

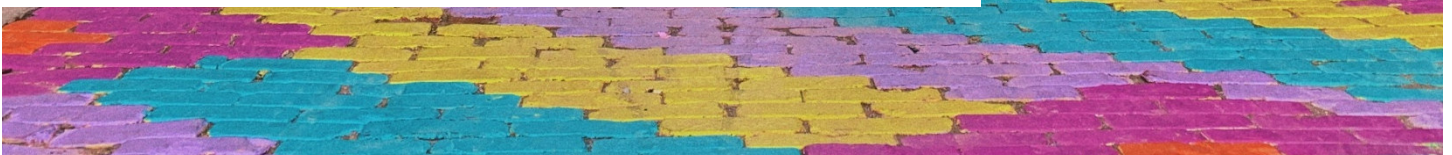


## 2026 Community Investor Accelerator

*For place-focused foundations building new impact investing programs*



Visit [investmentproject.org](https://investmentproject.org) to register for informational webinars and to learn more.



## Program Overview

The 2026 **Community Investor Accelerator** is a year-long action-learning network for 4-6 place-focused foundations—community foundations, health conversion foundations, etc.—ready to build governance consensus and an implementation plan for **community impact investing**.

The Accelerator includes deep education and training provided in a virtual setting with peers, along with customized coaching support to each foundation team. In the Accelerator, foundations will:

1. Explore the field of community impact investing while your team builds shared understanding of how this tool could create positive and equitable mission impact in your community.
2. Design and enact a community impact investing strategy, including action steps needed to advance that strategy.
3. Engage and tap the expertise of foundations from around the country that are investing in their communities.
4. Improve and evolve the framework through our collective learning and action – to build a stronger toolkit and strategy set for use by Accelerator participants and the field.
5. Advance the field of community impact investing by capturing and disseminating the learning and stories surfaced in the Accelerator.

At the end of the Accelerator, each foundation will have a set of community impact investing guidelines, a proposed investment policy, capital deployment tools including a decision-making rubric, and an initial implementation plan for board approval. Many teams also start to identify a test investment pipeline for their proposed strategy.

### What is Community Investing?

Place-focused foundations typically pursue **community impact investing**, a kind of impact investing that seeks investments that generate a financial return alongside mission community impacts. They pursue investments in their neighborhoods, towns, and communities.



## Program Structure

The Accelerator includes six virtual peer learning convenings, customized foundation meetings in-between peer gatherings, and foundation-identified board engagements to grow understanding of local impact investing and share the emerging program design. The Community Investment Project staff and consultants set agendas, analyze and prepare materials, and provide thoughtful guidance and coaching throughout the engagement. A timeline of Accelerator activities appears on the last page.



## Who Should Participate?

The Accelerator is ideal for foundations whose staff and board have done basic impact investing learning and whose leadership, the CEO and board chair, hope to develop the ability to deploy impact investments in the community. The Accelerator is designed to speed individualized impact investing program development while building broader stakeholder buy-in.

Once the Accelerator begins, the crux of the Accelerator experience is your foundation team which we call the Core Team. Each Core Team should include participants who are critical – as decision makers, influencers and/or implementers – to deepening your mission-aligned impact using the tool of community impact investing. We recommend a Core Team of five to nine members. Your team should include key foundation staff (e.g., CEO, CFO, program officer) and board members (e.g., board chair, members of investment committee). If it is your practice to include engaged community partners (e.g., community members of your investment or grants committee), you may consider including these individuals too. As you finalize your Core Team, consider whether each member – and the team as a whole – meet these criteria:

- Has the capacity, by position or personal characteristics, to influence your foundation's understanding, vision, action, and practices now and in the foreseeable future.
- Brings key decision-making, implementation and/or advocacy skills to your work during the Accelerator, and as you carry the work on in the future.
- Agrees to attend all Accelerator convenings and Core Team meetings. We anticipate that the Accelerator will require approximately 40-45 hours for members over the nine months.

### Program Scholarships

Kansas Health Foundation and CoBank are generously covering program costs for rural-serving Kansas foundations. Contact [travis@investmentproject.org](mailto:travis@investmentproject.org) to learn more.



Throughout the program, each foundation and Core Team will have the support of two coaches with experience in place-focused philanthropy and impact investing. Your Core Team will regularly interact with the Core Teams of other foundations, other coaches, and staff and board from other foundations that have previously implemented community impact investment programs.

## Getting Started

Accelerators launch on a rolling basis when four to six participating foundations are identified. We anticipate the next Accelerator will launch in January 2026 with a program cost of \$32,000 per foundation. To join a future Accelerator, contact [travis@investmentproject.org](mailto:travis@investmentproject.org) to discuss the program and engage necessary stakeholders in the review and overview presentations on community impact investing to staff, boards, and/or committees.

## 2026 Community Investor Accelerator Timeline

### Virtual Cohort Activities

- Convening 1**  
Wednesday, February 4, 1-5 ET  
*Fulfilling your community leadership mission through local impact investing*
- Convening 2**  
Wednesday, March 4, 1-5 ET  
*Choosing the right source & amount of funds for investing*
- Convening 3**  
Wednesday, April 1, 1-5 ET  
*Understanding policies, procedures and governance for CF investing programs*
- Convening 4**  
Wednesday, May 6, 1-5 ET  
*Scoping operational matters: how to source, underwrite and approve deals*
- Convening 5**  
Wednesday, June 3, 1-5 ET  
*Getting to roll out: communication and implementation workplan*
- Convening 6**  
Wednesday, July 8, 1-5 ET  
*Peer presentation of proposed programs*

February

March

April

May

June

July

August

September

### Virtual Foundation Activities

- Core Team Session A**  
*Your team articulates what you hope to achieve in the cohort.*
- Board Engagement 1**  
*Introduction to Impact Investing*  
*"Would You Invest?" portfolio survey*
- Core Team Session B**  
*Your team zeroes in on desired local impacts.*
- Core Team Session C**  
*Your team examines possible funding structures.*
- Core Team Session D**  
*Your team examines its policy framework and identifies governance decisions.*
- Core Team Session E**  
*Your team considers tools to support investment and portfolio assessment.*
- Core Team Session F**  
*Your team reviews documents and plans next steps.*
- Board Engagement 2**  
*Presentation of Program*

## About the Community Investment Project

Successful communities require assets: a strong sense of belonging, good infrastructure, well-trained workers, growing local businesses, inclusive and representative governments, and wealth that can be invested for the future. Our vision is that all communities have the assets they require to prosper and thrive. Towards this vision, the Community Investment Project accelerates the adoption of Community Impact Investing rooted in the practice of community engagement to address community needs and seize community opportunities. To do that, CIP educates boards and staff, facilitates networks and peer learning, develops and stands up investment programs, and assesses and refreshes foundation strategies. Over 40 foundations have built and strengthened place-based impact investment programs with the support of CIP coaches.