

The Community Foundation for McHenry County Community Grants Guidelines

Community Grants are awarded from the Community Foundation's Permanent Endowment Fund through a competitive process. There are two grants cycles in which competitive applications can be submitted.

Please review the following criteria for The Community Foundation's competitive grants. If you have questions contact Margaret Miller, Program Manager, at margaret@mccfdn.org or 815-338-4483.

WHO WE FUND

- Nonprofit agencies located in McHenry County or agencies that are which are able to demonstrate significant impact within McHenry County.
- Nonprofit agencies with evidence of tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or agencies using a 501(c)(3) fiscal agent.
- Grants are typically made for one year only and funded projects must be completed one year from receipt of the check.
- The Community Foundation encourages collaboration in both execution and funding of projects.
- The Community Foundation supports projects which have been planned in light of overall community needs and which do not duplicate existing services.
- Projects that demonstrate a capacity to be sustainable in the future are favorable.

GOVERNMENTAL COMPLIANCE

All organizations must be compliant with appropriate government agencies. Applicants are not required to submit paperwork for this; Community Foundation staff will verify through the websites listed below.

- Exempt organizations must be recognized as tax-exempt and in good standing with the IRS, with timely filed information returns (federal form 990).
- All organizations must be corporations in good standing with the Illinois Secretary of State.
- All 501(c)(3) organizations must be registered as a charitable organization with the Illinois Attorney General with timely filed annual reports (form AG990-IL).

Your status can be verified electronically, as follows:

-Internal Revenue Service: <https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/tax-exempt-organization-search>

-Illinois Secretary of State: <https://www.ilsos.gov/corporatellc/CorporateLlcController>

-Illinois Attorney General website: <http://charitableviewer.ilattorneygeneral.net/>

GRANTS CENTRAL

Grant applications are available on the online application system, Grants Central. Applicants can register any time during the year and complete their Organization Profile. When a Request for Proposal (RFP) becomes available (October for Arts & Culture, Education, and Environment grants and March for Health and Human Services), the applicant can start an application. Find a link on the CFMC website: <https://www.mccfdn.org/grant-process/>

APPLICATION PROCESS

The application is a two phase process. Applicants complete a first phase and may be invited or declined to complete the second phase. If invited, the second phase includes a budget section, metrics and other narratives for the project.

TIMELINE

Applications for Arts and Culture, Education, and Environment will become available in October with funding awarded in March. Health and Human Services applications will be available in March with funding awarded in August. All grant funds should be spent within one year of receipt. See the website for a detailed timeline.

CATEGORIES

Please note that you must select a category in which your grant application will be reviewed. You may select only one (1) category per submission. The categories are:

ARTS and CULTURE

Grants will help enrich the county's quality of life with participatory and/or audience-oriented artistic activities. Grants may include, but are not limited to: special projects, productions, activities, or supplies. Grants may also increase public understanding of the rich heritage of communities within the county. Projects may help the public develop a better sense of the past and broaden appreciation of local stories and history.

EDUCATION

Grants are awarded to support opportunities both within and outside the formal education system to promote learning at any age, creating possibilities for self-sufficiency, personal growth and discovery, and to better prepare our workforce for the future.

ENVIRONMENT

Grants in this focus area will enhance, protect or increase appreciation for the quality of the environment, including beautification, renovation and access to a specific area or the whole county. This may include conservation or agriculture related projects.

HEALTH

Grants in the area of Health will support the mental, physical, social, or emotional well-being of residents of the community. These grants may address the ability to access healthcare or provide services. Additionally, programs that increase the understanding of health issues or preventative services are eligible in this category.

HUMAN SERVICES

Human Services applications serve basic human needs for populations underserved or underrepresented. Grants in this focus area provide for basic human needs (food, clothing and shelter) and opportunities for self-improvement for persons in need.

GRANT SIZE

Organizations are invited to submit requests of \$1,000 - \$25,000, depending on your annual budget size:

Annual budget under \$100,000 – you may apply for a grant up to \$10,000 per submission

Annual budget \$100,000 - \$500,000 – you may apply for a grant up to \$15,000 per submission

Annual budget \$500,000 - \$1 million – you may apply for a grant up to \$20,000 per submission

Annual budget over \$1 million – you may apply for a grant up to \$25,000 per submission

NUMBER OF SUBMISSIONS

In an effort to reach as many organizations in the County as possible, one eligible nonprofit entity may receive only two (2) competitive grants over the course of the Community Foundation's fiscal year, October 1 – September 30.

NOT TO BE CONSIDERED

The Foundation will NOT Fund:

- *Organizations supported by a Foundation with an asset base greater than \$10 million*
- *Endowment campaigns*
- *Individuals*
- *Programs that require adherence to a particular religious belief or practice to receive services (faith-based organizations serving the community-at-large will be considered)*
- *Political campaigns or endeavors*
- *Operating deficits or liquidation of existing debt*

Please do not include these items in your request:

- *Executive Salaries*
- *Mileage Reimbursement*
- *Snacks or t-shirts*
- *Conferences, festivals, exhibitions, events, fundraisers, or meetings (one time events that meet for 3 days or less). The Foundation will consider a sponsorship if the event will benefit multiple organizations and/or areas. Please contact the Foundation for more information.*

REPORTING

If the grant is successfully funded through the Permanent Endowment Fund, there are two reports to complete. The **midterm report** is due **6 months** from the receipt of the funding and the **final report** is due **one year** from the receipt of funding. Reports are completed in Grants Central. *Grants that are funded through Donor Advised Funds will not have the same reporting requirements. Please plan to send a thank you note to the Foundation, which will be forwarded to the Fund Advisor(s). Additionally, any updates provided to the Foundation will be shared with the Fund Advisor(s).*

PLEASE NOTE:

STAFF POSITIONS

-If applying for a staff position:

Salaries for staff positions can and have been accepted for funding through the competitive grants cycle but will be considered on a year by year basis, applicants will need to apply each year. In the second year, if making the same request, requested funding must decrease by at least 50% of the amount approved for that position in the first year.

For example: In year 1, if the staff position is funded for \$10,000, the same position will receive no more than \$5,000 in year 2, if that request is made. A third year request will not be considered unless there is a strong case for it. In all cases, please address how the position will be sustained without Foundation funding in subsequent years.

NATIONAL/LARGE ORGANIZATIONS

-If applying as a large organization (region extends beyond just McHenry County):

Please focus your application on the McHenry County portion of your program and include a budget that is specific to McHenry County.

SAME PROJECT, DIFFERENT YEAR

-If applying for a grant for a program/project which has been funded in the past:

If your organization received a community grant from The Community Foundation for the same project for the past three years (2015/6, 2016/7 and 2017/8), you will not be eligible to receive a community grant for that project from us in 2018/19. You WILL, however, be eligible to apply again in the following cycle (2019/2020).

FIRST TIME APPLICANTS

-If you've never received a grant from the Community Foundation, please limit your request to up to \$5,000.

To be eligible for this grant, you must be a current 501(c)3 organization with at least three years of demonstrable activity (you do not have to have been a 501(c)3 for the full three years of activity, however). This will be a grant for up to \$5,000, regardless of budget, and will allow The Foundation to become better acquainted with the organization and the mission. **First time applicants are required to attend the Foundation's workshop. See the website for dates and RSVP to the Foundation office.**