

Barr Foundation Barr Fellowship FAQ

Last updated May 12, 2026

All relevant criteria about the Barr Fellowship is available on [Barr's website](#). The information included here reflect questions that the Foundation has further clarified.

If, after reviewing the eligibility and selection criteria and FAQ, you still have questions regarding your eligibility or your application for the program, please contact fellowship2026@barrfoundation.org. A team member is happy to answer any questions you may have.

Question	Answer
When is the application deadline?	The application deadline is Tuesday, June 30, 2026 at 5:00PM ET. Early applications are appreciated.
When are decisions made?	Our intention is to provide ongoing communication that helps applicants know where they are in the process, and we know that it is helpful to plan when you may have to be available. • By or before July 24, 2026, applicants will receive notice about whether they will be invited to the first interview stage. • By or before September 4th, applicants will know if they are invited to a second final Interview. • By or before November 5, 2026, finalists will be notified about their selection as Fellows for the 2026 cohort. 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.
When will interviews be scheduled and are they in-person?	All interviews will be virtual. Applicants to the Barr Fellowship must be able to be scheduled with the Review Team during these time periods. • First interviews, or 'alignment calls' will be scheduled for up to 75 minutes during the first three weeks in August.

	• Second interviews for up to 90 minutes will be scheduled on one of these days: September 29th, 30th, October 1st, 6th, 7th and 8th.
My organization serves multiple states, but most of our work is in Massachusetts. Are we eligible?	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.
I don't live in Massachusetts, but my work is focused there, am I eligible for the Fellowship?	Leaders eligible for this Fellowship must be full-time residents of New England with professional life and work significantly focused on Massachusetts. The spirit of this Fellowship is to create opportunities for leaders whose work and professional centers are in the Commonwealth in order to connect and develop collaborative relationships with one another. Proximity is important to supporting authentic relationships.
Why is this Fellowship focused on mid-career Executive Directors?	We are focusing on Executive Directors with three to ten total years' experience as Executive Directors because there is a gap in other offerings for these leaders. Many existing programs are either for seasoned, long-term or new, first-time Executive Directors.
I will not quite reach my third year as Executive Director until after the summer 2026 application period, am I eligible to apply?	Leaders eligible for this Fellowship must reach their third year being an executive director in 2026, i.e. at any time during the 2026 calendar year.
I have been an Executive Director for my organization for more than 10 years, but for the first number of years, I was unpaid. Am I eligible to apply?	Yes. This Fellowship is for persons who are paid executive directors for at least three years and no more than ten years. Individuals who were unpaid but held the title of executive director are still eligible to apply even if the total number of years in that position exceeds ten. We ask such applicants to share the details of those situations where relevant.
I have just finished my tenth year of being an ED, or will, by the time this process is complete. Am I eligible to apply?	Yes. Leaders who reach their tenth year being an executive director in 2026, i.e. at any time during the calendar year, are eligible.

I'm planning to retire within the next year or two, am I eligible to apply?	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 Fellowship. As such, we respectfully ask those who are actively planning or thinking about retirement or a career transition not to apply at this time.
I'm not sure I'd be able to take the time away from my family and duties to go on the multi-day, in-person retreats, should I still apply?	The Fellowship may not be a good fit for you at this time. It is essential that Fellows participate in all planned programming, roughly 16 days over 15 months. While some of the programming is virtual, some will be in-person and require several nights away. We currently plan at least two, four-day/three-night retreats at 'away' locations, and two regional site visits that involve overnight stays.
Will support for family care be offered to mitigate the costs of overnight stays?	For this cohort, additional support is not available to cover family care. Our hope is that the grant will be sufficient to cover such expenses. Since we are learning how best to deliver the refreshed program, please feel free to share related concerns in the application.
My English may not be strong enough to be a full participant in these offerings, will you offer translation and interpretation services?	For this cohort, translation and interpretation services are not available.
How can I use the \$25,000 to be allocated for the Fellow?	The \$75,000 grant includes \$25,000 that is intended to support each Fellow's personal and professional leadership as well as their overall wellbeing and resilience. Funds to support Fellows are intentionally flexible to support each person's unique circumstances and resilience goals. Fellows are encouraged to coordinate with their executive coach on how the funds might be used. We encourage award recipients to consult with their tax advisors regarding potential tax consequences of amounts received from award funds.
What can my organization use the \$50,000 for?	The \$75,000 grant includes \$50,000 to support the Fellow's organization to enhance the well-being and resilience of staff across the organization and/or to support staff to enhance their collaborative skills to improve internal coordination or external

	partnership abilities. Participating organizations will decide on their plan in partnership with their organizational coach. For illustrative purposes, examples of projects that organizations might engage in include: ● Well-being and resilience: support for staff members to develop individual well-being plans; stronger policies and practices that center staff members' well-being; consulting time on development of a sabbatical policy and seeding a fund to make future sabbaticals possible; creation of a professional development policy; team-building activities centering renewal and mindfulness; a retreat that includes professional development and planning around organizational wellness practices; etc. ● Collaborative Skills Building: support for activities to increase staff understanding of, or skills in, collaboration, partnership and movement building, including attendance at conferences and training programs; team learning about relevant models through site visits to other organizations and communities; etc.
What criteria contribute to a competitive application?	The Barr Fellowship is designed to support the personal and professional well-being and resilience of participants; cultivate trust, connection, and relationships among Fellows; strengthen collaborative leadership skills; and build social capital. The intended impact is to enable more leaders to experience increased resilience, renewal, and sustainability in their role; to expand networking among social change leaders that can be activated in service of shared goals; and to strengthen the quality and depth of relationships among leaders across sectors, within, and beyond established networks. We are seeking applicants who are motivated by the opportunity to not only deepen their own well-being and leadership capacities, but also to come together with other Executive Directors to understand and support each other, share challenges and opportunities, and contemplate how to not only

	meet the moment but dream together about what is possible. Strong applicants will be able to share tangible examples of collaborative leadership expressed internally or with other organizations. Additionally, we seek organizations ready and committed to deepening existing practices and policies around team and organizational wellness and resilience, and/or to strengthening their ability to engage in collaborative and collective spaces with allies and other social change actors with shared concerns.
I am hoping to apply for one of the other Social Change Leaders initiatives; are organizations able to participate in programs at the same time?	No, organizations may not participate in more than one Social Change Leaders program at the same time. However, participation can be considered sequentially. If your organization is a current participant in either the Barr Foundation's Leadership Recharge or the Organizational Wellness program, it would be eligible to apply for future rounds of the Fellowship.
Other FAQs	Check back periodically to see other questions and answers during the application period. If you still have questions regarding your eligibility or your application for the program, please contact fellowship2026@barrfoundation.org. A team member is happy to answer any questions you may have.