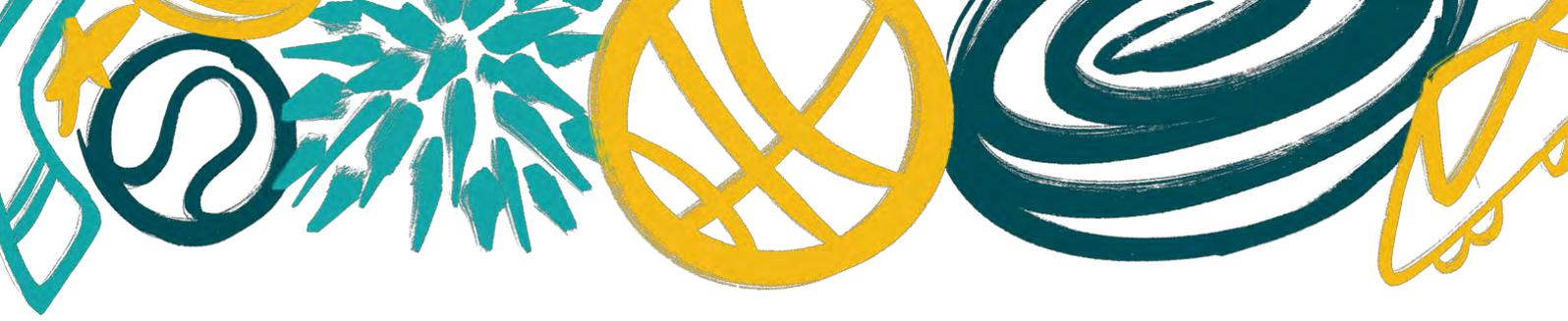




# FUNDING GUIDELINES

Information for applicant organizations to the Play Collective initiative





## 1. Program Overview

As part of adidas Foundation's *Playing for Purpose* pillar, designed to create opportunities for marginalized young people to access sports and physical activity, adidas Foundation, alongside Beyond Sport and Common Goal, has launched **Play Collective**, a three-year grant and capacity-building program. The program will support at least 21 community-based organizations, with a minimum of one in each of the FIFA World Cup 2026 host cities, that are leveraging sport to create inclusive, high-quality sport and physical activity opportunities for children and young people from under-resourced communities. The adidas Foundation specifically focuses on supporting young people who have less access to sport and physical activity opportunities relative to their contexts. The program will support organizations that are working to ensure that children and youth have sustained participation in physical activity and sport, with increased motivation, confidence and enjoyment in their youth-friendly, safe and inclusive programming.

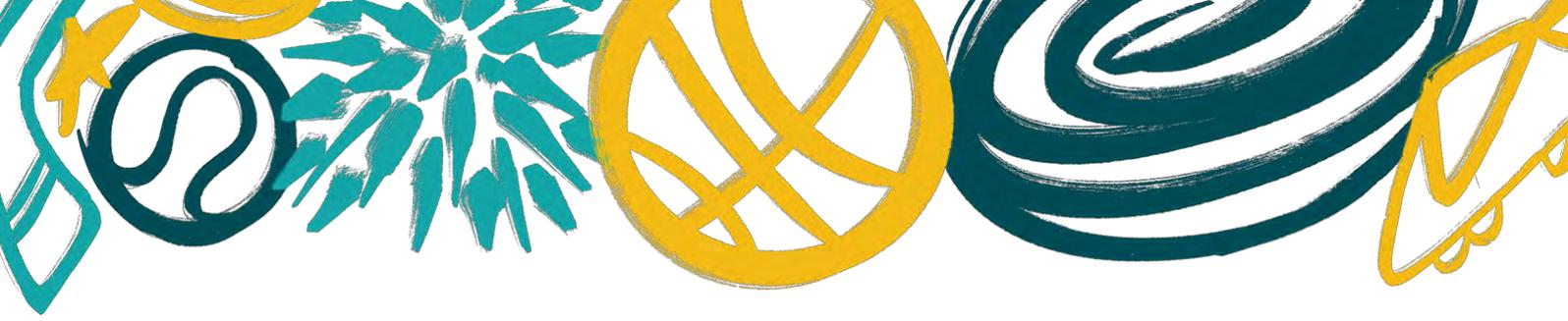
The program will select a minimum of eight (8) organizations based on demonstrated experience and success in delivering sport-based programming for children and youth with disabilities. The remaining selected organizations must focus on serving youth populations which align with [adidas Foundation focus communities](#). These communities may include children and youth with disabilities in addition to the minimum eight (8) noted above. Applicants will have the opportunity within the application to define the specific communities and populations they serve and to describe the contextual factors that shape their work.

