, Allie impacted countless lives, strengthened thousands of organizations, and inspired social impact leaders across the US and UK.

Much of Allie’s life’s work centered on helping nonprofits with promising solutions build the infrastructure and governance capacity required to actualize their potential and advance their social justice missions. In her career, Allie supported hundreds of nonprofits at Taproot Foundation before becoming the first full-time employee at Cause Strategy Partners, where she eventually became the Chief Operating Officer.

By investing in grassroots organizations serving the causes that were closest to Allie’s heart, this opportunity aims to amplify their impact, strengthen their capacity, and empower them to effect meaningful change in their communities, long into the future. In doing so, we honor Allie’s

vision and commitment to a world where every voice is heard, every life is valued, and every human right is upheld.

About Cause Strategy Partners

The mission of Cause Strategy Partners is to inspire the world's professionals to serve their cause. We are a purpose-driven enterprise that believes in harnessing the power of business for social good; our work is grounded in our values of Relationships, Zeal, Honesty, Advancement, Creativity, and Excellence. We envision a world where every business and community leader finds purpose by lending their skills and passions to high-impact, value-aligned nonprofits working to create a more just, vibrant, and equitable society.

SUMMARY OF GRANT OPPORTUNITY

This capacity building grant opportunity offers recipient organizations a **one-time \$20,000 USD unrestricted grant** and a host of **pro-bono capacity building support**, including:

- **A limited-scope consulting engagement** delivered by Cause Strategy Partners experts in the field, providing valuable assistance in building the organization's governance infrastructure (valued at \$10,000 USD);
- Connection to [Taproot Foundation's](#) capacity-building programs and their Nonprofit Success Coaches for consultation on successful use of pro bono resources;
- Participation in Cause Strategy Partners' **Executive Director Performance Assessment**;
- **Permanent access to the [BoardLead Nonprofit Network](#)**, which offers a wide variety of nonprofit governance and leadership-related resources including trainings, seminars, panel discussions, guides, and fireside chats;
- **Unlimited access for all board members to [BoardLearn](#)**, Cause Strategy Partners' learning platform for nonprofit board members that includes a New Board Member Good Governance Boot Camp course; and
- **Prominent publicity** associated with the grant award announcement.

Up to 3 organizations will be selected for funding during this award cycle.

Jointly funded by [Cause Strategy Partners](#), [Tradeweb](#), and [Dolce Vita](#), this opportunity is designed to offer more than just financial support. It is a gateway to growth and sustainability for modest-sized, growth-ready nonprofits offering promising solutions.

To this end, while awarded funds will be unrestricted and grantees will have flexibility in how they choose to invest these grant dollars after receiving the award funds, **applicants will be asked to identify specific capacity-related initiatives the organization would fund if given the opportunity, and propose defined strategies to increase organizational strength and capacity.**

Proposed capacity building improvements could include, but are not limited to:

- Enhancing business functions (accounting, bookkeeping, data management, etc.)
- Amplifying communications capacity (website design, social media, brochures, etc.)
- Diversifying revenue streams (developing targeted plans for fundraising and donor development, etc.)
- Updating technology
- Strengthening leadership and team culture through training and professional development opportunities
- Enhancing staff/volunteer recruitment and retention
- Strengthening advocacy/public policy skills

Awards will be based, in part, on the proposed capacity-building work; specifically, how this funding will tangibly strengthen the organization's ability to advance its mission and directly serve its identified priority population(s): women's and girls' empowerment, human rights, and the LGBTQ+ community.

GRANT ELIGIBILITY

Organizations must meet the following qualifications to apply:

- Must be a tax-exempt 501(c)3 nonprofit organization
- Must have been operating for at least 1 year (12 months) as either a 501(c)3 or with a fiscal sponsor
- Must have completed prior fiscal year with revenue totaling no more than \$400,000
- Must be an organization whose core mission explicitly centers on advancing human rights, girls' and women's empowerment, and/or LGBTQ+ communities, as demonstrated through its mission statement and ongoing programmatic activities.
- Must be based in and serve communities anywhere in the United States
- Organizations that currently have a Cause Strategy Partners (CSP) employee or Advisory Board member serving on their board of directors, or that are otherwise formally affiliated with CSP or a CSP team member, are not eligible for this opportunity. Nonprofit organizations that currently partner with CSP through its services or programs are welcome to apply, provided they meet all other grant requirements.

