



Huaka'i Travel Grants

Funding Opportunity

Rolling online application deadline until all funds are awarded or by November 30, 2026, 4:00 p.m. HST.

Focus: Support for travel that increases access to Native Hawaiian cultural places and activities across Hawai'i, to perpetuate Indigenous knowledge and culture.

Grant Range: Up to \$5,000 per organization

Total Funds Available: \$75,000

OVERVIEW

The Huaka'i Travel Grants Funding Opportunity will award funds to Hawai'i-based organizations and programs to support increased access to Native Hawaiian cultural places and activities across Hawai'i, to perpetuate Indigenous knowledge and culture. This opportunity is targeted to reach individuals that experience barriers or challenges to accessing cultural places and activities in person, including those living in rural communities. Applicants may request support for travel within the state, including inter-island or within-island travel, to provide access to Native Hawaiian cultural places and activities to support cultural learning and connection. The travel grant can be used to expand activities of a specific program or can support a new program¹.

This opportunity advances the long-term vision of perpetuating Indigenous knowledge and culture by expanding access to Native Hawaiian cultural experiences. Engagement in place-based activities helps strengthen cultural pride, revitalize ancestral knowledge, and deepen relationships between people and place. Funding will help cultivate these connections and ensure that Native Hawaiian cultural practices continue to thrive for future generations. See Appendix A to learn more about the Arts & Culture sector's vision and the background of this funding opportunity.

Program Goals

- To increase access to activities and events related to Indigenous knowledge and practices for organizations and individuals that would otherwise experience barriers to attending in person.
- To increase engagement with Indigenous knowledge and practices to the benefit of organizations, individuals, and the broader community.
- To support the perpetuation of Indigenous knowledge and practices.

TIMELINE/KEY DATES

Description	Date
Application Release	Wednesday, May 6, 2026
Virtual Information Session #1	Tuesday, May 19, 2026, 11:00 am- Noon: Register here .

¹ Examples may include bringing youth in an after-school program to a significant Native Hawaiian cultural place to learn mo'olelo and oli, bringing participants to 'āina-based activities to learn about traditional mala, or supporting travel for kumu to attend workshops to further their knowledge, etc.



Virtual Information Session #2	Wednesday, June 17, 2026, 1:00 pm-2:00 pm: Register here .
Application Deadline	Rolling deadline until all funds are awarded or by November 30, 2026, 4:00 p.m. HST
Anticipated Notification Time Frame	4-6 weeks after application
Grant Start & End Date	Grant activities to take place within 12 months of receiving funding

ELIGIBILITY & REQUIREMENTS

- Hawai'i-based nonprofit organizations that are 501(c)(3) IRS tax exempt organizations. Organizations that are not a 501(c)(3) public charity must apply with a fiscal sponsor that is a 501(c)(3) public charity.
- Organizations may submit one application to the Huaka'i Travel Grants program. An organization can serve as a fiscal sponsor for a different program.
- Schools and universities are not eligible for this funding opportunity.
- Organizations currently funded by HCF with overdue final reports are not eligible to apply.
- Grant funding can support travel expenses for program participants and staff/volunteers.
- Grant funding can be used for:
 - Travel expenses including airfare, ground transportation, lodging, food;
 - Other travel costs related to attending the identified activity and/or event; and
 - Post-travel events for participants to share knowledge and impact of the grant activities with the broader community.
- Applicants proposing to travel with youth (under the age of 18) must have a comprehensive Child Protection Policy including staff and volunteer background checks and procedures so that one staff or volunteer will not be alone with a child at any time. If your plans involve an overnight stay, appropriate policies for chaperones and sleeping arrangements must be in place. Written permission from the youths' guardians must be received prior to travel. A copy of these policies is not required to be submitted with the application but must be provided if requested by HCF.
- Applicants assume all risks and liability associated with travel and related activities and agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless HCF and its directors, staff, and agents against all claims arising from or related to actions taken by applicant pursuant to the grant award.

The strongest proposals will be those that meet all or most of the following criteria:

- Increase access for individuals that experience barriers or challenges to accessing cultural places and activities in person, including those in remote or underserved areas.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for participants to connect with Indigenous knowledge, cultural practices, or locations.
- Explain how the grant activities perpetuate Indigenous knowledge and culture.
- Have well thought out activities and timelines.
- Show impact of the project on participants.
- Provide an opportunity for participants to share their experience and knowledge gained with others to broaden the impact of the activities. This could include talk stories with families, curated social media posts, presentations, or other formal or informal activities.



Award Information

- **Grant Term:** Grant activities to take place within 12 months of receiving funding.
- **Funding Range:** Up to \$5,000 per organization. Total amount to be awarded through this funding opportunity is \$75,000. Applications will be accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis until all the funds are awarded or by Monday, November 30, 2026, 4:00 pm HST.
- **Reporting:** Grantees will be required to submit a final narrative and financial report to share about the impact of the travel grant and event(s) on participants.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Online Application

Applications can be submitted online via the Hawai'i Community Foundation's Grants Portal: https://hawaii.cf.smartsimple.com/s_Login.jsp using Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox. Applicants must log in to their account to apply; new users must register for an account. We recommend that you do not wait until the last moment to submit your application as you may experience technical difficulties. Only complete applications submitted by the deadline will be accepted; this includes completion of Organization Profiles and associated fiscal sponsorship documents, if applicable.

