Application Instructions: 2026 Community Fund Grant Application Project Rainbow Utah

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Project Rainbow Utah Background

Established in Utah in 2018, Project Rainbow Utah (PRU) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that raises flags to activate communities in support of all queer people, and raises funds to provide crucial support for those who are building a more inclusive future.

We increase visibility and acceptance for the LGBTQ community by displaying widespread support through the placement of pride flags throughout Utah. Utah's compassionate residents continue to come together to celebrate and support LGBTQ people. Project Rainbow volunteers show up to stake flags over the course of the year at homes and businesses throughout the state. Donations received from the flag hosts and other generous sponsors are turned into a Community Fund. This fund awards grants through the program described below, run by the PRU Board of Directors. The Community Fund also supports PRU's sponsorship of numerous pride festivals/parades, resource fairs, and other events and projects at the discretion of the Executive Director.

Since its inception, PRU has distributed over $350,000 in grants/sponsorships and staked 35,000 flags across the state of Utah.

Everything PRU does, including this grant program, is guided by our five core values:

- **We uplift belonging** — We invest in connection and shared ownership.
- **Be a symbol of safety and love** — We affirm, protect, and celebrate LGBTQ+ Utahns.
- **We are here, together** — We believe in collective work and solidarity.
- **No gaps in the rainbow** — We uplift those at the margins of our communities.
- **We invest in community** — We prioritize sustainability and community-rooted leadership.

Mission and Objective of Grant Program

Project Rainbow works to increase LGBTQ visibility in Utah by staking rainbow and transgender flags across the state. We know that LGBTQ people and their allies exist in all corners of the state, so we want to help you show your pride and the world that Utah is a place of LOVE!

This grant program was established so that donations received by Project Rainbow Utah from homes and businesses that host flags, and from our generous sponsors, can be distributed to local organizations and projects that advance the visibility of and celebrate LGBTQ+ people throughout Utah. Specifically, PRU supports projects that demonstrate these criteria derived from our core values and delineated further below:

- Community-Led & Participatory

- Collaborative & Cross-Connecting
- Rooted in Solidarity, Not Charity
- Shares Power, Knowledge, and Joy
- Reflects Equity & Intention

Past awardees have included art shows, community clubs and organizations, performance pieces, special events, service organizations and more. We aim to support sustainability and growth within our broader community, with a particular focus on funding projects that lack access to other forms of resources.

Dates and Deadlines:

The 2026 Fund Application is open for programs occurring between January 1, 2026, and December 31, 2026.

Application Opens: December 3rd, 2025

Application Closes: January 2, 2026 at 11:59PM MT

Award and Distribution Notifications: No later than February 16th, 2025

Apply here: bit.ly/PRUCFG26

Who Can Apply & Types of Grants Available

Individuals, groups, and organizations can apply for a grant that will be used for a specific, defined project or event that is in alignment with Project Rainbow Utah's mission to "provide crucial support for those who are building a more inclusive future." Community Fund Grants are limited; this is a competitive application process favoring small community led projects where our funding is particularly catalyzing to the project or event. Applications that were awarded funding in the past are not guaranteed funding in future years.

The amount awarded varies year to year depending on PRU's primarily on the volume and revenue of prior year flag sign ups. The total amount is to be determined but will likely be in the range of $30,000-$60,000 across all Community Fund areas (this grant as well as sponsorships as described earlier).

Grant Categories:

1. **Arts & Creative Expression:** This includes not just performance or gallery work, but also zines, storytelling events, film screenings, drag shows, coloring books, and mixed-media projects.
2. **Healing, Wellness, & Visibility:** This category includes projects that support safer spaces, youth and mental health programs, support circles, affirming wellness practices, and other community support that's about belonging, resilience, and mutual visibility—not just accessibility enhancements.
3. **Community Building, Inclusion & Collective Learning:** These projects focus on building shared space, community memory, learning, and leadership—across generations, geographies, or identities. They don't always fit neatly under art or wellness, but they still reflect core PRU values of participation, solidarity, and visibility. They may also be applications that focus primarily on inclusion & accessibility.

