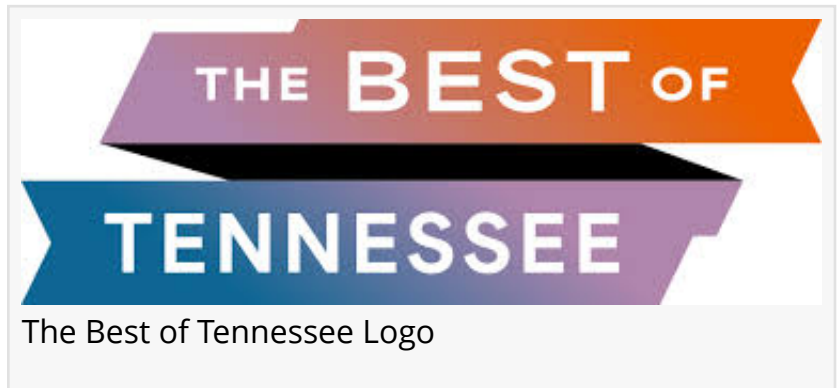


The Best of Tennessee Receives Investment From Leadership Now Project's Catalyst Fund

National initiative, supported by Melinda Gates, mobilizing new investments to strengthen civic organizations

NASHVILLE, TN, UNITED STATES, June 9, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Best of Tennessee, Inc. has been selected as one of nine recipients of grants from the Leadership Now Project's newly launched [Catalyst Fund](#), a \$1 million

initiative designed to direct capital toward high-impact organizing, civic education and trusted messengers working to strengthen the political center.



The Best of Tennessee Logo

"If we can increase primary participation in Tennessee, we can do it anywhere. That's not bravado, that's the work," said Chloe Akers, founder and CEO of The Best of Tennessee.

"Hyperpartisan primaries are a national crisis with a local solution, and The Best of Tennessee is building the model. Leadership Now Project understands what's at stake, and this investment is a bet on the idea that democracy works better when more people participate in it. We intend to prove them right."

The Catalyst Fund was unveiled at Leadership Now Project's 2026 Annual Summit, A Roadmap for America's Next Chapter, held May 11 in New York City. The Catalyst Fund was made possible in part by leading funders including Pivotal, a group of organizations founded by Melinda French Gates. Partner selection was guided by the Catalyst Fund Investment Advisory Committee, composed of Leadership Now Project members.

"For years, engaging Americans at the center has been underfunded and misunderstood. The Catalyst Fund creates a strategic way to deploy funds to innovative organizations working to revitalize the center," said Daniella Ballou-Aares, CEO of Leadership Now.

The Best of Tennessee, Inc. was recognized for its work amplifying the voice of the Tennessee majority by increasing primary voter participation — specifically by mobilizing general election voters who reliably show up in November but skip primaries. Research shows this large, underutilized majority is less hyper-partisan and less ideologically extreme than the voters who

typically decide primary outcomes. Through precision turnout efforts, The Best of Tennessee is building a scalable playbook for reshaping the primary electorate.

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About The Best of Tennessee

The Best of Tennessee Inc., a 501(c)(4) organization, works to amplify the voice of the Tennessee majority by increasing participation in primary elections. By turning out general election voters who skip primaries, the organization is building a replicable model for making primary electorates more reflective of the broader public and in turn, fostering a more representative government. Learn more at bestoftn.us.

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