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

Both new and returning users must certify and submit the organization profile prior to submission of the application; re-certification is required every six months.

The Organization Profile consists of five tabs: *Organization Information*, *Contact Information*, *Budget*, *Board and Certification*. To submit your organization profile, you must complete all required fields marked with an asterisk on each tab.

The following additional documents will be required:

- IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter (not required if previously applied to the Foundation or if applying through a fiscal sponsor)

APPLICATION

The application consists of four tabs: *Program Overview*, *Program Information*, *Budget*, and *Supporting Documents & Certification*. All required fields are marked with an asterisk.

- **Program Overview:**
 - Provide general information and characteristics about the program including program title, duration, program location(s), ages and genders served, and the CHANGE sector(s) your program most closely aligns with.
 - For more information about the CHANGE framework, please visit our website <https://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/change>.
 - If you have a fiscal sponsor, you will be asked to identify your fiscal sponsor. Please note, your fiscal sponsor must first be registered in the Grants Portal prior to submitting your application.



- **Program Information:** Provide a short narrative response (~1,000 characters with spaces, or 1/3 page) for each question:
 1. Share about the organization and participants that the travel grant will support. Include why the travel grant is necessary, addressing barriers participants would otherwise experience to accessing the proposed cultural places and activities in person.
 2. Explain the activities you will do with the travel grant. Include the place(s) or event(s) participants will attend. Explain their significance in perpetuating Indigenous knowledge and culture, and how attendance will support cultural learning and connection. Include a timeline of activities.
 3. Describe how many people will benefit from the travel grant and the expected impact of the grant on participants. Describe the anticipated impact on the organization and/or broader community, and plans for participants to share impact and knowledge gained with others.
 4. Describe the expenses the travel grant will support as reflected in the program budget.
 - Complete the additional question regarding traveling with youth.
- **Budget:**
 - Provide the amount requested through this application. Note the limit of \$5,000.
- **Supporting Documents & Certification:**
 - Upload a Program Budget showing:
 - Anticipated income including source, amount, restrictions, and whether secured or pending.
 - Anticipated expenses including overall expenses, and expenses for which this grant, if awarded, will be used.
 - *Applicants are strongly recommended to use the Huaka'i Travel Grant Program Budget template available in the Grant Portal's Resources section.*
 - Complete the certification.

FISCAL SPONSORS

- Fiscal sponsors must have an account in the portal. Their profile must be certified and include their IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter and up-to-date financial documents. Fiscal Sponsor Agreement and Board Resolution templates can be found at this [link](#).
- Starting July 28, 2025, **fiscal sponsors will be required to certify the application before it can be submitted by the applicant.** To do so, the applicant must invite the fiscal sponsor to collaborate on the draft application. Please reference this [video](#) and our [External User Guide](#) on how to invite collaborators. The fiscal sponsor as a collaborator can then check the Fiscal Sponsor certification box under Supporting Documents & Certification.

NOTIFICATION PROCESS

Decision notifications will be sent by email to the applicant, applicant's Chief Staff or Volunteer, and if applicable, the Fiscal Sponsor contact in the HCF Grants Portal. The decision letter will be attached to the email and available in the Grants Portal under My Application Tracker in the Active or Historical tabs.



CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions about this funding opportunity, please contact Elizabeth Lentz-Hill at elentzhill@hcf-hawaii.org or phone at (808) 566-5543.

For technical assistance with the Grants Portal, please submit a [support ticket](#).

Tips for Applicants

- How-to videos, the Applicant User Guide and support tickets can be found on our [website](#).
- Tool tips can be found throughout the portal. These boxes indicate exactly what information you should provide.
- Use Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox on a computer for the best user experience.
- The online application has fillable boxes with character limits that may not match character counts in MS word. If you cut and paste your work into the application, please be sure all text is complete.
- If you have an existing organization profile and fields are not editable, please click "Update Profile". This will move your org profile to draft and allow you to make edits. Click "Submit" to move it back to active status.



APPENDIX A

Funding Opportunity Background

We believe that change can happen when we understand the challenges in front of us and work together to find and implement equitable solutions to those challenges. Established by Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF), the [CHANGE Framework](#) identifies six essential sectors, or areas, that affect the overall well-being of these islands and people. Through community engagement, a vision for the Arts and Culture Sector was created. We envision a Hawai'i where:

Opportunities to practice and participate in arts and culture are inclusive and accessible to everyone, from keiki to kūpuna. The perpetuation of Hawai'i's diverse cultures, including Indigenous knowledge and practices, strengthens connections between people and place. Arts and culture experiences are recognized as essential to community well-being, advancing social change, and fostering a healthier community in Hawai'i.

In alignment with the vision to increase access to arts and culture in Hawai'i including Indigenous knowledge and practices, HCF offered travel grants in 2024 for organizations to bring youth to the Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture (FestPAC) and in 2025 for organizations to attend the Kumulipo Showcase held at 'Iolani Palace. These travel grants successfully removed financial and logistical barriers, to provide participants with the opportunity to engage in cultural practices, strengthen identity, and support intergenerational learning. The current funding opportunity was developed with input from previous travel grant recipients and members of the community, with the aim of increasing access to important people, places, and events related to Indigenous knowledge and practices as identified by applicants.