Fund Request Category

Funding varies based on the event's size. The amounts below determine the range of funding that can be requested by each application. Our grant awards range from $500 to $5,000.

- Small awards ($500-$1,499) are for events or projects that have a budget of less than $2,000.
- Medium awards ($1,500-$3,499) are for events or projects that have a budget over $2,000 up to $5,000.
- Large awards ($3,500-$5,000) are only for events or projects that have a budget over $5,000 where we are not the sole funder.

Events with a total budget of $10,000 and/or that charge an entry fee will have additional application questions to ensure PRU understands the intended impact of our contribution.

Note that the category selected does not inherently guarantee the amount awarded. The Board may decide to award partial funds for projects and events in order to maximize the impact and diversity of awards. As such, it can be helpful to note in your application how funds will specifically be used in particular when funds may cover multiple aspects of a project or event (such as venue, interpretation services, scholarships etc).

Specific Eligibility Criteria

Due to the volume of applications received in recent years, PRU seeks to be more transparent and clear about which projects are eligible for this grant opportunity. The

below statements represent the major eligibility criteria; please review each carefully. You will be asked to confirm each before beginning the application; please answer accurately and honestly; attestation to these criteria will be a requirement to receive funding disbursements if awarded.

- ☐ Your programming primarily serves the LGBTQ+ community in the state of Utah
- ☐ Your project is taking place in the calendar year 2026
- ☐ Your organization has an annual budget less than $200,000.
  Rationale: PRU is focused on funding grassroots organizations and projects that are unable to access other forms of resources or revenue from traditional methods, often due to the structural barriers faced by LGBTQ+ people and other marginalized communities.
- ☐ You have the ability to submit a W-9 on behalf of an individual, organization, or a fiscal sponsor who can accept disbursement of this grant. Grant funds MAY be taxable if the grantee is not tax-exempt, such as a 501(c)(3).
  Note: While organizations do not need to be 501(c)3 classified to submit or receive awards, please be aware that for non tax-exempt entities (including individuals), your award will be considered taxable income and you should expect to receive a form 1099 from PRU.
- ☐ You **ARE NOT** applying on behalf of a pride parade, pride festival or resource fair.
  Rationale: Project Rainbow funding of pride parades/festivals and sponsorships is to be handled directly by the sitting Executive Director. If you represent a pride festival, please email jacey@projectrainbowutah.org to discuss your needs for 2026.
- ☐ The primary purpose of your project/event **IS NOT** a fundraiser
  Rationale: We focus on funding programs and events that are primarily designed to have an impact on our community versus raising additional funds for a cause. This limitation includes requests to lower ticket costs for the purpose of alleviating budget constraints for fundraisers for the same reason. (Please note this does not imply that all funded events/projects must be free to the public). Fundraisers may be eligible for a sponsorship outside of this grant program if they align with our mission and priorities; please email jacey@projectrainbowutah.org with inquiries.
- ☐ Your project **DOES NOT** primarily provide direct mutual aid.
  Rationale: Although mutual aid initiatives (such as funds for transition related care or travel etc) are very important to our community, they are not possible to fund sustainably and at scale with PRU's current resources. This grant is specifically for projects that are tied to our mission of widespread visibility and inclusion.
- ☐ Your project **HAS NOT** received funding from PRU for the same project for 3 years in a row
  Rationale: PRU seeks to vary its funding across different communities and organizations over time while supporting long-standing initiatives in becoming financially viable beyond PRU's grant awards. If your organization is beyond this timeline, please email jacey@projectrainbowutah.org to discuss options for continued support outside of the community fund grant application/process.
- ☐ Your project or event **IS NOT** associated with a political campaign or candidate for public office or to influence legislation in any way
  Rationale: As a 501(c)3 non-profit, PRU must remain non-partisan in the distribution of funds.

Lastly, grant recipients from 2025 that have not filed their required Final Report will not be considered for 2026 grant funding

Grant Application Criteria and Review Process

When you apply to the Community Fund, your proposal moves through a three-step, values-aligned review:

1) Eligibility screen
The program lead conducts a binary eligibility check based on the published criteria in this packet (Utah/LGBTQ+ focus, project timing, W-9/fiscal sponsor readiness, etc.). Proposals that meet eligibility advance to full review.

