

PUBLIC REALM FUNDING INFORMATION

THE HEINZ ENDOWMENTS
HOWARD HEINZ ENDOWMENT • VIRA I. HEINZ ENDOWMENT



August Wilson Park in Pittsburgh's Hill District neighborhood; image by Jeremy Marshall, courtesy of Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy

A Just Public Realm Framework

The Heinz Endowments receives funding requests from government and nonprofit entities throughout the Pittsburgh region to support the development, rehabilitation and restoration of public parks, plazas and playing fields. The foundation recognizes the value of public spaces to neighborhoods and their benefit to residents and visitors. The multitude of public realm projects has made the Endowments consider the need for a comprehensible vision and set of value-based indicators to drive success, and assess the impacts of these projects on Pittsburgh's global identity, as well as on its neighborhood and community life.

The Endowments retained the services of [Toni L. Griffin](#), principal of urbanAC and director of The Just City Lab at Harvard Graduate School of Design, to help develop this framework. The Endowments' internal public realm team, in tandem with urbanAC, has worked to define what public realm means to us; identify values, challenges, and metrics criteria related to our public realm investing; and articulate a vision statement that can serve as a guide for determining the projects we support. The work is rooted in precedents that include the [Just City Index](#), developed by the Just City Lab; the [p4 Performance Measures](#); the Endowments' [Just Pittsburgh](#) narratives; and other public space frameworks.

Future resources of the Endowments directed to public realm projects should be intrinsically connected to fulfilment of a shared vision for the public realm, embody the foundation's values, offer positive strategies to address the challenges stated, and involve the value-based indicators listed in the "Funding Criteria" section below.

Inquire About Funding

Grant inquiries are requested prior to initiating applications for funding. To submit an inquiry, send an email with a narrative and supporting materials to publicrealm@heinz.org. In your inquiry, please be sure to address the location, timing and budget for your project. An Endowments' staff member will contact you after receipt of an inquiry to discuss next steps.



Fun in Schenley Plaza, located in Pittsburgh Oakland neighborhood; Image by John Altdorfer, courtesy Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy

Funding Criteria

Interested applicants should consider the following value-based indicators as criteria when making an inquiry. Based on review against these criteria, the Endowments may invite submission of a proposal for public realm projects that exemplify a robust combination of the following characteristics:

SAFETY & ACCEPTANCE

Safety and Protection

An environment that minimizes threats to physical, mental and emotional well-being where all are kept from harm or loss

Belonging

The provision to feel accepted, comfortable and free from exclusion in the public realm despite age, gender, race, sexuality, income or citizenship

EQUITY, INCLUSION & OWNERSHIP

Distribution and Access

The geographic allocation of public open spaces in a manner that brings the greatest benefits to a community, with convenient proximity to, high quality of and effortless connectivity to public realm amenities accessible via multiple modes of pedestrian, vehicular and public transportation

Please note that in this context, "community" refers to all civic sectors, including but not limited to residents and private, public, nonprofit and faith-based institutions.

User and Design/Construction Inclusion

The acceptance and valuing of difference and the intention to involve diverse populations, opinions, attitudes, cultures and behaviors in the use, design, construction and management of the public realm

Retention versus Displacement

The ability to have a stake in neighborhood property and processes that promote the ability to thrive physically, economically, socially, culturally and civically in a place without involuntary dislocation

Capital and Maintenance Resources

The access to capital, sustainable long-term maintenance and operational funding distributed equitably across all geographies

Public | Private Ownership

The sharing of property and process control between the public, private, nonprofit and community sectors in a manner that retains the right to publicly accessible open spaces

AUTHENTICITY & DESIGN EXCELLENCE***Aesthetics and Identity***

The recognition, preservation and elevation of characteristics that are genuine to the culture of the region, city and its neighborhoods, and enhanced through design ingenuity, design thinking and creative collaboration to produce exceptional public spaces

Quality of Space

Everyone's right to well-designed and well-maintained public spaces and environments that enhance distinct features or attributes of the region, city and neighborhoods

RESTORATIVE PRACTICE***Healthy Bodies***

A state of physical, mental and social well-being that supports the presence of happiness, enjoyment, activity and peace of mind.

Healthy Environment

A state of environmental well-being that supports the reduction of contamination and deterioration, or depletion of resources while not being harmful to social well-being

Development

The removal or replacement of harmful and exclusionary development practices and interventions that deepen social or spatial injustice in the public realm.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND STEWARDSHIP***Engagement***

An environment that invites collective groups from all civic sectors to build shared pride and goals around common interests, reconciling different points of view and accepting different cultural norms into decision-making, design and programming processes

Civic Capacity and Partnerships

The ability, rights and capability of an individual or group to make decisions and take actions on behalf of their own interests – alone or in collaboration with others



Outdoor time in downtown Pittsburgh's Point State Park; Image credit: Annie O'Neill

Public Realm Questions?

Please know that your feedback and input are vital to the future of The Heinz Endowments' public realm work. Do you have questions about our public realm vision or about the inquiry or application process? We are here to answer them.

Please send an email inquiry to our public realm team at publicrealm@heinz.org.