Organizations are not required to exclusively serve these underserved and under-resourced populations, but they must demonstrate meaningful, intentional inclusion and ensure that at least 60% of participating youth are from these prioritized communities and are integrated, not isolated or singled out.

## 2. Program Objectives

Through **Play Collective**, partner organizations will:

- Strengthen or expand existing sport-based youth development programs



- Reduce barriers preventing children and young people from accessing programming
- Increase continuous access to inclusive sport-based youth development programming
- Build their organizational capacity to strengthen and deliver high-quality sport programming through a structured Community of Practice
- Contribute to collective learning around inclusion, positive youth development and sport-for-good approaches

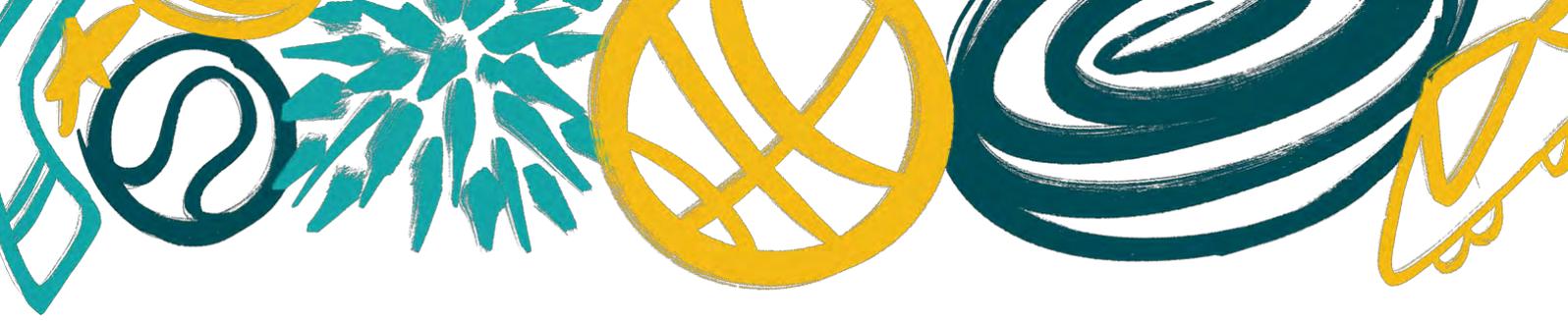
Each funded organization will deliver programming aligned to their local context while contributing to shared cohort learning and impact goals.

### 3. Funding Structure & Portfolio Design

At least 21 organizations will be selected. Of the total organizations selected:

- At least 8 organizations will primarily be advancing programming with and for young people with disabilities. Young people with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which, in interaction with various barriers, may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others
- The remaining organizations must primarily be advancing programming with and for youth populations which align with [adidas Foundation focus communities.](#)

The total portfolio of grantees will receive a combined total of \$3,780,000 (USD) over three years. The final grant amounts may vary by organization, however, funding recipients should request the same amount in each of the three years. Organizations may request up to \$180,000 over the three-year period, with a yearly proposed budget of between \$30,000 and \$60,000, distributed equally across all three years.