2) Community Fund Grant Committee scoring & recommendation.
A Committee composed of a small group of community members and the current Board of Directors reviews **eligible** applications using the five criteria below. Scores and discussion inform a **recommended funding slate** (including potential partial awards). All reviewers follow PRU's conflict-of-interest policy and recuse themselves where applicable.

3) Board ratification
The Board confirms compliance, budget fit, and reasonable diversification, then ratifies the slate.

We consider project's alignment to 5 key criteria that are derived from our organizational values:

1. **Community-Led & Participatory:** We prioritize projects that are shaped and led by LGBTQ+ people, especially those directly impacted by the issues the project addresses. We want to know how your community is involved—not just served.
2. **Collaborative & Cross-Connecting:** Strong projects bring people together across differences. Whether you're bridging rural and urban communities, generations, or cultural groups, we value work that invites collective problem-solving and joy.
3. **Rooted in Solidarity, Not Charity:** Our funds support efforts that uplift dignity and agency—not handouts. We're especially excited to fund projects that reinvest in the community, pay queer and trans folks for their work, and build shared power.
4. **Shares Power, Knowledge, and Joy:** We believe in joyful resistance, storytelling, and visibility. We fund projects that share what they learn, highlight LGBTQ+ experiences, and ripple beyond their immediate audience.
5. **Reflects Equity & Intention:** Inclusion isn't just a buzzword—it's a practice. We look for projects that include language access, disability accommodations, and leadership or participation from QTBIPOC, disabled, undocumented, or justice-involved folks.

Other factors we take into consideration when considering the entire slate of grants:

- **Geographic balance** across Utah, especially beyond the Salt Lake Valley
- **Project type and size** (small, medium, and large awards represented)
- **New vs. previously funded** (a healthy mix of returning projects that show impact and new ideas)

We may request limited clarifying information through the board to best understand a project's context and potential impact. All applicants will be notified after Board ratification.

How to Submit Applications & Applicant Supports

Grant applications should be completed online by filling out the appropriate application form no later than 11:59PM MT, January 2nd, 2026.

A recorded webinar/overview of the application process will be available shortly after when the application launches and linked on this page of our website.

Questions about the process may be submitted via this form. If you provide your email, you'll receive a direct response. Otherwise, the FAQ at the bottom of this document will be updated as needed to answer anonymous questions.

Expectations & Project Completion Requirements:

- **Timely acceptance:** You must complete a grant letter & contact form, as well as complete a W-9 form for the awarded person or organization
- **Project completion:** You must fill out a summary report, detailing how and when this grant money was spent. You must submit your summary report by December 31, 2026. The Final Report will briefly summarize (300-500 word final report with photographs when possible) if and how the project met each of the grant selection criteria, described in the section below.
- **Timely use of funds:** All funds must be spent in 2026. Any unspent or leftover funds must be returned to Project Rainbow, unless you request and are granted an extension for the funds to be spent in 2027. If a grantee wishes to request a time extension or to cancel the project and return the grant funds, you can do so via the final report and indicate which of these options you wish to pursue.
- **Disbursement of funds:** Funding will be disbursed within 30 days of grants being awarded, and can be received via either paper check (which may add an additional 10 business days for processing) or via PayPal.
- **Share learnings:** You will be invited - but not required - to attend a kickoff meeting to deepen connections across our awardees, This meeting will also cover the expectations for your final report and how to show impact, as well as opportunities to collaborate on PRU's flag campaigns. You will also be invited to join a private slack community to share events, ideas, and ask for help
- **Recognition and promotion:** You will include Project Rainbow Utah as a sponsor/donor when advertising your event/project, including using the media

kit/assets provided whenever feasible for your digital and in-person marketing materials

Failure to meet the above expectations may bar you or your organization from applying for Project Rainbow's Community Fund in future years.

Summary of changes for 2026 grant cycle:

These details are included above but are summarized here for your convenience.

