



Waterfront Initiative

As a private foundation, Barr Foundation takes a long-term view, aiming to ensure that decisions made today consider future generations. Grounded in this principle, the Foundation [publicly launched in 2016](#) a special initiative **to support the realization of a great public realm throughout Boston's waterfront**. This initiative is focused on the city of Boston and principally on the Boston Harbor.

We believe this great public realm will be achieved in Boston by a waterfront that:

- Provides exceptional parks and accessible open spaces
- Engages and reflects the full range of Boston neighborhoods and their residents
- Welcomes people of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities
- Enables responsible development that is attentive to the public's interest, design excellence, and mobility
- Seamlessly addresses the critical need for resiliency and adaptation to climate change

To date, Barr has committed \$6 million to advance this vision. Grants awarded to date have principally supported Harbor-wide planning and capacity-building efforts by Boston Harbor Now, The Trustees of Reservations, Conservation Law Foundation, and the Boston Planning and Development Agency. The Foundation has also awarded support for Martin's Park, a new park being developed on Fort Point Channel to serve the burgeoning Fort Point and South Boston Seaport neighborhoods. Visit the Foundation's [online grants database](#) to view individual grants.

Request Overview

As part of the next phase of its waterfront initiative—and building upon the work of current partners Boston Harbor Now, The Trustees of Reservations, and the Conservation Law Foundation—the Barr Foundation is interested in identifying opportunities to support community-based efforts that actively build constituencies focused on realizing a great public realm throughout Boston's waterfront.

To learn about community-based groups interested in advancing a long-term vision for Boston's waterfront, we are inviting concept proposals for community engagement efforts aligned with the priorities outlined below. Barr is especially interested in working with organizations with demonstrated track records of success in engaging and mobilizing a broad and inclusive range of local constituencies.

Barr anticipates awarding grants of \$50,000–\$100,000 for this work. These grants will most likely be for a 12-month period, although the Foundation will entertain requests for multi-year periods if warranted.

Interested organizations may address any of the following priorities:

- Advocating for exceptional parks and accessible open spaces on the Boston waterfront
- Ensuring that waterfront areas are accessible and welcoming to the full range of Boston residents and visitors
- Educating community members about waterfront regulatory and environmental issues
- Activating waterfront areas in ways demonstrate the potential of a great public realm (e.g., community gatherings; visioning charrettes; place-based arts, cultural, and design efforts)
- Advocating to ensure that waterfront development is advanced in accordance with state and local statutes
- Advocating to ensure that waterfront development is advanced with attention to design excellence, mobility, and resiliency and adaptation to climate change

Organizations do not need to be entirely dedicated to waterfront issues, as long as they address at least some of the aforementioned priorities. Efforts may be focused on any (or any combination) of Boston's waterfront neighborhoods, including Dorchester, East Boston, Charlestown, South Boston, and downtown.

Barr is particularly interested in organizations that reflect the diverse backgrounds of Boston residents. We welcome community-based organizations, neighborhood associations, main streets organizations, community economic development agencies, arts and design organizations, and others to respond to this request (this list is illustrative, not exhaustive).

Organizations may wish to reference [the City of Boston's vision for the waterfront](#), articulated in the final [Imagine Boston 2030](#) citywide master plan released in July 2017 (the Foundation supported the waterfront-specific planning efforts of *Imagine Boston 2030*). The City envisions a waterfront for all Bostonians; a climate-resilient waterfront; and a waterfront with strong stewardship, and it has outlined potential actions and investments in support of each of these elements. The Barr Foundation is interested in opportunities to help advance this public vision and aspirations for the waterfront.

Please note, the following types of activities are not eligible for funding via this RFP:

- Recreational activities (unless there is a clear connection to long-term planning and constituency-building)
- Neighborhood improvement and beautification capital projects
- Research projects

Application and Timeline

To make the best use of applicants' time, the Barr Foundation has a two-stage process for this RFP.

In the first stage, each applicant is asked to submit a brief concept note (up to two pages in length) outlining its organizational background, proposed activities in alignment with the priorities stated above, qualifications to carry out the proposed work, and budget overview.

Please submit concept notes no later than Tuesday, September 12, via email at waterfront@barrfoundation.org.

In the second stage, based upon review of initial submissions, the Foundation anticipates inviting up to 10 organizations to submit more detailed proposals.

The RFP and grant award timeline is as follows:

August 1, 2017	RFP released
September 12, 2017	Concept notes due
September 19, 2017	Full proposal invitations issued
October 16, 2017	Full proposals due
December 5, 2017	Barr Foundation board meeting
December 2017	Grants announced
January 2018	12-month grant periods begin

In addition to the resources committed to each organization for its work, Barr will provide opportunities for grantees to share plans and learning, coordinate work where and as appropriate, learn from other best practices, and build a larger community of like-minded organizations that share a passion for building a world-class waterfront for Boston.

Based on the learnings and outcomes of this initial grantmaking, Barr will determine whether and how to make longer-term investments in advocacy, organizing, and community mobilization related to the Boston waterfront.

We welcome inquiries about this RFP, including questions about eligibility, at waterfront@barrfoundation.org.

About the Barr Foundation

The Barr Foundation's mission is to invest in human, natural, and creative potential, serving as thoughtful stewards and catalysts. Based in Boston, Barr focuses regionally, and selectively engages nationally, working in partnership with nonprofits, foundations, the public sector, and civic and business leaders to elevate the arts, advance solutions for climate change, and connect all students to success in high school and beyond. With assets of \$1.7 billion, Barr is among the largest private foundations in New England and has contributed more than \$834 million to charitable causes since 1999. For more information, visit barrfoundation.org and follow [@BarrFdn](https://twitter.com/BarrFdn).