## 4. Eligibility Criteria

### a. Non-Negotiable Organizational Requirements

*(If any are “No,” the organization is not eligible. Evidence will be required for these answers at due diligence stage.)*

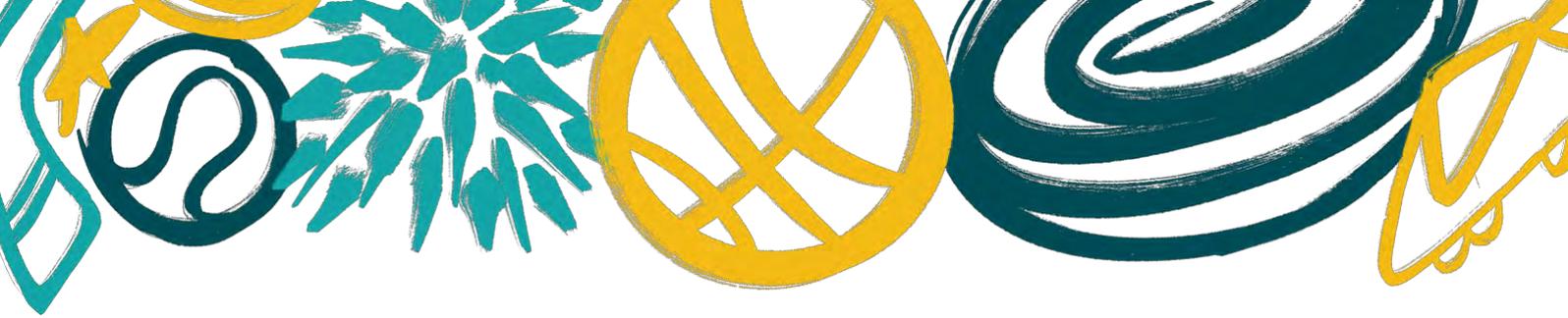
Applicant organizations must confirm:

- Political and religious independence
- Registered non-profit or non-governmental organization (or equivalent) Legal registration in the country of implementation
- Registered and delivered programming for children and young people for at least two years
- Documented safeguarding policy and/ or standard operating procedures that demonstrate how safeguarding is mainstreamed within programs and operations
- Documented inclusive organizational values and practices
- Requested yearly funding does not exceed 50% of last externally reviewed revenue
- Transparent governance and financial control mechanisms
- Willingness to undergo due diligence and vetting processes, including sharing more about the organization’s safeguarding policies and procedures

### b. Program-Specific Eligibility

Organizations must:

- Be operating within 50 miles or 80.5 kilometers from a FIFA World Cup 2026 stadium
- Be dedicated to sport-based youth development with activities for children and young people implemented within a 50-mile or 80.5-kilometer radius of a host stadium
- Be able to commit to a three-year partnership, i.e. being able to implement the funded program for at least three years

