

AdvancingCities Challenge: Frequently Asked Questions

PART ONE: ABOUT THE INITIATIVE

What is AdvancingCities?

AdvancingCities is a \$500 million, five-year initiative to invest in solutions that bolster the long-term vitality of cities and the communities within them that have not benefited from economic growth. A component of AdvancingCities is an annual competition to advance creative solutions to drive inclusive growth through collaboration between civic, business, and community leaders.

What is the AdvancingCities Challenge?

The AdvancingCities Challenge will make investments of up to \$3 million in cities to support creative, collaborative and sustainable solutions that address cross-cutting challenges that help more people benefit from a growing economy. Successful proposals will support existing local coalitions of elected, business and nonprofit leaders working together to address major social and economic challenges such as employment barriers, financial insecurity, and neighborhood disinvestment.

PART TWO: REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) ELIGIBILITY AND STRUCTURE

What are the eligibility requirements for applicants?

To be eligible for funding, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Lead organization must be a not-for-profit organization exempt from federal income taxation under Code Section 501(c)(3) and classified as a public charity under Code Sections 509(a)(1) or 509(a)(2);
- Lead organization will demonstrate expertise in the community, and oversight that corresponds with the intended geography and systems;
- Strong organizational leadership and management;
- Commitment to diversity and inclusion for the project, and within the organization, particularly at senior staff and board level;
- Strong preference for projects that overlap with JPMC's geographic business footprint and resources;
- Activities must be geographically focused on a single city, town, or region;
- Engagement of a multi-sector coalition of actors (government, nonprofit, business, community, foundation, etc.) to design and implement the initiative;
- Ability to achieve all deliverables within a three-year time frame; and
- Lead organization must be available for meetings on progress every 3 months.

What is the maximum grant amount available?

Successful applicants will be eligible for a three-year grant of up to \$3 million. All grants will be allocated over a three-year period, and we expect to award 4-6 grants annually.

Do organizations need to be located within the same geographic area?

Organizations do not have to be located in the same geographic location. However, activities must be geographically focused in a single city, town, or region.

Does having an existing grant from JPMC disqualify an applicant?

No.

How will the applications be evaluated?

Applications will be reviewed and evaluated according to the criteria outlined below:

- **Geography:** Reaches or deepens impact in a defined area, identifies and addresses a defined gap or need in the market and demonstrates clear priorities for geographies and populations targeted;
- **Rationale, approach, and alignment:** Clearly articulates a problem statement, solution and actionable plan for implementation, while demonstrating how these solutions will be transformative and address core challenges to economic mobility;
- **Collaboration and leadership:** Evinces strong leadership and collaboration among cross-sector actors to advance these solutions;
- **Innovation:** Exhibits high potential to intervene, disrupt and change systems with new or existing partnerships and/or resources;
- **Sustainability:** Displays clear path to long-term sustainability beyond a JPMC grant; and
- **Impact and evaluation:** Demonstrates vision for a large-scale, transformative result, and ability to define and measure both short-term outcomes against near-term goals and the systems change necessary to achieve the long-term result.

How will JPMC evaluate the extent to which proposals promote equity?

Below are key principles that we will look for when evaluating the extent to which programs will tackle persistent inequities and drive inclusive growth. This bullet list is not mean to be definitive, but to provide guidance.

- Create a transparent, data-driven approach to fostering inclusive local economies; reducing racial, ethnic, and income segregation; and directly addressing disparities and barriers to opportunity.
- Meaningfully engage multiple community stakeholders, including: government leaders, business and community leaders, and residents.
- Actively prevent and work against displacement of low-income individuals and small businesses
- Improve and continuously measure outcomes critical to an individual and community’s ability to progress socially and economically, including in the areas of health, education, employment, safety, and financial security.
- Plan for the needs of a city/region’s most vulnerable residents, such as the elderly, single parents, very low-income, people of color, people with disabilities, returning citizens, women, and/or non-English speakers.
- Respect local culture, history, and diversity.
- Ensure that the execution and delivery of the solution’s intended impact builds local capacity and has longevity that can be sustained over time.

What does JPMC mean by “systems change”?

