



Community Impact Grants - Frequently Asked Questions January 2019

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Eligibility, Guidelines and General Instructions

[How many proposals may one organization submit?](#)

An organization may submit one proposal per cycle for a Community Impact Grant (addressing mainly one funding priority). (Note that there are two cycles: spring cycle with a February deadline and fall cycle with an August deadline.) If the organization applies in February and does not receive a grant, the organization may submit a proposal addressing another program area in August.

An organization may partner with as many collaborative proposals as it has the capacity to do so. Read more about [collaborative grant proposals](#).

[May an organization apply for a Community Impact grant and another grant?](#)

Yes, an organization may apply for a Community Impact and [Opportunity or Stanton Endowment](#) grant in the same calendar year as long as the requests are for different purposes. Informal groups without the IRS 501(c)3 public charity status need to apply through a nonprofit [fiscal sponsor](#).

[How do you define a collaborative project?](#)

We understand that nonprofits regularly work with other service providers. For the purposes of a grant application to the Community Foundation, this specifically applies when a nonprofit is interested in applying for more than one Community Impact in the calendar year. All partners contribute to, and

benefit from, the funded activities, and are involved in decision-making and implementation of the collaborative effort. A 501(c)3 organization serves as the lead agency of the collaborative grant application and is responsible for grant management and reporting. A successful proposal will include a copy of the partners' memorandum of agreement or understanding, a brief description of each members' role, and a project budget detailing how the grant would be divided and used among partners. The lead applicant agency submits the application as the "authorized representative".

[Can a public agency or nonprofit that is not classified by the IRS as a 501\(c\)3 public charity apply for a Community Impact Grant?](#)

Public agencies (e.g., a public school or city/county library) may apply. Non-incorporated community benefit groups may apply through a fiscal sponsor that will assume responsibility for managing the grant. Collaborative projects may involve a variety of organization types, such as faith-based organizations, businesses and other 501(c) organizations. However, the lead applicant of a collaborative proposal must be a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization or public agency.

[How do you define fiscal sponsors?](#)

A fiscal sponsor is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization or a public agency that receives and manages a grant on behalf of a non-incorporated group without 501(c)3 tax exemption. The fiscal sponsor manages the grant funds and provides financial reports; the sponsored group completes the description of the request and final evaluation report. The fiscal sponsor is accountable to the CFMC for the financial outcomes of the grant.

[Is a pre-application or letter of intent required?](#)

No.

[Our proposal idea overlaps priority areas \(e.g. Children & Youth Development and Arts\). To which should we apply?](#)

Review the Evaluation Plan application questions and consider what will demonstrate progress towards your broader outcomes and what data you can realistically collect and track during the 11-month grant period. Choose the funding priority (and application deadline) which is most closely related to your proposed activities. In general, we encourage arts education proposals to apply under Arts and environmental education proposals to apply under Environment. If you have any questions about when to apply, please contact a program officer to discuss your application.

[Our organization received a grant last year. Do we need to have spent all of the funds from the previous grant? When is our Final Evaluation Report due?](#)

Funds from a previous grant must to be fully spent before the new grant period begins. The grant application includes a question addressing your current Community Impact grant; Briefly describe progress and any challenges to date. The final report due date is included in your grant agreement which is saved in your online account. If grant funds have not been spent during the grant period or an extension is needed for some other reason, email an extension request to your program officer, including the amount of funds spent to date, reason for extension and estimated date of completion.

[Will you support individual artists in community-building efforts and developing multicultural programming?](#)

Community Impact grants are only awarded to nonprofit organizations. Grants cannot be made directly to individuals.

[If prevention and upstream projects are preferred, how will outcomes be measured?](#)

Organizations are encouraged to choose indicators that will show that that activities effective. Depending on the work, this may include demonstrated knowledge, changed behavior or measurable changes in community resources or policies. Contact your program officer if you have questions or if you would like to discuss ideas.

[Will you confirm that you have received my application?](#)

Most of our grant applications are due by 5:00 pm the day of the stated deadline. After 5:00 pm, the online system will no longer accept applications. Expect to receive an email message after submitting a grant application or follow up report.

[How important is Board financial giving? We are a public agency / we have clients on our board / etc. and do not expect monetary contributions from our board.](#)

We expect to see a significant level of commitment from an organization's board, including 100% board giving. We understand that many boards donate in-kind contributions including labor and not all board members have the same financial resources. We view the percent of those who contribute as a sign of leadership and commitment. Here is one [article](#) on the value of board giving.

General Questions

[What are you looking for in a strong proposal?](#)

Funding through Community Impact grants is competitive. We typically receive grant requests 2-3 times the amount available. Answer the questions succinctly. The grant guidelines include a list of selection criteria. Ask your program officer for feedback on ways to strengthen a future request, including when a grant is received.

We look for grant applications that have a realistic budget and demonstrate the organization's strategy, experience and knowledge of community needs. We are looking to fund organizations with effective leadership, community support and financial health including diversified income sources.

We suggest that you carefully review the [Community Impact grant guidelines](#). We are only able to fund those projects that most closely align with our criteria and fit the available funding resources. Unfortunately, many worthwhile programs will not receive funding due to limited resources.

[Can you help us prepare our application?](#)

We will be happy to answer questions about the application process, and our Center for Nonprofit Excellence offers workshops on proposal writing. Our staff is available to discuss your proposal idea and provide constructive feedback.

[May we meet with Community Foundation staff to discuss our proposal?](#)

We are available to meet in person, time permitting, or have a telephone conversation with prospective applicants. We may schedule a call or a site visit during the review of your proposal. We are unable to visit every organization with an open grant application. Site visits are focused on the requests with which we are the least familiar or with many follow-up questions. Site visits are not a sign of guaranteed funding. Stay in communication with your program officer with opportunities to observe activities throughout the year.

[How are grant decisions made?](#)

Community Foundation's Board of Directors makes the final grant decisions. Grant subcommittees, comprised of Community Foundation board members and community volunteers, review all grant applications and recommend funding to the Foundation's board. Proposals are grouped by funding priority and reviewed together (e.g., all Health & Human Services proposals are reviewed by the same subcommittee in the spring). Subcommittee volunteers are listed on our [website](#).

[What if my proposal doesn't fit with these priorities?](#)

Community Foundation made an effort to include the traditional program areas funded in the past (e.g., community and social services, education and health, etc.). Funding priorities were defined based on community forums with the purpose of being better able to communicate impact in specific, high priority areas. Please contact the Community Foundation if your proposal does not address the stated funding priorities. You may be interested in an Opportunity grant; please review the [Opportunity Guidelines](#) and consider applying for a Time-sensitive or Emerging Venture grant, or contact Janet Shing, janet@cfmco.org or 831.375.9712, to discuss your proposal idea.

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