- **New review flow & roles:** The grant project leads screens first for eligibility, then both the board and a small group of community members reviews and recommends a funding slate, which the Board then officially reviews and ratifies.
- **Categories refreshed:** Grant categories updated to reflect the types of projects we most often fund.
- **Criteria aligned to values:** Selection criteria streamlined to mirror PRU's organizational values across all review stages.
- **Sponsorship boundary clarified:** Pride parade/festival sponsorships are handled outside the CFG process through the Executive Director.

FAQ

- **Q: I represent a pride parade or festival. Am I eligible to apply?**
  A: Pride festivals are uniquely aligned to our mission & vision - and our flag campaigns often directly overlap or work in conjunction with local Pride events. As such, we almost always have chosen to fund these events but at inconsistent amounts driven solely in the past by what the applicant asks for. We'd like to deepen our connection to these organizations and give ourselves a more conversational approach to this type of funding than the grant process allows. As such, Project Rainbow funding of pride parades/festivals and sponsorships is to be handled directly by the sitting Executive Director. If you represent a pride festival, please email jacey@projectrainbowutah.org to discuss your needs for 2024.
- **Q: What is the maximum award?**
  A: Awards are limited to $5,000 maximum; for awards $3,500 or above, PRU can not be the sole funder.
- **Q: When are disbursements made for granted projects?**
  A: Award disbursements will be made within 30 days of Project Rainbow receiving your award confirmation form and related disbursement information.
- **Q: What determines the amount granted each year?**
  A: Our grant amount is driven by the number of flag sign ups. These vary from year to year.
- **Q: What type of performing arts projects are you interested in funding?**
  A: Any, but particular emphasis is placed on those that focus on fostering visibility, promoting inclusivity, and creating joyful spaces for our community & allies
- **Q: Would you consider funding ongoing needs for arts projects, such as supplies or studio space?**
  A: In general, Project Rainbow aims to support particular initiatives that have tangible results or effects, involving a broad and diverse range of participants - for example, we may be more likely to fund a request for supplies in support of an exhibition featuring LGBTQ+ artists rather than a general request for supplies. We encourage you to be creative with your ideas and collaborate with others to come up with these type of ideas!
- **Q: My non-profit organization has two projects that could use funding - one is a queer-centered event and one is a queer student organization/club. The club does have some involvement with the event but is mostly organized by administration. Should I apply once, including both items, or twice - one application for each project?**
  A: You should apply twice since one is ongoing and one is stand alone, and be specific about where funds may overlap.

The below captures the set of questions included in our application form. You may wish to make a copy of this document to collaborate on responses before submitting the form.

* denotes required questions

1. Eligibility Criteria* (check all that apply)
    a. Your programming primarily serves the LGBTQ+ community in the state of Utah
    b. Your project is taking place in the calendar year 2025
    c. Your organization has an annual budget less than $200,000.
    Rationale: PRU is focused on funding grassroots organizations and projects that are unable to access other forms of resources or revenue from traditional methods, often due to the structural barriers faced by LGBTQ+ people and other marginalized communities.
    d. You have the ability to submit a W9 on behalf of an individual, organization, or a fiscal sponsor who can accept disbursement of this grant.
    Note: While organizations do not need to be 501(c)3 classified to submit or receive awards, please be aware that for non tax-exempt entities (including individuals), your award will be considered taxable income and you should expect to receive a form 1099 from PRU.
    e. You ARE NOT applying on behalf of a pride parade, pride festival or resource fair.
    Rationale: Project Rainbow funding of pride parades/festivals and sponsorships is to be handled directly by the sitting Executive Director. If you represent a pride festival, please email jacey@projectrainbowutah.org to discuss your needs for 2026.
    f. The primary purpose of your project/event IS NOT a fundraiser
    Rationale: We focus on funding programs and events that are primarily designed to have an impact on our community versus raising additional funds for a cause. This limitation includes requests to lower ticket costs for the purpose of alleviating budget constraints for fundraisers for the same reason. (Please note this does not imply that all funded events/projects must be free to the public). Fundraisers may be eligible for a sponsorship outside of this grant program if they align with our mission and priorities; please email jacey@projectrainbowutah.org with inquiries.
    g. Your project DOES NOT primarily provide direct mutual aid.
    Rationale: Although mutual aid initiatives (such as funds for transition related care or travel etc) are very important to our community, they are not possible to fund sustainably and at scale with PRU's current resources. This grant is specifically for projects that are tied to our mission of widespread visibility and inclusion.
    h. Your project HAS NOT received funding from PRU for the same project for 3 years in a row
    Rationale: PRU seeks to vary its funding across different communities and organizations over time while supporting long-standing initiatives in becoming financially viable beyond PRU's grant awards
    i. Your project or event IS NOT associated with a political campaign or candidate for public office or to influence legislation in any way
    Rationale: As a 501(c)3 non-profit, PRU must remain non-partisan in the distribution of funds
2. Applicant Name*
3. Applicant Pronouns*
4. Applicant Email*
5. Applicant Phone*
6. Organization Name (answer "self" if project is not by an organization)*
7. Secondary contact (name, email, phone number)