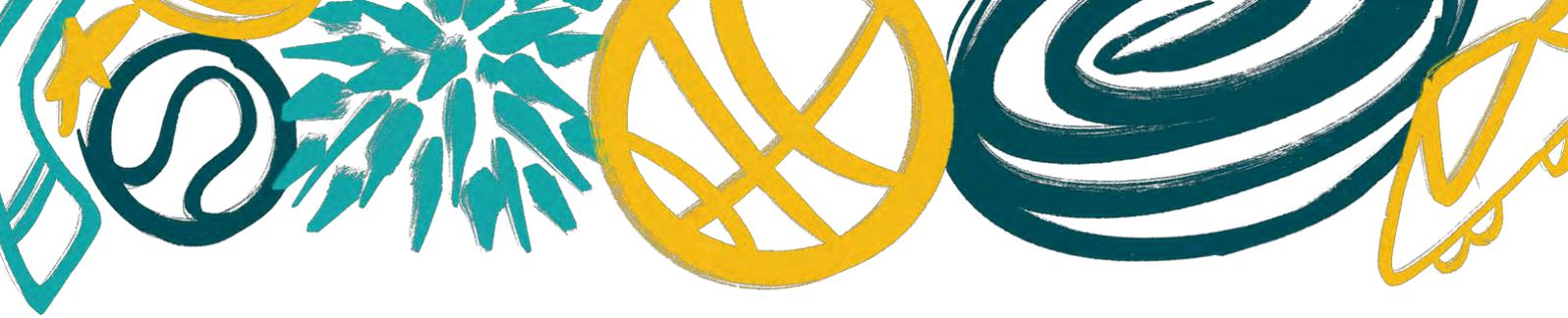


- Through their programming, serve children and youth with disabilities or from other [adidas Foundation focus communities](#) who have less access to sport and physical activity opportunities. Organizations will be able to further elaborate on the specific communities and populations they serve and describe the contextual factors that shape their work in the grant application. At least 60% of participating youth in the programming must come from these prioritized communities.
- Include soccer in the funded programming, however, neither the organization nor its programming must be exclusively soccer focused.
- Be motivated and committed to actively participate in a Community of Practice, a collaborative space where organizations, through their staff representatives, come together to share knowledge, build capacity and strengthen their ability to address common challenges, promoting structured, ongoing learning and peer support through co-creation, exchange of practical tools and collective growth.
- Be committed to engaging in Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) processes, including tracking participant data, using shared measurement tools and submitting required reporting throughout the program
- Be willing to support program communications and storytelling efforts, including sharing updates, photos (with consent), impact data and participating in reasonable media or visibility opportunities

### c. World Cup Host City Eligibility

For this program, eligibility is based on World Cup 2026 host city regions, defined by a 50-mile or 80.5-kilometer radius from a host stadium, rather than city limits alone. Organizations may be operating in the host city itself or in surrounding metropolitan areas or counties that are socially, economically and programmatically connected to the host city and are within the aforementioned radius. Applicants located in any host city can apply for funding in either youth with disabilities or other [adidas Foundation focus communities](#) tracks.

Country	Host City	Stadium	The funded program must be within 50 miles or 80.5 kilometres from the addresses below.
Canada	Toronto	BMO Field	170 Princes' Blvd, Toronto, ON M6K 3C3, Canada
Canada	Vancouver	BC Place	777 Pacific Blvd, Vancouver, BC V6B 4Y8, Canada
Mexico	Guadalajara	Estadio Akron	Circuito J.V.C. 2800, El Bajío, 45014 Zapopan, Jalisco, Mexico



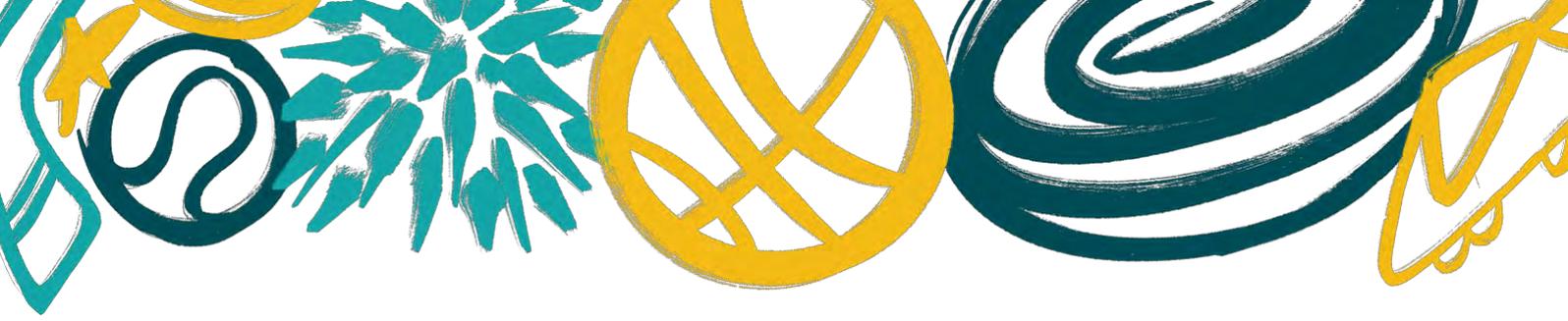
Mexico	Mexico City	Estadio Azteca	Calz. de Tlalpan 3465, Sta. Úrsula Coapa, Coyoacán, 04650 Ciudad de México, CDMX, Mexico
Mexico	Monterrey	Estadio BBVA	Av. Pablo Livas 2011, colonia La Pastora, C.P. 67140, Guadalupe, Nuevo León, Mexico
United States	Atlanta	Mercedes-Benz Stadium	1 AMB Dr NW, Atlanta, GA 30313, USA
United States	Boston	Gillette Stadium	1 Patriot Pl, Foxborough, MA 02035, USA
United States	Dallas	AT&T Stadium	1 AT&T Way, Arlington, TX 76011, USA
United States	Houston	NRG Stadium	NRG Pkwy, Houston, TX 77054, USA
United States	Kansas City	Arrowhead Stadium	1 Arrowhead Dr, Kansas City, MO 64129, USA
United States	Los Angeles	SoFi Stadium	1001 Stadium Dr, Inglewood, CA 90301, USA
United States	Miami	Hard Rock Stadium	347 Don Shula Dr, Miami Gardens, FL 33056, USA
United States	New York / New Jersey	MetLife Stadium	1 MetLife Stadium Dr, East Rutherford, NJ 07073, USA
United States	Philadelphia	Lincoln Financial Field	One Lincoln Financial Field Way, Philadelphia, PA 19148, USA
United States	San Francisco Bay Area	Levi's Stadium	4900 Marie P DeBartolo Way, Santa Clara, CA 95054, USA
United States	Seattle	Lumen Field	800 Occidental Ave S, Seattle, WA 98134, USA

