

Request for Proposals 2026 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service

OVERVIEW

As part of PAYETTE's commitment to community engagement and pro-bono services, the firm will host its seventh annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service. This design-focused service is open to organizations throughout Massachusetts and seeks to connect our practice with local communities by applying architectural and engagement skills in support of Day of Service goals. Project types may include architecture, landscape architecture, interior design, sustainability, urban and campus planning, fabrication, furniture design, programming, and related spheres.

PAYETTE, winner of the 2019 AIA Firm of the Year Award, is an architecture firm that embraces a practice model based upon collaborative authorship and diverse voices to create boldly original buildings with vision, exceptional execution and grounded by the experience of the people they serve. Our work strives to fuse design excellence and building performance in its work for science, healthcare, and pro bono clients. Client engagement is central to our design process and we bring this expertise to bear on our pro-bono work.

On the Day of Service, PAYETTE donates the time of approximately one-third of the staff for one workday to community-focused non-profit organizations. Leading up to the Day of Service, PAYETTE prepares for the charrette, or design workshop, *with* selected community partners, to make the most of the Day of Service. This collaboration benefits both PAYETTE and our partner organizations: we offer creative skills to serve the needs and aspirations of our community, and we gain a deeper understanding of how to cultivate social justice and equity in our work.

ABOUT THE DAY OF SERVICE

Date: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, January 19, 2026

Location: PAYETTE Office, 290 Congress Street, Fifth Floor, Boston, MA 02210

More information:

[Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service - PAYETTE](#)

[MLK Day of Service 2024 Recap](#)

[Day of Service: East Boston Neighborhood Health Center](#)

[Day of Service: Grandmother's Village](#)

[Day of Service: Greater Grove Hall Main Streets](#)

[Day of Service: Northern Berkshire Community Coalition](#)

[Day of Service: Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services](#)

PROCESS

Proposals received by Friday, November 14, 2025 will be reviewed and selected projects will be notified the following week. Each project will then connect with their PAYETTE design team in early December. Teams will consist of 5-10 members and each team will have 1-2 team leaders responsible for collaborating with the partner and project team to coordinate scope definition, identify deliverables and organize the Day of Service charrette.

PAYETTE asks project teams and community partners to meet prior to the Day of Service, to refine the project scope and deliverables and gather project materials before the charrette. These meetings will be scheduled by the PAYETTE team leaders at a time, location, and format convenient for both the community partner and the PAYETTE team. On the Day of Service, PAYETTE team members will have a full-day design workshop to produce the agreed-upon deliverables, or work products. Community members are **not** expected to attend the Day of Service, but the teams may arrange for the partners to check in virtually to provide feedback to the project team. Following the Day of Service, the PAYETTE team will compile the identified deliverables and prepare a booklet documenting the project. Booklets will be distributed during the final presentation to the community partners, typically in early February. The project team and community partners will also be asked to participate in a follow-up survey to evaluate the experience and impact of the day.

ELIGIBILITY

Applicants and their proposed projects must be based in Massachusetts. The proposal must identify and address a local need. The project must serve the mission of the applying organization.

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Please provide the following information in a project narrative organized according to the following sections.

1. PROJECT & ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

- Name and address of the organization
- Title and address of the project for which services are requested
- Point of contact name, phone number and e-mail address

2. PROJECT SUMMARY

- Provide a summary of your project and the need it fills in your community (300 words max.).

3. ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

- Describe the work of your organization.
- What are your organization's major accomplishments in the past 3 years?
- Is the organization a 501(c)3 or under fiscal sponsorship?
- Has your organization undertaken a project of this size or scope previously? If so, please describe.

4. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- Describe the project for which you are seeking design services.
- How does this project help the organization achieve its mission?
- What led your organization to identify this project as a need in your community?
- Identify deliverables or final products you hope to receive, if known.
- What will be the next step after our services are complete?

5. COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

- Describe the community your organization serves.
- Who are your community partners and stakeholders?
- What stakeholders do you anticipate will participate in this design process and what will their role be?

SELECTION CRITERIA

Projects will be selected based on the following criteria:

- **Project Viability**
Is it feasible to complete the project within the Day of Service timeframe (see important dates for timeframe reference)?
- **Organization's Mission**
Does the proposed project align with the community partner's mission, and does it have support from those who will be affected?
- **Identified Need**
Is there a clear relationship between the project objectives and the organization's identified need?
- **Organizational Capacity**
Is there a clear plan for next steps after the design services are provided?
- **Relevance**
Does it engage with the MLK Day of Service goals of social justice and equity?



IMPORTANT DATES

2025		2026	
September 29	RFP Opens	Early January	Project Meeting #2
November 14	Project proposals due	January 19	Day of Service Charrette
November 26	Selected partners notified	Early February	Final presentations*
Early December	Project Meeting #1	Late February	Project evaluations due from partners

**Date of Final Presentation is subject to change. The location and time will be confirmed before the Day of Service.*

SUBMISSIONS

Please complete the application above and the Day of Service Project Letter Agreement and send to mlkdos@PAYETTE.com by *November 14, 2025*. All applicants **must** sign the Day of Service Project Letter Agreement below and include it in the proposal application.

If you have questions prior to submitting your application or would like to discuss your proposal, please do not hesitate to contact the event organizers via the email above.