U.S. Bank Places to Play Program
2017 Request for Proposals (RFP)

Overview
U.S. Bank’s community giving and engagement platform called “Community Possible,” focuses on three central themes: Work, Home and Play. We invest our time, resources and passion in economic development by supporting efforts to create stable jobs, better homes and vibrant communities.

As part of the focus on play, U.S. Bank is collaborating with the Minnesota Vikings on the U.S. Bank Places to Play Program, a $1 million, three-year investment across the state of Minnesota. U.S. Bank Places to Play was introduced as part of the original U.S. Bank Stadium partnership announcement with the Minnesota Vikings in June 2015.

U.S. Bank Places to Play provides grant funding to non-profit, neighborhood-based organizations and schools in low- to moderate-income communities in Minnesota to improve the quality, safety, and accessibility of local play spaces. As part of U.S. Bank’s Community Possible platform, this grantmaking initiative focuses on parks, playgrounds, indoor/outdoor athletic facilities and repairs to existing trails over three years.

In order to be eligible for a grant under the Program, projects must be sponsored by community-based non-profit organizations registered as exempt from Federal Income Tax under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3) or by schools in low- to moderate-income communities in Minnesota.

Strong preference will be given to those proposals that (1) seek to upgrade existing facilities that are in poor condition or otherwise underutilized; (2) demonstrate active use of the spaces; (3) attract matching funding that exceeds the minimum required match of 1:1; (4) involve local partnerships with non-profit community partners (e.g., Parks and Recreation departments, YMCA branches, etc.) to promote youth safety and community programming; and (5) provide for continuing maintenance and safety.

Proposals are due November 22, 2017 at 12:00 p.m. CST. Please read the complete RFP before requesting a proposal submission link.

Availability of Funding
Matching grants of $25,000 to $50,000 will be available to provide general recreation space support. Community-based non-profit organizations and schools in low- to moderate-income communities may submit requests for capital projects associated with actual recreation and play spaces. This includes the installation or refurbishment of parks, playgrounds, indoor/outdoor recreation facilities and repairs to existing trails.

Organizational Eligibility Criteria
To be eligible for the U.S. Bank Places to Play Program, organizations applying for grant funds must meet all of the criteria listed below:

- Be a community-based non-profit organization or school serving a neighborhood consisting primarily of low- to moderate-income families and individuals. Please note:
  - Schools must demonstrate the ability of the community to also utilize the recreation space;
  - Universities and college campuses are not eligible to apply for funding from the U.S. Bank Places Program and will not be considered.
- Have at least one full-time staff person (all-volunteer organizations will not be considered);
- Be in existence for at least three years;
- Demonstrate capacity to develop and accomplish the proposed project;
- Have 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status/school status

Funding Restrictions
The U.S. Bank Places to Play Program will not provide funding for:

- Organizations that are not tax-exempt under Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3), except public schools
- Fraternal organizations, merchant associations, chamber memberships or programs, or 501(c)(4) or (6) organizations
- Section 509(a)(3) supporting organizations
- Fundraising events or sponsorships
- Private foundations
- Organizations outside the State of Minnesota
- Programs operated by religious organizations for religious purposes
- Political organizations or organizations designed primarily to lobby
- Individuals, including those seeking scholarships or fellowship assistance
- Travel and related expenses including student trips and tours
- Endowments or memorial campaigns
- Deficit reduction
- Organizations that discriminate based on race, ethnicity, color, sex, religion, age, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, disability, marital status, genetic information, veteran status or other factors that are protected by law
- Organizations that have previously received a U.S. Bank Places to Play grant

Selection Criteria
Organizations and their projects will be selected for funding based upon the following criteria:

1. **Feasibility of the proposed project.** The project budget must be based upon realistic costs, preferably written contractor’s estimates.

2. **Project readiness.** Sources of funding for the entire budget should be identified. Plans for renovation should take into account the schedule of recreation activities over the course of the year. A project timeline should be specified in the proposal. Projects should have plans for completion by November 1, 2019.

3. **Impact upon neighborhood and support from the community.** Only proposals that locate projects in low- to moderate-income communities in the State of Minnesota will be considered. The proposal should clearly state how the improvements would benefit the community. It also must clearly detail how many youth and adults will make use of the recreation space. Moreover, the proposal must include a projected increase in the number of people that will use the facility as a result of the U.S. Bank Places to Play improvements. Support letters from other neighborhood and partner organizations and joint use agreements (where applicable) must be included as well as contact information for the youth organizations and school programs scheduled to use the facilities (if applicable).

4. **Match funding.** The U.S. Bank Places to Play Program requires a minimum local match of one dollar for every dollar granted (1:1). For example, if the proposal requests $25,000 from the Program, it must demonstrate sources and commitments for at least $25,000 in local funds. **Match funding at a higher ratio will strengthen the proposal.**

5. **Security of future maintenance and safety.** Proposals must have written commitments of maintenance funding for a minimum of three years and a detailed three-year maintenance plan in order to demonstrate that the applicant will maintain the space despite projected wear and tear and potential overuse of the facility. As a reminder, U.S. Bank Places to Play funds may not be used for maintenance, as all grant funds must be used for capital expenditures.
6. **Capacity of organization and its partners to carry out project.** The applicant organization must demonstrate, through its current management team and previous experience, the ability to manage a project of this size and nature.

**Other Terms & Definitions:**

1. Capital improvements refer to the physical development of the recreation site and its surrounding amenities.

2. Public agencies (other than public schools) may not apply for grants from the U.S. Bank Places to Play Program. However, community-based non-profit organizations with 501(c)(3) designation, schools meeting all other organizational criteria, and private schools with 501(c)(3) designation may apply to make improvements on recreation spaces owned and managed by public sector entities (e.g. City, Parks and Recreation Departments, etc.). In those cases, the applicant must show evidence that (1) the public entity supports the proposal; (2) the public entity authorizes the applicant to carry out the proposed capital improvements (this authorization must take into account relevant labor/union regulations and liability issues); (3) the public entity demonstrates its financial commitment to maintenance; and (4) the facility is open to and used by the community for organized and other events through joint use agreements.

3. To qualify as a serving a low- to moderate-income neighborhood the project must:
   
   a. Have a physical address in a Low or Moderate Income Tract Level according to the most recent Census Demographic Data available at [https://geomap.ffiec.gov/FFIECGeocMap/GeocodeMap1.aspx](https://geomap.ffiec.gov/FFIECGeocMap/GeocodeMap1.aspx); or
   b. Demonstrate through verified data that the organization or school provides services for targeted groups made up of greater than 50% of families or households with income of less than 80% of area median income (area median income information can generally be found at [www.huduser.org/datasets/il.html](http://www.huduser.org/datasets/il.html)); or
   c. Have a free and reduced lunch rate greater than 50%, if the organization is a school

**Application Procedures**

Please email [placestoplay@usbank.com](mailto:placestoplay@usbank.com) to request a U.S. Bank Places to Play proposal submission link. Include your name, your email address and your organization’s name.

**Key Dates:**

- Proposals must be submitted by **November 22, 2017 at 12:00 p.m. CST**. No exceptions.
- Decisions will be communicated to applicants by May 4, 2018.

Please email [placestoplay@usbank.com](mailto:placestoplay@usbank.com) with questions.