To check if your organization is located within 50-mile or 80.5-kilometer radius from a host stadium you can use this resource: [mapdevelopers.com](https://www.mapdevelopers.com)

## 5. Use of Funds

### Funding may support organizations to:

- Strengthen or expand existing programs
- Pilot new approaches to programming



- Enhance program quality and inclusion
- Address unmet programmatic needs
- Build staff, systems and delivery capacity connected to program goals

**Funds may be used to cover programmatic costs specific to:**

- Program delivery & activities
- Equipment and supplies
- Staff and coaching support
- Curriculum and training
- MEAL activities

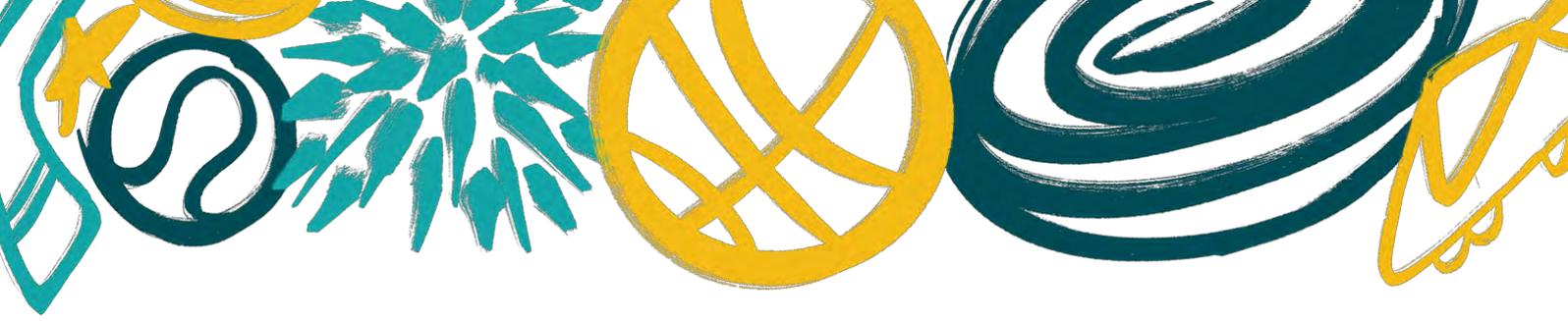
**Limits:**

- **Up to 15%** of the total grant may be used for administrative or indirect costs
- **Up to 10%** of the total grant may be allocated to participation in the Community of Practice, ensuring full participation in these activities. This may include, but is not limited to, costs related to time participating in capacity-building and peer-learning and costs related to travel for peer exchange or convening events.
- **At least 5%** of the total grant is to go towards MEAL activities. These activities are to align with the reporting requirements for each organization.

## 6. Community of Practice Expectations

Organizations will identify one key staff member to serve as their “Community of Practice Lead” who will devote approximately 20 hours annually to the following Community of Practice experiences:

- Quarterly live online learning sessions, two hours each (Q3 2026 – Q4 2028). Covering key capacity domains for sport-based youth development organizations. Live online sessions will be held in English but all resources aim to be shared in English and Spanish.



- Consistent engagement via an online platform for Community of Practice communication, collaboration and resource sharing.
- Applying and socializing Community of Practice learning within their organization.

