

USTA New England Game Changer Grant

Grant Description and Purpose:

The Game Changer Grant (GCG) is USTA New England's premier funding opportunity, offering up to \$20,000 to promote the growth of tennis and inspire healthy communities throughout New England. This grant is designed to support innovative, high-impact special projects that have the potential to further USTA New England's mission. **Funding is not available for ongoing program expenses such as court time, coach salaries, or other program-related costs.**

Eligibility Requirements:

- Application is **aligned with USTA New England's mission** to promote the growth of tennis and inspire healthy communities throughout New England.
- Application is closely aligned with USTA New England's Strategic Pillars. ([See more below](#)).
- Organizations seeking support must be a USTA organizational member (visit [USTA membership](#) for more information - **membership is free**).
- All staff and volunteers working in connection with the program or initiative must be registered Net Generation providers and Safe Play Approved if working with anyone 18 years of age or younger.
- The project or initiative must impact the New England community.
- Applying entity must be an established 501(c)(3). The entity applying is permitted to work in partnership with a for-profit organization. If the applying entity is applying in partnership with a for-profit entity, a signed Memorandum of Agreement between partners is required in order to receive funding.
- Applying entity must have all prior grant accountability forms submitted before being considered for a new grant request.
- Applying entity must not have received Game Changer Grant funding within the last two years.

USTA New England's Strategic Pillars 2024-2026:

The grant request must also align with one of the following strategic pillars:

1. Engagement

Examples:

- Successful and inclusive programming for public facilities
- Revitalizing tennis in schools
- Introducing students to team play through middle and high school tennis programming
- Player retention initiatives
- Establishing strategic partnerships
- Engaging with other complimentary racquet sports

2. People & Organizational Capacity Development

Examples:

- Coach recruitment
- Coaches training and professional development and support
- Coach mentorship and networking
- Volunteer recruitment, training, and engagement
- Partnership development
- Organizational capacity building

3. Access

Examples:

- ADA compliance, ramps, wheelchair programs, adaptive tennis
- Tennis advocacy initiatives
- Innovative, grassroots tennis and other racquet sports

***Note:** At this time, the Game Changer Grant **does not support court maintenance and facilities projects**, however USTA New England is happy to support providers through the [USTA Tennis Venue Services](#) application process. For assistance, please contact Mavi Sanchez-Skakle (mavi.sanchez-skakle@newengland.usta.com).

Application Process:

- **New in 2025:**

- Effective March 6, 2025, the Community Champions Grant application will remain open to applications through September 30. See specific details below.
- Grant applications will be reviewed quarterly in a collaborative effort between the USTA New England Grants Committee and representatives from respective State Associations.

- **Anticipated review and decision dates:**

- Quarter 1 (March 6 - March 31) applications
 - Applications submitted between March 6 and March 31
 - Reviewed by April 18
 - Approval/denial letters received by May 1
 - Signed agreement and W 9 required by May 6
 - Funds disbursed by May 30, 2025
- Quarter 2 (April 1 - June 30) applications
 - Applications submitted in Q2 (April 1 - June 30)
 - Reviewed by July 18
 - Approval/denial letters received by August 1
 - Signed agreement and W 9 required by August 6
 - Funds disbursed by August 29, 2025
- Quarter 3 (July 1 - September 30) applications
 - Applications submitted in Q3 (July 1 - September 30)
 - Reviewed in October
 - Approval/denial letters received in November
 - Signed agreement and W 9 required before funds can be disbursed
 - Funds received in November/December
- New Year Cycle - CLOSED
 - Applications submitted in Q4 (October 1 - December 31) can only be considered for funding from respective State Associations (\$5,000 or less).
 - The USTANE Grants Committee will use this period to gather grant accountability reports and strategically plan for the upcoming grant cycles.

- **Required Application Materials:**

- Annual budget
- Program budget
- Organizational W-9

- **Application Review:**

- The USTA New England grant process review is a collaboration with State Associations.
- All funding from USTA sources including USTA Foundation, State Associations, and USTA New England will be considered in funding decisions.

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- **Grant Accountability:**
 - Share details on accountability form, completion dates
 - All organizations must submit a grant accountability form within three months of either completing the use of funds or the deadline specified in the award letter, whichever comes first.
- **Updated Application for Each Grant Request:** An updated grant application is required for each funding request. This allows the grant committee to assess the most up-to-date program information, including delivery, impact, and challenges, ensuring an equitable evaluation process.

By adhering to these guidelines, we aim to support organizations that are committed to creating positive change and making a lasting difference in our community.

Priority Criteria:

Funding requests that demonstrate the following criteria will be given priority consideration:

- **Sustainability:** Projects that have a clear plan for long-term sustainability.
- **Additional Funding Sources:** Grant requests that have secured additional funding sources to support the program or initiative.
- **Inclusivity:** Organizations and initiatives that actively promote and support inclusive tennis programming, coach development, and accessibility.
- **Need for Expansion/Impact:** Clearly articulated need and opportunity for additional funding to catalyze the growth of tennis in the community.
- **Outreach to Grant Ambassador:** Applicants who have consulted with USTA New England Grant Ambassadors ([see list below](#)) will be given priority in the review process.

Grant Ambassadors

State Association Presidents, along with select members of State Grants Committees, serve as Grant Ambassadors in this process. These Ambassadors play a vital role in supporting applicants, acting as key points of contact throughout the grant cycle. By fostering strong relationships between providers and State representatives, they help ensure applicants fully understand funding opportunities and the grant process. Additionally, these interactions enable Grant Ambassadors to effectively advocate for applicants during the collaborative review process with State representatives and the USTANE Grants Committee.

Section Representatives

- Mavi Sanchez-Skakle, Head of DEI (mavi.sanchez-skakle@newengland.usta.com)
- Mason Bultje, Chair, USTA NE Grants Committee (mbultje@sportsmenstennis.org)

USTA New England State Representatives

- Todd Piker, Chair of Connecticut Grants Committee (tpiker@gmail.com)
- Lance Andersen, President of Eastern Massachusetts (lance@luckydogtennis.com)
- Lisa Gilbride, President of Maine (lisa.c.gilbride@gmail.com)
- Jeff Siegel, President of New Hampshire (jcgull@gmail.com)
- Doug Chapman, President of Rhode Island (somersettennis@aol.com)
- Joanna Beall, President of Vermont (ustavtassoc@gmail.com)
- Karen Fawthrop, President of Western Massachusetts (karenfawthrop@hotmail.com)