Accelerating Disability Inclusion in Alabama Communities of Excellence

Call for Proposals: Community-Based Micro-Grants

Proposals due: November 16, 2026 at 5:00 pm CT

Estimated Project Dates: January 1, 2027 – June 30, 2027

Submit Applications via ONLINE FORM.

All questions must be submitted in writing to communityhealth@lakeshore.org.

The Healthy Alabama Communities program in partnership with Lakeshore Foundation is seeking proposals for a community-based micro-grant program that promotes accessibility and inclusion of people with disabilities in health promotion and wellness activities.

We are looking for innovative community-based projects that incorporate disability inclusion into programs, policy, systems and/or environments related to improving physical activity access/opportunities, nutrition access/choices, and healthy living access/opportunities. This program supports alignment with strategies, programs, and resources described in the Toolkit for Creating a Healthy Alabama Community and the Alabama State Physical Activity and Nutrition Plan. This program will award grants up to $10,000 for projects related to supporting disability inclusion and access strategies in Alabama communities.

Why are we focusing on inclusion of people with disabilities?

A disability is any condition of the body or mind (impairment) that makes it more difficult for the person with the condition to do certain activities (activity limitation) and interact with the world around them (participation restrictions). People with disabilities experience barriers that prevent them from being able to access health promoting opportunities in communities. Inclusion is all about making sure every community member has the same opportunities to participate in every aspect of life to the best of their abilities and desires.

What are we looking for?

This micro-grant program aims to recognize, support and grow efforts around designing communities that promote *inclusive health* for people with disabilities. We are looking for "shovel-ready" projects that need a small amount of funding to improve or increase disability access and inclusion. Given the funding amount and timeline of this micro-grant, it is anticipated that applicants will leverage projects that are currently being planned or implemented. Although newly conceived projects will still be considered, they will have to show a strong feasibility of implementation under the 6-month timeline. Examples of projects may include, but are not limited to:

- Adaptation of a community fitness program
- Adaptation of community garden plans to be universally designed
- Development of inclusive wayfinding signage or smartphone applications
- Improving the design of a new playground to incorporate universal design
- Systems changes to make a walking school bus program more inclusive
- Adapted equipment loaner program for outdoor recreation
- Equipment loaner program for adapted sports
- Inclusive farmers market project
- Accessible nutrition education
- Inclusive trails assessment and action plan
- Inclusive walking groups/clubs
- Inclusive walk/move infrastructure audits
- Supporting Diabetes Prevention Programs for people with disabilities
- Supporting sensory considerations for health, recreation, and wellness activities
- Improving accessible digital and communication materials related to health information
- Accessibility audits and recommendations incorporated into strategic plans
- Community engagement activities with people with disabilities or disability organizations

As part of this proposal, you should:

1. Identify a program, policy, system or environmental change that is being planned or implemented in your community.
2. Describe how you will work to make the project inclusive of people with disabilities.
3. Identify partners who will be involved in planning and implementing your project.

If funded, you will:

1. Gather community feedback from people with disabilities about your project.
2. Implement your project.
3. Host staff for a site visit/meeting related to your project.
4. Submit a final report on your project.

Project Requirements:

- Demonstrate that a program, policy, system or environmental change in your community has strong potential to increase disability access and inclusion as it relates to physical activity, nutrition or healthy living.
- Demonstrate how your project will have a broad impact for people with disabilities in an identified community. For example, an implementation project that occurs across a school district instead of just one school.
- Demonstrate involvement throughout the whole project of local disability representatives, defined as a person with a disability or a person representing an organization that serves/advocates for persons with disabilities.
- Complete project in a 6-month timeline.
- Receive training and technical assistance by Lakeshore Community Health staff.
- Submit a brief final report 30 days after completion of the project period (template provided).
- Work with the Lakeshore evaluation team at regular intervals throughout the project period to answer short surveys and brief interviews.
- Agree to have project publicly shared and reported on by Lakeshore and Healthy Alabama Communities.
- Commit to working towards the training and designation requirements to be a Healthy Alabama Community.

The following types of projects will *NOT* be considered:

- Funding for improvements that are otherwise required under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) (i.e. funding to make a restroom accessible, or to provide sign-language interpretation for a program).
- Projects that do not have a focus on nutrition, physical activity or healthy living.
- Projects with no disability representation.
- Projects that are not at the community level (i.e. only accessible to limited number of people).
- Projects that do not demonstrate community involvement and feedback.

Who can apply?

This funding opportunity is open to <u>currently designated or an active class</u> of the Alabama Communities of Excellence (ACE) municipalities (cities between 2,000 and 18,000 in population) program. Applications must be submitted by the municipality. Funding can be issued by the municipality to an organization, group, or agency that will be implementing the project.

If awarded, you will be added to a network of cities committed to working towards the training and designation requirements to be a Healthy Alabama Community.

Award Information:

Award ceiling:	$10,000
Length of project period:	6 months
Estimated start date:	January 1, 2027
Estimated end date:	June 30, 2027

Payment of funds will occur through a Fee for Service contract with 50% of the project awards upfront and the remaining 50% upon completion of the final report. Indirect costs or overhead are not permitted.

Application Submission:

Applications for this funding include completion of the required **application questions, budget and budget justification**. Please fill out all application questions using the **Online Form**. The budget and budget justification should be attached to your Online Form.

Budget Narrative/Justification
Provide an itemized budget breakdown for the project (capped at $10,000) and the basis for estimating the costs of personnel salaries, project staff travel, materials and supplies, consultants and subcontracts, and any other projected expenditures. Applicants should use the budget justification section to provide a detailed budget for each proposed activity. Budgets exceeding $10,000 will not be reviewed. Only direct project costs are permitted; indirect costs or overhead are not permitted. Specify any cash-matching or in-kind contributions.

Completed applications must be submitted via ONLINE FORM by November 16, 2026 at 5:00 pm CT.

Review Process:

Lakeshore and Healthy Alabama Communities will review applications received upon the deadline date. Reviewers may ask for clarifications or request revisions where appropriate.

For More Information:

Please contact:
Allison Tubbs
Director of Community Health
Lakeshore Foundation
4000 Ridgeway Drive
Birmingham, AL 35209

205-313-7447
allisont@lakeshore.org

Helpful Documents and Links:

- Healthy Alabama Communities
- Lakeshore Community Health
- Alabama Public Health Nutrition and Physical Activity
- Reaching People with Disabilities through Healthy Communities
- Promoting Activity and Inclusive Healthy Communities Video Series
- 2025 Disability Inclusion Grants
- 2024 Disability Inclusion Grants
- Community Health Inclusion Dashboard
- Walkable and Vibrant Small Towns
- Community Health Inclusion Videos Playlist