Leads will identify additional organizational staff to be involved in relevant capacity building learning sessions throughout the Community of Practice.

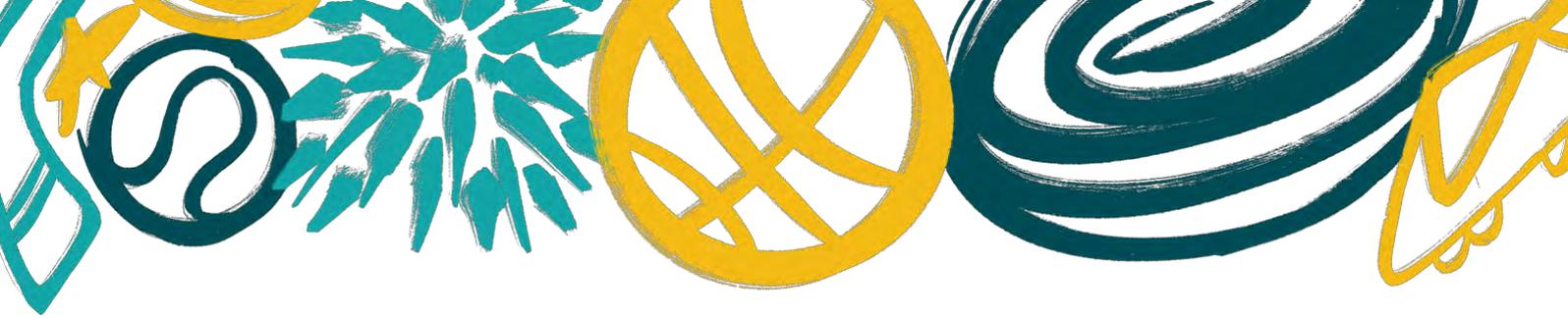
There may be a potential in-person convening. These plans are to be finalized with participating organizations' feedback upon the Community of Practice launch.

*Costs associated with staff participation in the Community of Practice may be partially supported through grant funding.*

## 7. Reporting, Measurement and Evaluation

### **Selected organizations will be required to:**

- Submit and keep updated an implementation schedule
- Complete a MEAL log frame on a 6-month basis, indicating key outputs and outcomes of their proposed programmatic and organizational activities. This will include:
  - Mandatory reporting on Reach indicators (e.g., unique participants reached, coaches trained, organizations supported)
  - Reporting on capacity-strengthening and institutional development indicators, including progress made toward strengthening governance, safeguarding, internal systems, implementation capacity, or network development
  - Reporting on at least one additional outcome area selected by the organization: Increased Physical Activity & Health Outcomes; Decreased Social Isolation, Stigmatization & Stereotypes; Coach/ Teacher/ Mentor/ Community Leader Training & Support
- Provide annual narrative and financial reports
- Respond to an annual survey from adidas Foundation



- Contribute to overall learning activities and program evaluations

Support templates for documenting MEAL-related activities, outputs and outcomes and training related to MEAL will be provided to the selected organizations.

Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) will be conducted in English. We will recommend translation tools to facilitate this process for organizations whose primary language is Spanish.