Additionally, successful applicants will:

- Effectively demonstrate their current program impact in the communities they serve
- Clearly describe their organization's capacity building needs
- Highlight the critical structural improvements that the organization hopes to address with these grant funds, describe why these improvements are essential to the organization's long-term success, and how they will enable the organization to strengthen its impact

GRANT TIMELINE

- **March 4, 2026:** Application period opens
- **April 10, 2026:** Application submission deadline at 5pm ET
- **April - May 2026:** Application review & selection
- **Early-June 2026:** Grantees announced and publicized
- **Late-June 2026:** Grant funds disbursed to Grantees. Grantees can anticipate receiving funds no later than June 30, 2026
- **July 2026:**
 - Kick-off pro bono governance consulting engagement with Cause Strategy Partners.
 - Receive introduction to Success Manager at Taproot Foundation to identify potential pro bono projects.
 - Receive access to the BoardLead Network and BoardLearn training opportunities.
 - Receive introduction to Cause Strategy Partners' Executive Director Performance Assessment
- **Fall 2026:** Grantees invited into BoardLead matching cohort. If a grantee is currently ineligible for the BoardLead program, they will be invited to a consultation call with BoardLead program staff to support participation in a future BoardLead round.
- **June 2027:** Deadline for awardees to leverage the additional, non-monetary aspects of this award (including the limited-scope consulting engagement delivered by Cause Strategy Partners, connection to a Nonprofit Success Coach at Taproot Foundation, access to the BoardLead Nonprofit Network, participation in Cause Strategy Partners' Executive Director Performance Assessment, access for all board members to BoardLearn, and publicity associated with the grant award announcement).

GRANT SUBMISSION & EVALUATION PROCESS

Interested nonprofits will **submit their full application and supplemental materials by the deadline through the official [Application Form](#)**. No late submissions will be accepted. The [Application Preview](#) outlines the application questions and documents to assist applicants in preparing their submissions.

Please note that the Application Form requires applicants to sign into a Google account in order to upload required documents. If you do not have access to a Google account or experience technical difficulties, please contact us at grants@causestrategypartners.com, and we will provide an alternative submission option.

The following two-part process will then be used to review and evaluate submissions. Note that finalists may be asked to provide additional information.

- **Phase 1:** Cause Strategy Partners will review all applications and develop a finalist shortlist of 6-10 carefully vetted, qualified organizations.
- **Phase 2:** Grant Panel will review finalists and select three final awardees. This panel will consist of representatives from the sponsoring entities (Cause Strategy Partners, Tradeweb, and Dolce Vita) and family & friend representatives of Alexandra Hallock.

GRANT SUPPORTS & FUNDING: DISBURSEMENT and REPORTING

Disbursement Process

Grantees will receive a one-time grant award of \$20,000 USD in an upfront, single lump sum. Award funds will come directly from either Cause Strategy Partners, Tradeweb, or Dolce Vita.

The associated supports and consulting engagement, should an awardee choose to utilize any or all of these services, will be provided and made available for a 12-month period immediately following being named as a grant recipient.

Reporting Requirements

- **1 Year Post-Award:** Grantees will be asked to complete a written grant impact report. The focus of this will be to understand their overall experience, how funds are being used, and the impact of this opportunity on their organization. Cause Strategy Partners will provide a report template.
- **2 Years Post-Award:** Grantees will be asked to complete a brief 2-year survey. The focus of this will be to understand longer-term impacts of this opportunity on their organization.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

General

- ***What is a capacity building grant?***

As [defined](#) by the National Council of Nonprofits, “capacity building” refers to investment in the effectiveness and future sustainability of a nonprofit organization. Capacity building efforts strengthen the organization’s ability to deliver on its mission, ultimately enhancing its ability to positively impact the communities that it serves.

A capacity building grant is a funding opportunity designed to provide organizations with resources necessary to strengthen their organizational infrastructure and governance capacity to effectively pursue their mission.

- ***Do I need to propose a specific capacity-building project?***

This funding opportunity is unrestricted, meaning that grantees will have flexibility in how they invest these grant dollars. The awarded grant funds can be used for any legal purpose that the organization deems fit, including for general operating expenses.

