



Reimagine & Revitalize Program (R2) *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)*

ABOUT THE R2 PROGRAM

The War on Drugs significantly disrupted many Connecticut communities, creating stigmas that hindered economic growth, diverted resources from social programs, and created enduring challenges for affected individuals. Through targeted reinvestment, the Social Equity Council's (the Council) Revitalize and Reimagine Program (R2 Program) is using a portion of the revenues from cannabis sales in Connecticut to strengthen these communities and create new opportunities for residents.

The definitions below are to provide context on the specific terms presented in the questions presented below. The FAQ's below are meant to address common themes of concerns in reference to the Council's upcoming Reimagine and Revitalize Program's Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

DEFINITIONS:

Reimagine and Revitalize Program (R2 Program): The Council's program to reinvest cannabis sales tax monies into communities disproportionately impacted by the War on Drugs.

R2 Program Regions: The 10 program regions are Bridgeport, Danbury, Hartford/East Hartford, Meriden, New Britain, New Haven/East Haven/West Haven, New London/Norwich/Windham, Norwalk, Stamford, and Waterbury. These regions account for 194 out of Connecticut's 237 disproportionately impacted census tracts.

Disproportionately Impacted Areas (DIAs): a United States census tract in Connecticut that has been identified by the Social Equity Council using (1) a poverty rate metric and (2) ranking of historical conviction rates for drug-related offenses by census tract.

Grant Managers: Entities under contract with the Council to serve as fiduciary of funds to be distributed to CBOs.

Community Based Organizations (CBOs): An organization selected by Grant Managers and approved by the Council to receive funding for existing programs and community impact through funds provided by the Council.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

1. How were the R2 Program regions selected?

Answer: These regions were selected to account for the towns and regional combinations throughout the state which account for the majority of the DIA census tracts. The R2 Program Regions account for 194 out of Connecticut's 237 DIA census tracts.

2. What types of programs are supported through the program priorities?

Answer: The Council understands the uniqueness of CBOs and that each CBO is different. Each program priority has many options to support impact.

Below are descriptions the Council's focus areas and some examples of the types of programs supported through the R2 Program.

Economic Development: Including Job training, Access to Employment, Workforce Development, Neighborhood Revitalization, and Repair or Limited Renovations to a property.

Reentry Initiatives: Including Employment Assistance, Legal Assistance, Housing Assistance, Social Support and Mental Health Services, Educational and Vocational Training, Financial Literacy and Basic Sustenance Needs, Family Support Services, Entrepreneurship Development, Development and Court Proceeding Education, Transportation Assistance, and Technology Access.

Youth Initiatives: Including Nutritional Education, Mental Health Support, Education and Academic Support, Life Skill Training, Leadership Development, Family and Community Involvement, Physical Health, Financial Literacy, Mentorship, Test prep, Internships, and Youth Entrepreneurship

3. How were the program priorities selected?

Answer: Funding priorities were shaped by sustained listening sessions, stakeholder engagement, and direct input from community-based organizations, residents, and practitioners across the state. These insights were paired with the Council's research, assessment, and analysis of socioeconomic indicators and disparities across the DIAs.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS & PROCESS

1. What are the requirements to apply as a CBO?

Answer: The CBO must meet all of the following:

1. A non-profit registered with the Secretary of State in CT
2. Must have been in operation within the applicable region for at least 3 consecutive years
3. Must be located in and provide services within the R2 Region for which they are applying. Applicant must certify that 90 - 100% of the project/program participants are residents of the R2 Region for which they are applying.
4. Designated IRS status as a 501(c) entity is required for the applicant or its fiscal sponsor, if applicable.

2. Can a CBO apply for funding collaboratively with another organization?

Answer: No, submissions must be submitted by individual CBOs. However, you can subcontract with an organization if it provides services that support the applicant CBO's programming.

3. If a CBO has a fiscal sponsor, are they eligible to apply?

Answer: If the grant manager for your region is your fiscal sponsor, no. If it is another organization, you may apply. There would be a conflict of interest if your fiscal sponsor were to serve as the evaluator and scorer of your application.

4. Is there a restriction on the size of an organization that can apply?

Answer: No, there is no restriction. We encourage CBOs of all sizes to apply.

5. My CBO is based in another targeted region, but I recently commenced operations in this region. Can I apply for funds in this region?

Answer: A CBO applying for funds must be located in and have been serving the region it is applying for for at least 3 years.

6. Can a CBO apply to more than one region or program priority?

Answer: Applicants are limited to one application per region. An entity that meets the requirements in more than one region may apply in those regions. However, the Council may exercise its discretion in deciding whether to fund the same entity in multiple regions.

7. Should a CBO apply to the region where they are headquartered, or should the CBO apply to the region they service the most?

Answer: A CBO should apply to the region in which they are both located and in which they provide services. Example: If an organization is doing work in Hartford and has a location there, the application should focus on that location. The applicant should focus on the DIA municipality. In contrast, if the CBO serves individuals in Hartford but is not located in Hartford, the CBO would not be eligible.

GRANT MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Who are the Grant Managers?

Answer: The Grant Managers are listed below, along with their respective regions.

Region*	Grant Manager
Bridgeport	Community Foundation for Greater New Haven
Danbury	United Way of Coastal and Western CT
Hartford, East Hartford	United Way of Central and Northeastern CT
Meriden	Community Foundation for Greater New Haven
New Britain	Community Foundation for Greater New Britain
New Haven, East Haven, West Haven	United Way of Greater New Haven
New London, Norwich, Windham	United Way of Southeastern CT
Norwalk	United Way of Coastal and Western CT
Stamford	United Way of Coastal and Western CT
Waterbury	United Way of Greater Waterbury

*There will be approximately 18 grants per region. For example, Hartford and East Hartford are regions, and the 18 grants will go to applicants for either town.

