

CONSERVATIVE AGENDA FOR DEMOCRACY FUND

2025 RFP MATERIALS

OVERVIEW

The Conservative Agenda for Democracy Fund (CADF) provides funding and other support to state and local conservative efforts that promote policies and behavior necessary for a free, fair, and trusted elections system. CADF was established in recognition of the importance of bolstering infrastructure to develop and implement conservative approaches to responsible elections work in localities across the country - work that has historically seen underinvestment. CADF will launch with a focus on elections while beginning to explore broader elements necessary for a conservative agenda for democracy, including elements like talent, civics education, and rule of law related efforts.

GRANTMAKING

CADF prioritizes general support to state and local nonprofit entities that:

- Engage conservative constituencies that can move the policymaking process, legal process, or public opinion.
- Promote policies, behaviors, and norms that are the backbone of a free, fair, and trusted elections system.
- Pursue innovative ideas aimed to improve civic culture more broadly.

CADF funds organizations, projects, and collaborations that:

- ***Support Local and State Infrastructure***

With the objective of creating a durable national network of organizations promoting good elections work at the state and local levels, CADF spurs and incubates efforts by new and existing nonprofits, projects, and think tanks to promote responsible elections-related policy and values. Examples of this type of work include:

- A new (or small existing) state nonprofit that is creating a sustainable infrastructure to promote trust in election and broader democratic principles.
- A conservative think tank which has begun to make elections a broader part of its programming.

- ***Catalyze Innovation***

CADF supports the development and implementation of fresh ideas to improve elections and build civic culture at the state and local levels. Examples of this type of work could include:

- Piloting fellowships, mentoring opportunities, and other efforts to leverage former Republican elections administrators and policymakers to support and advise current officials.
- Cultivating a conservative talent pipeline, ranging from the local administration level, including County Clerks, to creating networks of officials on the right actively promoting democratic principles in their jobs.
- Investing in public education on the benefits of participating in primary elections, understanding that the lack of turnout in primaries often leads to the election of more extreme voices.
- **Address Time-Sensitive Opportunities**
Because on occasion, unanticipated and time-sensitive opportunities arise, CADF reserves funding to support emergent situations that demonstrate impact across the conservative election ecosystem. For example:
 - Specific litigation needs around election-related efforts;
 - Time-sensitive communications support around elections.

OTHER SUPPORT

To deepen the impact of their work, grantees are encouraged to take advantage of other types of support provided by the fund. The CADF team will confer with grantees to determine what support will be helpful, including:

- Strategic planning consultations.
- Communications and storytelling support, including research and polling, media training, and rapid response talking points.
- Fundraising support.
- Connection with others in the center-right elections and broader democracy ecosystem.
- Resource and tool development and sharing, including linking to national think tanks.

GRANT GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION PROCESS

In addition to addressing the priorities described above, CADF grants will:

- Fund small-to-medium-sized nonprofit organizations with budgets of approximately \$1.5 million or less, or start-up organizations, including those that are fiscally sponsored. New projects embedded in larger organizations will also be considered.
- Provide one-time, one-year catalytic general support – although all grant activities do not need to be completed within 12 months of receiving the funding.
- Be in the \$25,000-\$50,000 range, although grants for smaller and larger amounts will be considered.

*****Please note: CADF does not make grants to governmental entities*****

Prospective grantees should submit a three-to-five-page narrative with the following information:

- Overview of the organization and mission.
- Description of the project/idea, including rationale for the work's fit with CADF priorities.
- Relevant activities and anticipated results.
- Bios of key personnel who will engage in CADF-funded work.
- Other sources of funding and plans for sustainability if relevant.

In addition, the following supporting documents are required:

- Project budget and narrative.
- Organizational budget (and narrative if the funding request is for core organizational support).
- 501(c)(3) determination letter or, if applicable, proof of fiscal sponsorship.

All application materials listed above should be submitted in one (1) combined PDF document to info@conservativeagendafordemocracy.org

DECISION-MAKING PROCESS AND CRITERIA

CADF funding decisions are made by an Advisory Board comprised of elections experts with experience in the conservative ecosystem.

Successful applications will demonstrate:

- ***Alignment with the Fund's objectives:*** How the organization, project, or idea and relevant activities support state and local conservative efforts focused on promoting the policies and behavior necessary for a free, fair, and trusted elections system.
- ***Potential for Impact:*** The anticipated impact of the proposed work at the state and local levels. If applicable, how the work will have impact beyond the locality or its potential for scalability.
- ***Opportunity for Catalytic Support:*** How CADF's support accelerates the trajectory of the organization or project.
- ***Innovation:*** The expected effect of the idea and project in the broader conservative election ecosystem.
- ***Strength of Team:*** The ability of project staff to conduct the proposed work based on their collective experience with elections, innovation, and the conservative ecosystem.

TIMELINE & IMPORTANT DATES

- The suggested deadline for submitting applications for the inaugural grant cycle is midnight EDT on Friday July 25, 2025 (we will consider grant applications that come in after that date, especially for time-sensitive requests).
- Successful applicants will receive notice of awards on Friday August 22, 2025.
- Funds will be disbursed as soon as possible after grant agreements are signed but no later than Friday August 29, 2025.
- Grant terms will extend from Monday, September 1, 2025 to Monday August 31, 2026.
- Final grant reports are due no later than Wednesday, October 1, 2026.

TIME-SENSITIVE GRANTS

CADF accepts applications to address time-sensitive opportunities on a rolling basis. Organizations interested in exploring such funding should reach out directly to CADF at info@conservativeagendafordemocracy.org to explore options, funding availability, and timing of grants. Current grantees are eligible to apply for time-sensitive grants.

Generally, successful applicants will meet the same criteria as other grants. Once an invitation to submit a proposal is extended, grantees can expect a lag of approximately one month between the time complete proposal materials are submitted and funds are disbursed.

GRANTEE OBLIGATIONS

In addition to fulfilling the activities detailed in their proposals and memorialized in their grant agreements, funded projects and organizations are required to:

- Attend a grantee convening in Fall 2025 (date TBD). CADF will cover travel and accommodations for up to two (2) staff members.
- Participate in quarterly video calls with other CADF grantees.
- Share learnings, challenges, and opportunities in occasional check-in calls with CADF staff and advisors.
- Submit a report of activities and impact no later than 60 days after the conclusion of the grant period. Reports are due on October 1, 2026.