However, the most competitive proposals will propose a **specific capacity-building project**. In the application, you will be asked to describe how the funds will be used, and how that specific use of funds will meet a critical organizational infrastructure need for your organization, strengthen your organization's long-term capacity, enhance your organization's ability to advance its mission, and accomplish the goals your organization sets for itself.

Eligibility

- ***Are we eligible to apply if our mission and work indirectly relate to human rights, girls' and women's empowerment, and/or LGBTQ+ causes?***

This funding opportunity is exclusively available to organizations whose core mission and primary programmatic work directly advance human rights, girls' and women's empowerment, and/or LGBTQ+ communities. Indirect, tangential, or secondary connections to these issue areas are not sufficient for eligibility. Applicants must demonstrate that these populations are central to the organization's mission, strategy, and ongoing programming. As part of the application, you will be asked to clearly describe how your programs and services directly serve and advance outcomes for these communities.

- ***How can we demonstrate that our organization advances work related to human rights, girls' and women's empowerment, and/or LGBTQ+ causes?***

As part of the application, you will be asked to provide your organization's mission statement and describe your core programs and activities. Applicants should clearly explain how their work directly serves and advances outcomes for human rights, girls' and women's empowerment, and/or LGBTQ+ communities. You will also have the opportunity to share any relevant data, metrics, or examples that demonstrate your organization's impact in these areas. Strong applications will provide concrete evidence that these communities are central to the organization's mission and ongoing work.

- ***My organization's annual budget is larger than \$400,000 USD, but we are a small organization. Are we still eligible to apply?***

No; this opportunity is intended exclusively for small nonprofit organizations, as defined by annual budget. Organizations will be asked to provide financial figures for the most recently completed fiscal year.

- ***What are eligible uses of funds for this grant?***

This funding opportunity is unrestricted, meaning that the awarded grant funds can be used for any legal purpose that the organization deems fit, including for general operating expenses.

However, in line with the intent of this funding opportunity, your proposal should clearly outline how your organization plans to apply these funds and clearly articulate how that specific use of funds will meet a critical organizational infrastructure need for your

organization, strengthen your organization's long-term capacity, and enhance your organization's ability to advance its mission.

Award Components

- ***What will the limited-scope consulting engagement entail?***

The focus of the limited-scope consulting engagement will be on building your organization's governance infrastructure. As part of this engagement, senior members of the Cause Strategy Partners team who are experts in nonprofit governance will work with you to assess your organization's governance needs and identify an appropriate project.

Awardees will have the opportunity to select from a list of possible consulting projects with a pre-set scope, including:

- Board Structural Document Review & Recommended Revisions
 - *Goal:* To review, refresh or draft board structural documents (member roles & responsibilities, committee charters, officer roles, and give/get policy)
 - *Deliverable:* CSP presents and shares final revised structural documents
- Board Gap Analysis & Census Report
 - *Goal:* To identify gaps in current board composition related to key demographics, skills, and desired competencies
 - *Deliverable:* CSP presents a board gap analysis and evergreen census spreadsheet to inform and track board ongoing recruitment efforts
- Board Meeting Optimization
 - *Goal:* To improve the structure, effectiveness, and productivity of board meetings
 - *Deliverable:* CSP shares final suggestions for structural changes to board meeting agendas, along with resources for effective board meeting management
- Board Development Process Review & Recommendations
 - *Goal:* To improve the strategies and processes used to promote more effective board development
 - *Deliverable:* CSP presents final recommendations and coaching for improving the board development process, along with resources for effective board development
- Governance Training
 - *Goal:* To provide an easy-to-access training for all board members in a topic area of your choice; sample topics include best practices in board governance, board fundraising & ambassadorship toolkit, and more
 - *Deliverable:* CSP provides easy-to-access, one-hour training for members of your Board of Directors and senior staff

- ***What support can my organization expect from a Taproot Nonprofit Success Coach?***

Taproot Nonprofit Success Coaches specialize in consulting with nonprofits to conduct an analysis of your organization's needs, gauge good fit for support from skilled volunteers, and scope pro bono projects so that you're prepared to request and manage these resources successfully. As part of this award component, you will also gain access to pro bono capacity-building support through [Taproot's programs](#) that connect nonprofits with skilled professionals in marketing, IT, operations, and more.

