

Boston College Neighborhood Improvement Fund

For Brighton and Allston

2018 Grant Cycle Application Information and Request for
Information

Submissions Due:

Monday, October 1, 2018 5:00 p.m.

Inquiries to:

Anabela Gomes: bela@mail.com

BACKGROUND

As part of a package of public benefits approved in 2013 and memorialized in a Cooperation Agreement with the Boston Redevelopment Authority dated August 7, 2014, Boston College created a fund to provide \$2,564,000 to projects that enhance the public realm and for which public sources of financing may be unavailable or inadequate. Projects may include improvements in public parks and open space, neighborhood beautification, transportation and roadway improvements, public safety projects and public art. Projects should be of broad public benefit to the Allston-Brighton neighborhood, with particular emphasis on the areas of Brighton closest to Boston College (e.g. Lake Street, Foster Street, Cleveland Circle, Commonwealth Avenue, Brighton Center). Applicants will be expected to garner and demonstrate broad community support for their projects as part of the application and review process.

It is the goal of Boston College and the Boston Redevelopment Authority to work with the Boston College Task Force and the broader community to identify, review and select projects, in accordance with the procedure outlined below, such that the Fund will be disbursed in full over the term of the Institutional Master Plan, ending on June 30, 2020.

During the first cycle in 2015, the Neighborhood Improvement Fund (NIF) awarded \$446,138 in grants to the following six Allston-Brighton organizations and their public partners: Allston Brighton Veterans/City of Boston Veteran's Services and Brighton Marine Health Center, Boston Police Department-District 14, Friends of Chestnut Hill Reservation/Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, Brighton Main Streets, Inc., Boston Bikes/Hubway and Friends of McKinney Park/Boston Parks & Recreation Department. During the second cycle in 2016 the NIF awarded \$325,798 to Allston Village Main Streets, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, Jackson-Mann Complex, Artists for Humanity, and VFW Post 669/The Fund for Parks & Recreation.

The Boston College Allston-Brighton Task Force serves as the review body and will also guide the formulation of uniform application procedures and criteria. Task Force members are all Brighton residents who have been appointed by the Mayor of Boston.

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

For the 2018 grant cycle, the NIF will use a modified two-step process intended to make the application process as simple as possible for applicants. The NIF is soliciting Letters of Interest by October 1, 2018. These are intended to be very short descriptions of potential projects. The Task Force, Boston College, and the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) will review these LOIs and select some applicants to submit a complete proposal. In some cases the proposal may be for a project that is slightly different than the one outlined in the LOI.

Please note that it is anticipated that most grants will continue to be no larger than \$100,000, although the NIF also plans to consider one or more larger grants as part of this grant cycle, likely in consultation with public agencies.

Applicants should submit the following information by 5:00 p.m. on October 1 by e-mail to Anabela Gomes at belamail.com, with a cc: to Gerald.Autler@boston.gov:

1. Name of organization(s) applying for funding
2. Amount requested
3. Brief (250 word maximum) description of the project concept
4. Bullet points on how project meets some or all of grant criteria (see below)

CRITERIA AND GUIDELINES

Applicants should refer to the criteria and guidelines in the 2016 NIF application, which is available upon request by writing to the e-mail addresses listed above. It is also posted online at:

[http://www.bostonplans.org/documents/planning/institutional-planning/higher-education/boston-college-neighborhood-improvement-fund-a-\(3\)](http://www.bostonplans.org/documents/planning/institutional-planning/higher-education/boston-college-neighborhood-improvement-fund-a-(3))

For reference, key information from the document is replicated below.

Purpose: The purpose of the Boston College Neighborhood Improvement Fund (“NIF”) is to support enhance the public realm and for which public sources of financing may be unavailable or inadequate. Projects may include improvements in public parks and open space, neighborhood beautification, transportation and roadway improvements, public safety projects, and public art, including functional art such as benches or bike racks.

Projects should be of broad public benefit to the Allston-Brighton neighborhood, with particular emphasis on the areas of Brighton closest to Boston College (e.g. Lake Street, Foster Street, Cleveland Circle, Commonwealth Avenue, Brighton Center). Applicants will be expected to garner and demonstrate broad community support for their projects as part of the application and review process.

Grant Amounts: Two categories of grants have been defined: small (\$10,000-\$25,000) and large (over \$25,000 and up to \$100,000).

Allowable Grant Fund Uses: Grants are intended to help implement projects on public property for which public funding is not available and might not typically be available, or for which public funding is available but insufficient to yield the quality of project desired. Grants are not intended to be used for routine maintenance of public infrastructure such as roads, sidewalks, or parks. However, grant funding could be sought in order to implement a higher standard of public realm or open space infrastructure by supplementing the level of public funding typically available for comparable projects. Public art projects can be interior or exterior works, provided that interior works are in public buildings and sited in an area open to the public.

Applicant Eligibility: Applications are encouraged from public entities and non-profits interested in implementing projects on public property in conjunction with public agencies. Grants will not be awarded to individuals, but funding is available to:

- Organizations (or teams of organizations) with a mission to serve the Allston-Brighton community
- Established 501(c)3 non-profit organizations, or organizations with a fiscal sponsor. For exceptional project proposals the Task Force may wish to consider recommending funding for an organization or team that differs from this model, e.g. a team that includes a for-profit urban design firm
- Demonstrate sound financial condition, reporting, and controls
- Demonstrate the ability to execute the proposed project or program

Review Criteria: The review of proposals is based upon the criteria listed below.

Project MUST:

- Provide benefits to Allston-Brighton residents by achieving one or more of the following goals:
 - Enhance the aesthetic quality and user experience of the public realm
 - Enhance public safety
 - Enhance local business and economic activity, either during implementation or permanently. Whenever possible, applicants should use Allston-Brighton based vendors and/or contractors
 - Improve accessibility and connectivity for non-vehicular modes of transportation
 - Promote community collaboration and civic and cultural growth
 - Showcase unique qualities of the neighborhood
- Be located in the Allston-Brighton neighborhood.
- Be located on public property.
- Demonstrate community support.
- Demonstrate that it can be completed in a timely fashion, with preference given to those projects that can be completed within one year, or 2-3 years in the case of particularly large and complex projects requiring larger-than-average grants.
- NOT be contrary to the teachings and beliefs of the Catholic Church or the culture and traditions of Boston College or the Society of Jesus.
- Demonstrate that grant funding will not be used to pay organization salaries or operating expenses.

The Task Force will look favorably upon projects that ALSO:

- Demonstrate potential for public engagement as a project outcome
- Demonstrate other sources of funding when the proposal in question is for more than \$25,000 from the NIF

Other criteria to be considered:

- Feasibility of the budget
- Length of time proponent has been involved in local neighborhood activities and track record of proponent implementing similar successful projects
- Partnerships with other organizations and utilization of community volunteers
- Project readiness