



Barr Foundation

Leadership Recharge FAQ

Last updated April 28, 2026

All relevant criteria about the Leadership Recharge program are available on [Barr’s website](#). The information included here reflect questions that the Foundation has further clarified.

If, after reviewing our eligibility and selection criteria and FAQ, you still have questions regarding your eligibility or your application for the program, please contact leadershiprecharge@barrfoundation.org. A team member is happy to answer any questions you may have.

GENERAL QUESTIONS

Question	Answer
When is the application deadline?	The application deadline is Wednesday, May 8, 2026 at 5:00PM ET.
When are decisions made?	Finalists will be notified in early September 2026, and will be invited to interview in late September. Grants will be awarded in October, and announced publicly by December. Please note that, as this is a pilot program, the timeline may shift slightly. The Barr Foundation is committed to providing timely updates should any adjustments occur.
How many organizations will be part of the pilot?	The program anticipates a cohort of up to 10 award recipients in the pilot.
What criteria contribute to a competitive application?	A strong application demonstrates a thoughtful plan for how the organization might sustain the benefits of the sabbatical and any related resilience initiatives beyond the grant period. While the Barr Foundation does not expect applicants to have every detail finalized, we look for indicators that the organization has the interest, capacity, and commitment to carry this work forward in a meaningful and lasting way.
If awarded, how should grant funds be handled and what can they be used for?	Award recipients commit to supporting resilience efforts across their organization and to providing a paid sabbatical for their nominated senior leader. Salary for the duration of the sabbatical will be subject to standard withholding. We encourage award recipients to consult with their accountant regarding how to disburse the funds to minimize any

Question	Answer
	<p>personal tax liability. In some cases, certain expenses (e.g., per diem expenses, certain supplies, etc.) may qualify as non-taxable under your accountable plan or under other provisions of the tax code. Again, we encourage award recipients to consult with their accountant.</p> <p>Note that grant funds cannot be utilized for “regular” living expenses such as rent or groceries.</p>
<p>How does this relate to the Barr Fellowship program?</p>	<p>The Social Change Leaders refreshed strategy invests in highly capable leaders who think strategically, develop new approaches, and collaborate to drive change. To advance this vision and updated strategy, instead of operating just one program, the Sector Effectiveness Team will operate three anchor programs: Leadership Recharge, Barr Fellowship, and Organizational Wellness.</p> <p>Leadership Recharge is a separate, new program that runs alongside (not in lieu of) the reimagined Barr Fellowship. Leadership Recharge and Barr Fellowship programs target different leader profiles and serve complementary roles in building a strong leadership pipeline.</p>
<p>Does the Barr Foundation plan to continue this initiative in future years?</p>	<p>Yes, we intend to learn from this pilot and continue this initiative, however, there may be changes over time. Assessment of the pilot and any subsequent rounds will inform future direction. We anticipate that the target applicant audience may shift in future cycles depending on learnings and the nonprofit landscape.</p>

ORGANIZATIONAL QUESTIONS

Question	Answer
<p>My organization serves multiple states, but most of our work is in Massachusetts. Am I eligible?</p>	<p>Eligible organizations may serve more than one state, but the organization must be headquartered in Massachusetts and roughly 75% of the organization’s activities, services, or programming must occur in Massachusetts.</p>
<p>Our budget may exceed \$5M this year, is the eligible budget amount flexible?</p>	<p>We recognize that a single grant has the potential to raise an organization’s budget beyond the \$5 million eligibility threshold. We can offer some flexibility, though we are not able to consider organizations with budgets that exceed \$5.3 million.</p>

Is there a minimum staff size that my organization must have to participate in this program?	The organization must have a minimum of four (4) full-time paid staff to ensure sufficient staff capacity to support the organization while the senior leader is out on sabbatical.
Do organizations need to already have a sabbatical policy to apply?	No. This program is intended primarily for organizations that do not currently offer paid sabbaticals. Organizations that offer only short or unpaid sabbaticals are eligible.
Will particular missions or issue areas be prioritized?	While Barr's priority areas include Arts & Creativity, Climate, and Education, the open application process is designed to support organizations across all disciplines that contribute to a thriving sector. Barr welcomes applications from issue areas and organizations we don't typically fund.

SABBATICAL & SABBATICAL NOMINEE QUESTIONS

Question	Answer
My organization would like to nominate our Executive Director for a sabbatical. Are they eligible?	No, not at this time. This pilot cycle is specifically focused on senior-level leaders who report directly to the chief executive, such as deputies or second-in-command leaders. Executive Directors are not the focus of this sabbatical cycle.
What supports are provided to the organization while the senior leader takes the sabbatical?	The grant includes funding to support short-term coverage during the sabbatical. Organizations are encouraged to build internal bench strength by having team members step up, and to provide stipends or one-time bonuses for those who take on additional responsibilities. Coaching support is also available to help the organization navigate the transition and stay on track while the senior leader is away.
The nominated candidate has taken a sabbatical. Are they eligible?	This program is intended to support candidates who have not previously taken a sabbatical. Nominated candidates that have taken an unpaid or brief sabbatical more than five years ago are still eligible, but these applications may be less competitive.

Question	Answer
The nominated candidate plans to retire in the next three years or make a career transition. Are they eligible?	The program is designed to strengthen the social sector’s leadership pipeline by supporting senior leaders who plan to continue contributing to the field for at least three years after their sabbatical. As such, we respectfully ask those who are actively planning or thinking about retirement or a career transition to nominate another eligible leader from their organization or not to apply at this time.
Does the nominated leader have to live in Massachusetts to be eligible?	No. The nominated leader must be a full-time resident of New England.
Does the nominated leader have to fully unplug during the sabbatical? What about service on board of directors or public commissions?	Yes. The sabbatical recipient is required to fully unplug from work and all other professional obligations for the full duration of the sabbatical, including boards and commissions. This program is designed to support true rest and renewal.
Can the nominated individual split up the sabbatical, for example taking four weeks now and eight weeks later on?	The sabbatical must last at least two consecutive months. A three-month sabbatical is strongly encouraged.
When can the nominated leader take sabbatical?	Sabbaticals must begin no later than December 31, 2027.
Are there specific months recommended for the sabbatical?	No specific months are required. The timing is left to each individual and organization to determine.
Does the 5-year requirement have to be in the nominated candidate’s current role, or can it span multiple organizations?	The candidate must have served at least five (5) years as a senior-level leader in their current organization, reporting to the chief executive. As long as the candidate meets the eligibility criteria by the time they plan to take their sabbatical, they would be considered eligible.

Question	Answer
<p>Does the 10-year requirement have to be within the nominated candidate's current role, or can it span multiple organizations?</p>	<p>The nominated candidate must have worked in the nonprofit or social sector for at least 10 years. This can span their tenure at multiple organizations.</p>
<p>How are the 25 coaching hours typically structured in practice?</p>	<p>Each organization will receive up to 25 hours of coaching to allocate between individual coaching for the senior leader and coaching for the organization. Each organization will determine its allocation of hours to the individual and organization at the beginning of the coaching engagement. As a starting point, Barr suggests the following allocation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Up to 15 hours of individual coaching to support the senior leader in preparing for the sabbatical, identifying growth goals, building long-term resilience practices, and supporting a thoughtful return to work. • Up to 10 hours of organizational coaching to help the organization identify its highest-priority resilience goals across staff and determine how to invest the portion of the grant designated for cultivating a healthy operating culture.