- ***What is the BoardLead Nonprofit Network?***

The BoardLead Nonprofit Network is a group of over 1,500 nonprofit organizations and charities that have met the high standards for acceptance into Cause Strategy Partners' signature [BoardLead](#) program. Members of the network receive free and exclusive access to a wide variety of governance and leadership-related resources, including trainings, seminars, panel discussions, guides, and fireside chats. The Network also provides opportunities for members to build connections, share best practices, and learn from one another.

Grantees will receive immediate and permanent access to governance resources available through the BoardLead Nonprofit Network. Additionally, grantees that meet BoardLead program requirements will be invited to participate in the next BoardLead round following their grant award. If a grantee is currently ineligible for the BoardLead program, they will be invited to a consultation call with BoardLead program staff to support participation in a future BoardLead round.

- ***What is BoardLead?***

[BoardLead](#) is Cause Strategy Partners' signature program and online platform that introduces executives and employees from our corporate and strategic partner networks to nonprofits seeking board members. Through a rigorous recruitment, training, and matching process, BoardLead identifies promising candidates for board service on both Boards of Directors and young professionals boards, then facilitates an introduction. Nonprofits then meet one-on-one with each candidate and together begin the process of deciding whether it's a strong match. For the candidates ultimately vetted, nominated, and elected to boards, we provide governance training and offer one-on-one support.

BoardLead can help participating nonprofits expand and diversify their board development network by connecting them to cause-aligned and talented professionals that meet their organization's governance needs. Participation in this program is free of charge to our nonprofit partners.

You can learn more about the program by exploring our [Frequently Asked Questions for Nonprofit Partners](#).

- ***What is BoardLearn?***

[BoardLearn](#) is Cause Strategy Partners' self-paced online governance training platform that grounds potential and existing board members in best practices for nonprofit board service. BoardLearn's 11-module learning experience equips professionals with the resources they need to serve on nonprofit boards, become standout leaders, serve with integrity, and invest in their organization's cause and mission

Application Process

- ***How do I submit an application?***

To apply, submit your application and supplemental materials through the [Application Form](#) by the deadline. No late grant submissions or applications with missing documents will be moved forward in the review process.

- ***What makes a successful application? How will applications be assessed?***

Eligible applications must first meet all stated qualifications in order to be considered.

Among eligible applicants, successful proposals will:

- Demonstrate measurable impact in advancing girls' and women's empowerment, human rights, and/or LGBTQ+ communities;
- Clearly articulate the organization's highest-priority capacity-building needs;
- Describe the specific improvements the organization seeks to achieve through this funding and support, explain why these improvements are critical to long-term sustainability and effectiveness, and outline how they will enhance service to priority populations;
- Explain how receipt of the grant and associated supports will meaningfully strengthen the organization's capacity and long-term impact.

Applications will be evaluated based on the clarity and specificity of responses, and how effectively applicants connect their demonstrated impact, identified needs, and proposed improvements.

- ***Can I submit more than one application?***

Organizations may only submit one application per RFP.

- ***What is the maximum award amount?***

Awards will be made in the amount of \$20,000 USD for capacity building purposes.

- ***When can my organization expect to receive a funding decision?***

We anticipate announcing awards for this opportunity by early-June 2026.

- ***Who can I contact if I have questions about the application process?***

For any questions regarding this funding opportunity, please contact Ashley Bratrud at grants@causestrategypartners.com.

Funding Disbursement & Reporting

- ***How and when will award funds be disbursed?***

Funds will be disbursed to your organization in a single, lump sum by June 30, 2026.

- ***Is there a deadline by which award funds must be expended?***

In general, grantees should expend funds within 1 year of award. However, grantees may propose a multi-year use of funds, if appropriate based on their capacity-building needs and specific proposed project.

- ***On what timeline do the associated supports need to be used by awardees?***

Awardees are able to choose to utilize any or all of the support services associated with being selected for this opportunity. These associated supports will be provided and made available for a 12-month period immediately following being named as a grant recipient.

As a reminder, these supports include:

- A limited-scope consulting engagement delivered by Cause Strategy Partners experts in the field, providing valuable assistance in building the organization's governance infrastructure (valued at \$10,000 USD);
- Connection to [Taproot Foundation's](#) capacity-building programs and their Nonprofit Success Coaches for consultation on successful use of pro bono resources;
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