8. Event/Program Name*
9. Grant Categories*
    a. Select the grant category that most closely aligns with your project or event that supports the LGBTQ+ community.
        i. Arts & Creative Expression (e.g., drag shows, zines, queer film nights, public art)
        ii. Healing, Wellness, & Visibility (e.g., support groups, visibility campaigns, wellness workshops)
        iii. Community Building, Inclusion & Collective Learning (e.g., queer history, school clubs, speaker series, rural convenings, accessibility/accomodations support)
10. Fund Request Category*
    a. Our grant awards range from $500 to $5,000. Select which applies.
        i. Small awards are for events or projects that have a budget of less than $2,000.
        ii. Medium awards are for events or projects that have a budget over $2,000 to $5,000.
        iii. Large awards are only for events or projects that have a budget over $5,000 where we are not the sole funder.
11. Funding Request Amount* (Exact dollar amount requested)
12. In what range does your **total** budget for this event or project fall into?*
    a. $0-$999
    b. $1,000-$1,999
    c. $2,000-$4,999
    d. $5,000-$9,999
    e. $10,000+
13. Exact Project Cost: If known, the exact cost of your project can help us better assess the impact of our funds.
14. Please specify how the funds requested contribute to the overall budget for your event or project. PRU seeks to understand what specifically our funds will be supporting; the more detail provided, the more informed the board can be about making decisions in the likely scenario of giving out partial awards.
15. Admission/Event Participation Fee: Will participants in your event/project be charged an admission fee?*
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Not Sure
        i. If Yes or Not Sure is selected: If you are charging admission or participation fees, please describe how you will ensure equity and access for the most marginalized in our community. For example, if all or part of the grant is intended to subsidize entry, please state so here.
16. Date of Event: If no exact date is set, please select your best guest or the first day of the month targeted*
17. Location: If no exact venue is identified yet, please select the relevant city or county*
18. Project/Event Description*
    a. Project descriptions have a 700 word limit. A short and clear description is preferred.

        Example of a short description:

Our project, "Empowering Communities through Sustainable Agriculture," aims to help rural areas with food and money by using new and eco-friendly farming methods. We want to improve the lives of local farmers and make the community stronger in the long run.

We will teach farmers about organic farming, smart water use, and how to use resources around them. We also plan to create a community cooperative so farmers can work together to sell their products fairly.

Our goal is not just to make sure there's enough food but also to take care of the environment. This project can grow to help more communities, thanks to partnerships with local experts and leaders. Together, we want to create a model that others can copy to bring positive changes to nearby areas.

19. Community Leadership, Collaboration, and Solidarity: How is your project led by LGBTQ+ people, and how does it build collaboration and shared ownership across different identities or communities?
    a. Please highlight any meaningful roles played by community members, partnerships involved, and how your project uplifts leadership from within the community rather than providing charity.
20. Visibility, Joy, and Inclusion: How will your project help LGBTQ+ people feel seen, affirmed, and connected?
    a. Describe how your project creates joy or healing, what will be shared with the broader community, and how you're ensuring accessibility and inclusion—especially for QTBIPOC, disabled, rural, or otherwise marginalized LGBTQ+ folks.