

## Program Overview

The [JAMS Foundation](#) and [National Association for Community Mediation](#) (NAFCM) are pleased to announce the 2025-2027 funding track of the Community Mediation Mini-Grant Program (“Program”).

**Community Leadership:** Cultivating leaders who can listen and learn and hold potentially transformative conversations regarding issues of public interest and concern is essential for good governance. The need to embed Conflict Resolution Skills within the modus operandi of elected officials and other community leaders is a key to productive engagement and community safety. Requirement: A current relationship with one or more governmental leaders (e.g. County Executive, Mayor, Chair of the Assembly) or similarly positioned individuals, who will be willing and able to facilitate access to a broader array of community leaders. The sustainable impact would be to have -recognized leaders equipped with basic conflict resolution skills (coaching, de-escalation, impartial facilitation, and/or mediation) to employ when a disturbance, disruption or disagreement arises.

Systemic changes developed as part of this process should be able to be replicated by community mediation centers, democracy hubs or bridging hubs as a path for sustainability and growth for the field of community mediation, as well as to inform the development of training, evidence-based strategies, policy, and research at the national level.

The Mini-Grant Program is designed to encourage creativity and variation based on research. Service strategies will be developed through the implementation of the “Listening for Action” Leadership Process and strengthened by at least one policy or procedure change developed and locally implemented over a two-year period. Mini-grant recipients will work together throughout the grant period, anchored in the Learning Community. The Learning Community is a structured and collaborative peer working group facilitated by NAFCM. This structure serves as an incubator for innovation by aiding in the development of “good practices.” All materials developed through these grants will be shared with community mediation centers and community mediators across the continent to strengthen their work in facilitating co-created engagement, justice, and peace. By distributing these materials, sharing programmatic resources, providing training, and developing national partnerships, NAFCM supports the replication of these service models and ensures the Program’s impact on an international level.

The Learning Community will meet twice a month for the first six months, and monthly thereafter using a specified on-line meeting platform. This Learning Community will follow the “Listening for Action” structured guidance offered by NAFCM that is intended to strengthen the unique work of each project as well as create an executive learning environment that allows the members to grow both individually and professionally.

### 2025 Solicitation of Interest (SI) Overview

The 2025 Program selection process has two distinct phases.

Phase 1 begins with the release of this 2025 Solicitation of Interest (SI) protocol. This phase is open to any organization which works to incorporate the 9 NAFCM Hallmarks of Community Mediation and believes that this funding and technical assistance support opportunity is a good fit for the needs of their work and those with whom they work.

An organization is expected to embed the nine hallmarks of community mediation center work. These nine hallmarks of a community mediation center are:

1. A private non-profit or public agency or program thereof, with mediators, staff and governing/advisory board representative of the diversity of the community served.
2. The use of trained community volunteers as providers of mediation services; the practice of mediation is open to all persons.
3. Providing direct access to the public through self-referral and striving to reduce barriers to service including physical, linguistic, cultural, programmatic and economic.
4. Providing service to clients regardless of their ability to pay.
5. Providing service and hiring without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, disabilities, national origin, marital status, personal appearance, gender orientation, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, source of income.
6. Providing a forum for dispute resolution at the earliest stage of conflict.
7. Providing an alternative to the judicial system at any stage of a conflict.
8. Initiating, facilitating and educating for collaborative community relationships to effect positive systemic change.
9. Engaging in public awareness and educational activities about the values and practices of mediation.

The Learning Community will focus on Hallmark 2, Hallmark 8, and Hallmark 9.

Phase 2 begins in April 2025 and is open only to those who submitted a response to the SI during the prior phase and have been invited to submit a full proposal.

### **2025 Submission of Interest (SI)**

Community mediation is community mobilization. Together, both nationally and locally, we must aggregate the wisdom of our work, amplify the voices of community members so each can be heard, and advance the transformative value of community mediation. To live out this mission, the selected Mini-Grant participants will participate in a Learning Community as described above.

Grants will be awarded by **August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025**, for an initial twelve-month funding period and are renewable for an additional year of funding by agreement of the Mini-Grant recipient, NAFCM, and the JAMS Foundation. Funding is intended primarily for staff time dedicated to program development activities, including participation in the Learning Community and the development of resource materials.

**There are three priority considerations in the Solicitation of Interest (SI):**

- Cultivate the recognition that the practice of community mediation is open to all persons. (Hallmark 2)
- Support positive system changes which increase the potential for connection, engagement, and the possibility for all to thrive. (Hallmark 8).
- Work to engage in public awareness and educational activities about the values of using community mediation to address issues of public interest and concern. (Hallmark 9)

### **Funding Parameters and Criteria for the 2025 Funding Cycle**

Mini-Grants of \$15,000 per year will be awarded to up to five organizations to be used as incentive funds to support cultivating leaders who can listen and learn and hold potentially transformative conversations regarding issues of public interest and concern which is a key to productive engagement and community safety

- Funding requests may be for up to two years, but decisions regarding second-year funding will be contingent on evidence of benchmark accomplishments at the end of the first year of funding.
- Preference for funding is given to those applicants who have previously demonstrated an ability to bring projects to a level of scalability and sustainability.
- Eligible organizations include nonprofit 501(c)3 organizations, educational institutions, and public or for-profit agencies working in conjunction with nonprofit institutions or organizations.

