

# Guiding Principles for Distribution of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Fiscal Recovery Funds in Cambridge



The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) allocates \$350 billion nationwide in aid for state, local governments to use in providing “assistance to households, small businesses, and nonprofits, or to aid impacted industries” responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. **As the City of Cambridge plans the allocation of its \$65 million share of the fiscal recovery funds, Cambridge nonprofits urge city officials to focus on equity and aid to disproportionately impacted populations and communities, and include nonprofit partners for substantive roles in strategy development, gathering community input, as well as the decision making process for how funds are deployed.**

The process by which funds are distributed significantly impacts the ability to effectively address community needs. CNC has reviewed ARPA funding guiding principles from several nonprofit associations in other states including West Virginia’s Nonprofit Association, New York State’s Coalition to Advance Nonprofits, and Washington Nonprofits. We have incorporated their ideas into guiding principles for Cambridge and we urge you to consider these items as you determine where and how to distribute ARPA Fiscal Recovery Fund dollars for our community and to prioritize those most negatively impacted by the pandemic.

- 1. Leverage nonprofit leaders as knowledgeable partners, and include them in strategy development in addition to engaging them for service delivery. Allocate funding in partnership with the nonprofit sector, including through special task forces and advisory committees, as urged in the Treasury Department’s Interim Final Rule.**
- 2. Center racial equity from the outset to end the disparities in access to and delivery of services exposed by the pandemic nationally and in Cambridge. Invest in robust community outreach and technical assistance in service of achieving equitable distribution of funding, while moving with a level of urgency that matches the scale of community need.**
- 3. Provide premium pay for essential workers at Cambridge nonprofits, offering additional support to those who have borne and will bear the greatest health risks because of their service, and a strategy for nonprofits to help recruit and retain employees.** According to a [recent survey by the National Council of Nonprofits](#), 26% of organizations responded that they had job openings for 20% to 29% of their positions. Eight out of 10 nonprofits identified salary competition as a factor preventing them from filling openings.
- 4. Streamline, simplify and standardize grant processes to the extent possible. For example, reassessing grant timelines, selection criteria and reporting requirements. Work with local philanthropic partners such as community foundations to distribute funds. Allow funding of fiscally sponsored projects.**
- 5. Exempt projects and programs supported through ARPA funds from restrictions imposed by the Anti-Aid Amendment, allowing much greater flexibility for supporting community organizations and residents in need.** The Anti-Aid Amendment of the Massachusetts Constitution controls only public funds raised by Massachusetts state and local taxes and should not be applied to dollars raised from the federal government. See [Commonwealth v. School Committee of Springfield](#), 382 Mass. 665, 680 n.16 (1981); see also *Opinion of the Justices*, 368 Mass. 880, 885 (1975) (“public purpose” limitation of Massachusetts Constitution applies only to public funds raised by Massachusetts taxation).

The American Rescue Plan Act provides a unique opportunity for the City of Cambridge to more fully put its values as a caring community into action. Many in our community need help, and nonprofit organizations have been the bedrock of connecting with and uplifting residents during this time of crisis. We now stand ready to partner with City leadership to deploy these resources equitably and with the greatest impact possible.

**This position is supported by the following Cambridge Nonprofit Coalition (CNC) members:**

Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC) – Duane de Four  
 Brattle Film Foundation – Ivy Moylan  
 Breakthrough Greater Boston – Elissa Spelman  
 Brookline/Cambridge Community Center for the Arts, Inc. (BCCA/CCCA) – Dan Yonah Marshall  
 Cambridge Camping – Sharon Zimmerman  
 Cambridge Carnival International, Inc. – Nicola Williams  
 Cambridge Center for Adult Education – Mary-Catherine Deibel  
 Cambridge Community Center – Darrin Korte  
 Cambridge Community Television – Maritza Grooms  
 Cambridge Family & Children’s Service – Robert Gittens  
 Cambridge Local First – Theodora Skeadas  
 Cambridge School Volunteers – Meg Ramsdell  
 Cambridge Volunteer Clearinghouse – Laurie Rothstein  
 Cambridge Women’s Center – Michelle Long  
 Central Square Theater – Catherine Carr Kelly  
 Charles River Conservancy – Laura Jasinski  
 Community Action Agency of Somerville, Inc. – David Gibbs  
 Community Art Center – Erin Muirhead McCarty  
 Community Dispute Settlement Center, Inc. – Gail Packer  
 Dante Alighieri Society – Salvatore Bramante  
 East End House – Michael Delia  
 Enroot – Rose Francois  
 Farrington Memorial dba Farrington Nature Linc – Wendy Matusovich  
 FKA Agassiz Baldwin Community – Maria LaPage  
 Food For Free – Sasha Purpura  
 Green Cambridge – Steven Nutter  
 Hands with Ethiopia – Ashebir Gezmu

Innovators for Purpose – Michael K. Dawson  
 Just A Start – Carl Nagy-Koechlin  
 Life Science Cares – Sarah MacDonald  
 Many Helping Hands 365 – Lori Lander  
 Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House – Kimberly Massenburg  
 Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers (MAPS) – Paulo Pinto  
 Material Aid and Advocacy Program – Cassie Hurd  
 Multicultural Arts Center – Adria Katz  
 New England Bangladeshi American Foundation Inc. (NEBAF) – Fehmida Malik  
 Paine Senior Services – Elizabeth Aguilo  
 Parents Forum – Eve Sullivan  
 Per Scholas Greater Boston – Robin Nadeau  
 Science Club for Girls – Bonnie Bertolaet  
 Second Chances, Inc. – Andrea Shapiro  
 South Asian Workers Center – Boston – Jyoti Sinha  
 Sustainable Business Network of MA – Laury Hammel  
 The Dance Complex – Peter DiMuro  
 The Loop Lab – Christopher Hope  
 The Rian Immigrant Center – Ronnie Millar  
 The Union Partnership for A Whole Community – Joan Squeri  
 TiE Boston – Rowena Kay Mascarenhas  
 Transition House – Sarah Gyorog  
 Violeta Montessori School, Inc – Mardie Hinkley  
 Young People’s Project (YPP) – Maisha Moses  
 YWCA Cambridge – Tania Del Rio

*List as of December 1, 2021*

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Cambridge Nonprofit Coalition advances equity and justice in the community by strengthening the Cambridge nonprofit sector, building collective voice, and promoting collaboration.\*

*\* We define equity as recognizing that as a result of root causes that are historical, environmental, systemic, cultural, and political, everyone does not start at the same place – so some people will need different resources or supports to achieve the same outcome. We have a collective responsibility to work to eliminate disparities and create greater racial and economic equality.*

## VISION STATEMENT

The Cambridge Nonprofit Coalition envisions a city where all community members have equitable access to opportunities and resources, and where the nonprofit sector is a valued partner in leading social change that addresses historical injustice, levels the playing field, and improves our community.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

### COLLABORATION

We advance inter- and intra- sector partnerships that benefit the community.

### INCLUSION

We value residents’ perspectives and elicit and elevate resident voice in all of our efforts.\*\*

### TRANSPARENCY

We are open and honest, and we seek similar accountability from our partners.

### STRATEGY

We strive to be efficient and effective, and base our work on in- depth research.

### LEADERSHIP

We strengthen the sector with knowledge sharing, network building and innovation.

*\*\* We define resident as a person living in Cambridge, regardless of any legal status, with a particular focus on residents that are part of underrepresented groups.*