2. What is the responsibility of Grant Managers?

Answer:

- Grant Managers will conduct the Notice of Funding Opportunity, review and score applications
- Grant Managers will oversee Fiscal and Programmatic Reporting, and distribute funds to CBOs, including site visits to selected CBOs
- Grant Managers will compile and share Programmatic and Fiscal Reports with the Council

3. When will Grant Managers release the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for CBOs?

Answer: Grant Managers anticipate releasing the NOFO for CBOs at the start of Q2 in 2026.

4. Will there be training for CBOs who participate in the R2 Program?

Answer: Yes! If awarded, Grant Managers will require in-person onboarding training and educational courses for Community Based Organizations on the following: *Performance Data Evaluation Basics, Financial Management for Non-Profits, Project Management, AI For Non-Profits, Establishing Strategic Partnerships, and Grant Writing Strategies*. Completion of courses will be a requirement for continued funding.

5. How does the Programmatic and Fiscal reporting work?

Answer: Based on feedback from the 2023-2024 Community Reinvestment Pilot Program and best practices from industry experts, the Council has standardized all reporting for CBOs. A grant management software will be used to collect quarterly and monthly programmatic and fiscal reports, respectively.

FUNDING

1. My CBO receives federal funds, given the federal status of adult-use cannabis, am I prevented from applying for or receiving R2 Program funds?

Answer: You should consult your specific federal grant conditions, but funds from the Council will be disbursed through Grant Managers, not the Council.

2. How long is the funding commitment?

Answer: CBOs will receive three-year awards, resulting in grants ranging from \$25,000-\$100,000 per year.

3. Can CBOs apply to future funding opportunities of the R2 Program if selected in this round?

Answer: Yes, there is no restriction on future applications.

4. What is the minimum award and maximum award amount?

Answer: Depending on the program priority, the minimum award is \$25,000 a year for three (3) years or a total of \$75,000. The maximum is \$100,000 a year for three (3) years or a total of \$300,000.

5. What is the funding breakdown per priority area?

R ² PRIORITY	FUNDING TIER LEVELS	ANNUAL FUNDING BY TIER	TOTAL TIER FUNDING/REGION/ YEAR	TOTAL # OF PROJECTS PER REGION
Youth Initiatives	TIER 3	\$72,500	\$145,000	2
	TIER 2	\$50,000	\$100,000	2
	TIER 1	\$25,000	\$25,000	1
Reentry Initiatives	TIER 4	\$100,000	\$100,000	1
	TIER 3	\$72,500	\$145,000	2
	TIER 2	\$45,000	\$135,000	3
	TIER 1	\$25,000	\$25,000	1
Economic Development	TIER 4	\$100,000	\$200,000	2
	TIER 3	\$67,500	\$135,000	2
	TIER 2	\$35,000	\$70,000	2
	TIER 1	-	-	-

6. How were the grant funding amounts decided for each program priority?

Answer: The grant funding amounts for the R2 Program were determined through alignment with the Council’s statutory mission and long-term equity goals. The R2 Program is supported by a global funding amount of \$36 million over three years. Funds are allocated with a total distribution of \$1.2 million per year, per region, over the three-year period. Funds and priority areas were informed by community conversations and stakeholder feedback obtained during and after the pilot.

7. Will there be additional grant opportunities available specifically for smaller CBOs?

Answer: Following this 3-year funding period, the Council will assess the impact of the current version of the R2 program. Future versions of the R2 program will be adapted to community needs based on the data we obtain.

8. Are there specific spending criteria or constraints on the awarded funds?

Answer: Yes. The following is a non-exhaustive list of services, activities, goods, and other costs that cannot be supported:

- Loan Fund (create/replenish)
- Lobbying
- Payment of taxes
- Subsidizing a business
- Refinancing or restructuring existing debt
- Relocation of a business
- Personal loans
- Fundraising events
- Contracts to individuals
- Research and development (*Limited data collection, surveys, or community feedback activities directly related to program evaluation and measuring outcomes are allowable expenses.*)
- Political campaigns
- Fines or penalties
- International or Out-of-state Travel

Any other activities are subject to the Council's approval at its sole discretion.

9. Are administrative costs allowed?

Answer: Yes, administrative costs are allowed, but they are capped at 10% of the amount awarded and must be detailed in the proposed budget.

10. If I apply for the \$100,000 grant and it is determined I don't need the full amount, am I ineligible to receive funds?

Answer: Not necessarily, the Council and Grant Managers may exercise their discretion to determine whether a lesser amount can support the proposal/program if the application is strong enough.

11. Questions or concerns?

Answer: Please contact your region’s grant manager.

Bridgeport & Meriden	<u>Community Foundation for Greater New Haven</u>
Danbury/Norwalk/ Stamford	<u>United Way of Coastal and Western CT</u>
Hartford, East Hartford	<u>United Way of Central and Northeastern CT</u>
New Britain	<u>Community Foundation of Greater New Britain</u>
New Haven, East Haven, West Haven	<u>United Way of Greater New Haven</u>
New London, Norwich, Windham	<u>United Way of Southeastern CT</u>
Waterbury	<u>United Way of Greater Waterbury</u>

Please note that this document may be updated from time to time. For the most current version, please visit our website at <https://portal.ct.gov/socialequitycouncil/community-reinvestment>.

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