## 8. Communications & Storytelling

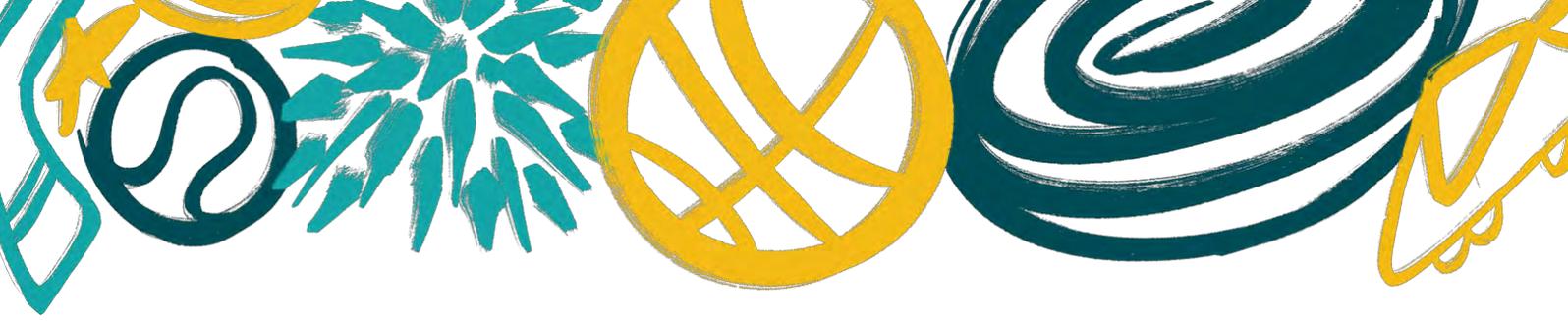
- Contribute a short video to share the profile of their organization, program and involvement in the overall project. These short videos will be compiled for a communications piece around the World Cup 2026.
- Be willing to be part of the other storytelling pieces of the project and to contribute content when applicable
- Acknowledge and implement [ethical communication guidelines](#) and respect brand guidelines of the adidas Foundation<sup>1</sup>
- Provide feedback/ approvals during stage 1 (pre and during World Cup period) in a margin of 3 days maximum. This period gets extended to 5 business days after the end of the World Cup.

## 9. Application & Selection Process

The **Play Collective** application process has been designed to be clear, fair and respectful of organizations' time. We are using a three-stage approach so organizations can quickly determine whether this opportunity is a fit before investing time in a full proposal. This allows applicants to avoid unnecessary work if they do not meet the

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<sup>1</sup> Brand guidelines will be provided to selected organizations upon confirmation of their selection.



required criteria and enables the partners to focus the full review on eligible, aligned organizations.

The three-stage application process includes:

- **Stage 1: Eligibility Screening:**

A short online form confirming non-negotiable organizational and program criteria. Organizations that meet all required criteria will be invited to continue to Stage 2.

- **Stage 2: Full Application:**

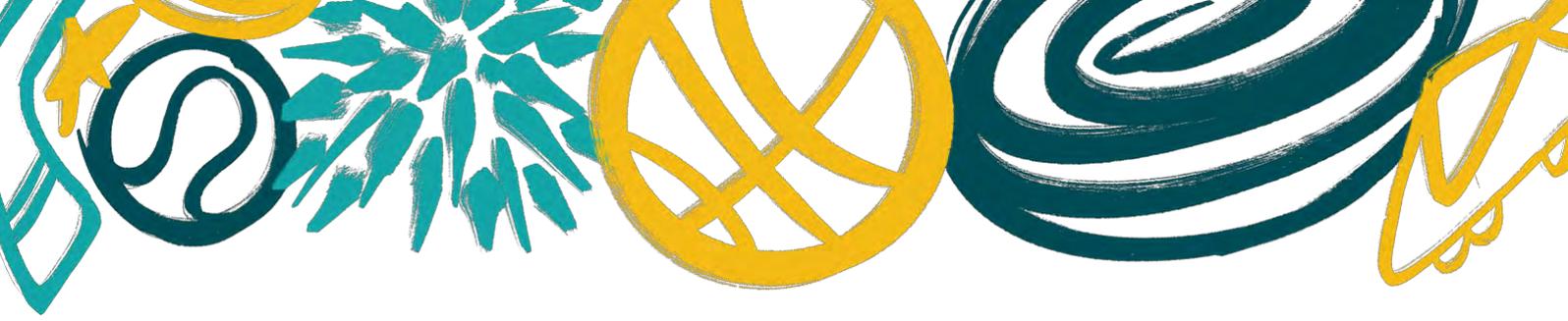
Eligible organizations will complete a full application focused on their organizational capacity, community context, current programming and how this partnership would strengthen their work over three years.

- **Stage 3: Due Diligence**

Shortlisted organizations will be required to submit documentation to verify eligibility, legal status, safeguarding policies and reporting systems, financial standing and any other information necessary to confirm compliance with program requirements.