### **Funding Project Process Step 1 – Open to all now until February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2025**

- Interested organizations are required to submit a 1-3-page response to the Solicitation of Interest (SI) (using the guidelines on the following page) to NAFCM no later than 11:59 PM local time of the organization's legal/main location, **February 24, 2025** to [jamsnafcmlearningcommunities@gmail.com](mailto:jamsnafcmlearningcommunities@gmail.com)
- An informational conference call will be held on **January 31, 2025, 3:30- 5:00 PM Eastern Time. You must register in advance.** Registrants who wait until January 30 to register are not guaranteed entry. To register in advance for this webinar: [Registration Link](#)
- Upon registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

### **Funding Project Process Step 2 – By invitation only**

- The NAFCM Grant review committee will notify applicants if they have been selected to develop a full proposal by **March 19, 2025**. For selected applicants, a review webinar will be offered on **April 2, 2025, at 2:00 PM Eastern Time**. The link for attendance will be sent to those applicants who are invited to submit a full proposal.
- Full proposals (with a required application protocol provided upon notification) will be due to the NAFCM Grant review committee no later than 11:59 PM local time of

the organization's legal/main location on **Monday, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2025**.

- Notifications of the final decision will be made by **August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025**.
- Please address questions about grant program to D.G. Mawn, President, NAFCM, at [jamsnafcmlearningcommunities@gmail.com](mailto:jamsnafcmlearningcommunities@gmail.com)

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## Solicitation of Interest (SI) Response

### MANDATORY ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION

Proposal Descriptions must be submitted online. The subject line of the email must read: JAMS Foundation/NAFCM Grant – [Organization Name]. Applications must be submitted **electronically by 11:59 p.m., local time of applicant on February 24, 2025**, to [jamsnafcmlearningcommunities@gmail.com](mailto:jamsnafcmlearningcommunities@gmail.com)

***Cover letter: In the body of the email, please provide only the following information:***

I commit that if we are invited to submit a full proposal, we agree to meet the following requirements:

1. Identify **one team member** who will be responsible for the implementation of the Mini-Grant and who will participate in **each** Learning Community calls and web-based meetings.
2. Implement program development activities including but not limited to:
  - a. Reviewing research and past programmatic materials developed in the field;
  - b. Conducting local needs assessment;
  - c. Developing stakeholder and referral source relationships;
  - d. Developing and implementing pilot programming and evaluation strategies;
  - e. Training community mediators; and,
  - f. Cultivating local funding sources with a focus on sustaining the effort post JAMS Foundation/NAFCM funding.
3. Assist in the development of program materials that will be shared with community mediation centers and mediators, including at least one NAFCM hosted webinar each year.
4. Assist NAFCM in presenting at local, regional, and national ADR conferences and/or other on-line trainings, as requested.
5. Maintain, or be working toward meeting, [NAFCM's hallmarks of a community mediation center](#)
6. Maintain NAFCM membership for the duration of the funding period.

***The Proposal must be attached in Word.*** The proposed project description **shall be no more than three pages**, single spaced, 12-point font, 1-inch margins. The application must be submitted as a **Microsoft Word document**. Pages should be numbered consecutively from beginning to end so that information can be located easily during the review of the application. The information provided in your application **must** be sufficient for review. Following these guidelines will help ensure your application is complete and will assist in the review of your application. Do not include any grids, charts, or budget information.

*In the body of the Proposal, please provide in no more than three pages the following:*

**Applicant Information:**

1. Name and street address of the applicant; and,
2. Contact Person (and necessary contact information) for this proposal.

**Project Description:**

1. Present a brief example of your organization's previous work living out the call of the 1964 Civil Rights Act to aid communities and individuals in resolving disputes, disagreements or difficulties relating to practices that impair the rights of persons in their communities and thereby threatening peaceful relations among them.
2. Discuss your current engagement with a government or non-governmental organization in supporting their ability to adopt skills that enhance their listening and facilitation skills. This includes how this effort has equipped them with basic conflict resolution skills such as coaching, de-escalation, impartial facilitation, and/or mediation. (Hallmark 2)
3. Provide an example of how you have assisted in amplifying the work of a community recognized leader so that others know of their work to co-create peace, move the community closer to justice and/or provide opportunities for engagement across diverse communities. (Hallmark 9)
4. Discuss your **current engagement** with one or more of the following: County Executive, Mayor, Chair of the Assembly or a leader, or council elected by the community to govern a governmental body. In this discussion include how your work with them has assisted them in creating avenues for the use, formally or informally, of coaching, de-escalation, impartial facilitation, and/or mediation in working with their constituents and/or those on the elected council and/or their employees. (Hallmark 8)
5. Discuss what benefits you and your organization hope to obtain from the participation in the NAFCM Learning Community which focuses on sharpening the skills of the participants in areas of 1)listening, 2)holding space, 3)data collection and analysis, 4)systemic change, 5)program implementation and 6)sustainability.

**Please be aware that applications that do not include all of the above requirements are considered incomplete. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed for consideration.**

**We look forward to your response to this Solicitation of Interest (SI).**