JPMC is interested in proposals that will lead to durable changes in how systems operate to benefit individuals, families, small businesses, and communities. This type of systems change may be referred to as *external systems change* because it affects how systems operate from the perspective of the end users. This contrasts with *internal systems change* which is a change in how systems operate from the perspective of the individuals or organizations that administer them. Internal systems changes are often important as a means to the end of changing how systems operate from the perspective of the end users but it is ultimately the external systems changes that JPMC is hoping to achieve through the *AdvancingCities* Challenge.

My organization still has questions about the application process. What resources are available to us?

We will host two informational calls to answer your questions about the program and RFP:

- Monday, September 17, 2018, from 3:00-4:00pm ET
- Tuesday, September 25, 2018, from 1:00-2:00pm ET

All other questions can be directed to Advancing.Cities@jpmchase.com.

PART THREE: EXPECTATIONS AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

What are the expectations of participants?

Expectations of participants include:

Selection Process Requirements: Applicants must be available for phone/video interviews in mid-February 2019. At least one representative must be available for announcement activities in late April.

Other requirements for winners will include (included in grant budget):

- Submit MOU and work plan for participating organizations
- Report to JPMC’s national evaluator: JPMC will work with a national evaluator, who will produce a series of studies and reports that assess the progress and results of the *AdvancingCities* Challenge. Each local evaluation partner must participate in calls, report data to the national evaluation team, and submit an initial research plan to JPMC and its national evaluation partner.
- Release annual progress report: Each winner will have a local evaluator that is required to put out a public white paper/progress report with detailed, quantitative data and impact on the project annually on their website and/or release during a media/visibility event. They will share an estimated timeline for release early in the year to JPMC to assist in planning.
- Submit JPMC CyberGrants impact report: In addition to the national evaluation requirement, all *AdvancingCities* Challenge grants are requested to submit impact reports through JPMC’s online grants system, CyberGrants. They will receive a reminder email from our system 30 days prior to the due date of the report.

- Share a story of how the target geography/population was directly impacted by the grant: When grantees submit their impact report in CyberGrants, they will attach an “impact story” or human interest story that highlights the problem or challenge the grant addressed, describes how the geography/population served was assisted by the grant, and helps explain the success of the program.

Who should applicants select as evaluation partners?

Each applicant must identify a local evaluation partner in their proposal. Evaluation partners can be local universities, consultant firms, or individuals able to effectively track program outcomes. Ideally, they should be familiar with the city and/or the challenges that the proposal seeks to address. Evaluation partners will be responsible for submitting publically available annual reports and the final impact report, as well as sharing outcomes with JPMC’s national evaluator.

What are the expectations of a local evaluation partner?

The local evaluation partner will be responsible for collecting data on the outputs and outcomes of the *AdvancingCities* Challenge grant; reporting the data quarterly to JPMC and/or JPMC’s national evaluation partner and other local evaluators through conference calls, webinars, and in-person meetings; producing interim reports on the status of the evaluation and findings to date after years 1 and 2; and submitting a final evaluation report by the end of year 3. During the initial months of the grant period, the local evaluation partner will also be required to submit a research plan that must be approved by JPMC and its national evaluation partner.

How will JPMC’s national evaluator be engaged?

The success of the evaluation component relies heavily on engagement with JPMC’s selected national evaluator. Specifically, the national evaluator will introduce and discuss the metrics and reporting process with local evaluation partners, and may engage with them throughout the year to collect and clarify data. The national evaluator will also select sides to participate in case studies, and may request interviews, data, pictures, or other information to support this work.

PART FOUR: RFP TIMELINE

How do I submit an application?

All proposals must be submitted via [Cybergrants](#).

The invitation code is ‘McCarthy00’.

All proposals are due by **Friday, November 30, midnight Eastern Time**. Any proposals received via email will not be reviewed as part of the application process. Questions can be directed to Advancing.Cities@jpmchase.com.

What happens to the application once it is submitted?

JPMC will leverage experts from across the firm to carefully review proposals. Proposals will be reviewed over several rounds. Non-winners will be notified at each stage.

What is the timeline of the proposal review and selection process?

- September 12: *Advancing*Cities Challenge RFP is released
- September 17, 25: Informational calls on the Challenge
- November 30: Deadline to submit application at 11:59PM ET
- December – March: Applications go through review
 - o Mid-February: phone/video interviews
- March: Initial award notification
- March – early April: Grant agreements finalized
- Late April: Winners announced

***These dates are subject to change**