In the full application, organizations will be asked to submit a combination of narrative responses and uploads, including:

- Organization and contact information
- High-level organizational capacity and documentation to demonstrate the organizational safeguarding system
- Description of your community context and current programming
- Explanation of how prioritized young people are meaningfully integrated into your work
- Overview of what you would strengthen, expand or pilot through this partnership and why you would take this approach
- Intended outcomes and approach to MEAL



- Participation interest and goals for the Community of Practice
- A budget for the requested amount
- Documents to demonstrate an organizational financial overview
- Key organizational documentation (e.g., proof of non-profit status, key policies, annual financial report)

### ***Review and Selection***

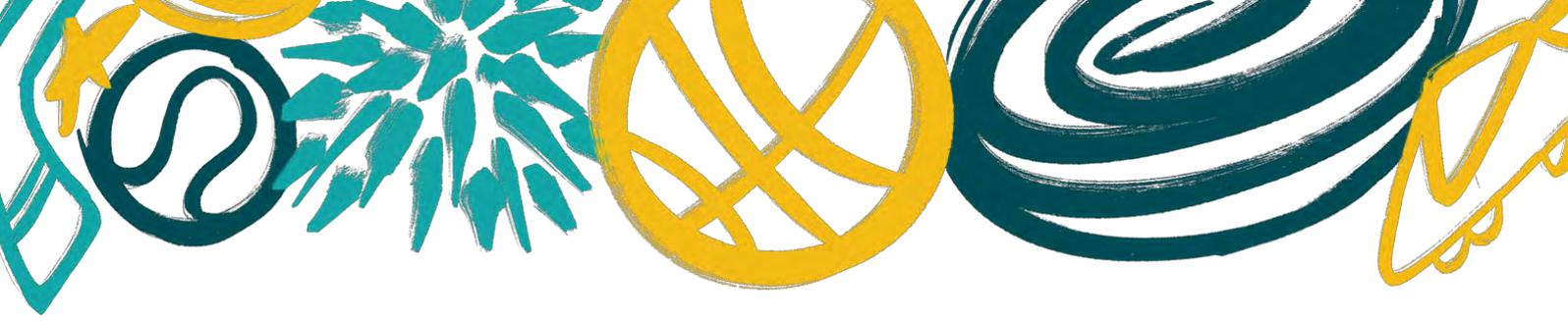
All eligible applications will undergo:

- Technical screening for completeness and eligibility
- Review using a standardized scoring rubric
- Reviewer calibration to support consistency and fairness
- Shortlisting and deeper assessment
- Final selection and due diligence

Applications will be evaluated against the following weighted criteria:

- **Organizational Foundation & Risk Readiness (15%):** Governance, staffing structure, financial systems, safeguarding, institutional maturity
- **Program Quality & Delivery Capacity (15%):** Program structure, recruitment, retention, operational consistency
- **Community Context & Relevance (10%):** Understanding of community assets, systemic barriers, unmet need
- **Priority Community Integration (20%):** Authentic integration of priority population, feasibility of 60% requirement
- **Proposed Program Development & Strategic Fit (15%):** 3-year milestones, risk mitigation, alignment to mission
- **Outcomes & MEAL Readiness (10%):** Measurement systems, reporting readiness, outcome alignment
- **Community of Practice Engagement & Change Readiness (10%):** Leadership buy-in, internal learning flow, cohort engagement
- **Budget & Financial Alignment (5%):** Budget realism, compliance, sustainability

We endeavor for the Play Collective to be inclusive of groups from Canada, the U.S. and Mexico, and language accessibility is a part of this. Due to constraints on our internal capacity, written applications will be reviewed in English, translated from Spanish, if



applicable. We encourage applicants to use tech-based translation tools to review their application before submission, ensuring that the language they use accurately conveys their intended meaning across English and Spanish as clearly as possible.

## 10. Key Dates

### Application Deadline

Sunday, March 22, 2026 at 11:59 PM PST

**Apply [here](#)**

### Information Webinar (English)

Monday, March 9, 2026

2:00–3:00 PM EST / 11:00 AM–12:00 PM PST

**Register [here](#)**

### Information Webinar (Spanish)

Tuesday, March 10, 2026

2:00–3:00 PM EST / 11:00 AM–12:00 PM PST

**Register [here](#)**

### Notification of Decision

All applicants will be informed of the outcome no later than Monday, May 11, 2026.