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**ORGANIZATION SUPPORT GRANT APPLICATION**

2024 GUIDELINES

purpose:

**Organization Support Grants** provide funding for general operating costs or capacity-building projects for nonprofits that serve Linn County, Iowa.

DEADLINES:

Organization Support Grants deadlines for 2024 are Friday, March 1 and Friday, September 13 at 4:30 p.m. Central Time.

ORGANIZATION ELIGIBILITY:

For General Operating Support:

* Must be based in Linn County
* Be a nonprofit organization with current 501(c)(3) status
* At least two years old (based on IRS letter of determination)
* Operating budget is less than $5 million

For Capacity-Building Projects:

* Be a nonprofit organization with current 501(c)(3) status
* Operating budget less than $20 million
* Organizations based outside of Linn County may only apply for the Linn County portion of projects

INELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS OR ACTIVITIES:

* Capital infrastructure [bricks and mortar] projects
* Expenses that have already occurred or will occur during the grant review process (approximately 10 weeks after the grant application deadline)
* Fundraising events and activities
* Program-specific staff training (may apply for Program Support Grant)
* For capacity-building projects: overhead costs, including staff salary costs that are not directly related to project
* Religious activities or efforts supporting an organization’s core religious mission
  + Organizations with a core religious mission are not eligible for general operating support
* Re-granting awarded funds to other nonprofits
* Travel out of the region
* Organizations that received an Organization Support Grant in the previous grant cycle
  + If an Organization Support Grant was awarded in the fall of the previous year, may not apply again until fall of the current year
  + If a time extension was requested to complete a previous grant, contact Program Officer to confirm eligibility

MAXIMUM REQUEST AMOUNT:

* For organizations with operating budgets greater than $125,000, the maximum request amount is $25,000
* Organizations with operating budgets less than $125,000 may request an amount up to 20% of their operating budget per request (rounded up to the nearest $100)
  + The Community Foundation generally does not fund more than 20% of an organization’s operating budget between Program Support and Organization Support grants total in a calendar year
* Organizations that are primarily volunteer-driven and/or have a very small operating budget should contact the Program Officer to discuss the eligible amount for their specific situation

Duration of grants:

12 months

# Grantmaking Equity Statement

The Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation supports people and places that shape our community, through our broad multi-sector grantmaking strategy. The Community Foundation Board of Directors has adopted the following statement as it relates to implementing this strategy:

The Community Foundation prioritizes grant funding for nonprofit organizations that are deeply engaged in or actively working to improve organizational equity and justice practices. The foundation commits to providing learning and funding resources to assist in this transformational process.

These equity and justice practices may include, but not be limited to, employment practices, volunteer opportunities, and delivery of programs and services and should be considered as they relate to under-resourced communities or to legally protected characteristics, including race, color, religion, gender, national origin, ancestry, age, medical condition, disability, veteran status, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by law.

**Grantmaking Equity in 2024:**

The Community Foundation is committed to providing learning and funding resources to assist in this transformational process.

* We recognize that engaging in equity and justice work takes time and commitment.
* Our commitment is to provide support to organizations to help with that journey.
* Learning opportunities in 2024 will be made available through the Nonprofit Network: <https://www.gcrcf.org/nonprofits/nonprofit-network/>

Our grant applications and scoring process include a focus on applicant organizational equity and justice practices as we continue our commitment to work with and support our nonprofit community in this journey.

“Organization Equity Practices” is an added scoring criteria category related to the equity practices questions in the application. The Organization Demographics Form must be completed and uploaded along with other required documents.

Please note that the related scoring criteria are not about assessing the diversity of the organization’s demographics, but whether demographic information has been collected and shared in the application. We understand that organization demographics and equity-related practices are specific to the local community and those being served.

HOW TO APPLY

* Use this document to prepare your application responses:
  + Please verify response character counts.  *(Note: all character counts INCLUDE spaces.)*
* Prepare documents for upload:
  + Download the required forms for this program and complete as needed.
* Request grant portal access:
  + Nonprofits must select one person to act as the grant administrator for the organization. Then a log in and password must be requested for that individual. Instructions for obtaining portal access can be found here: <https://www.gcrcf.org/nonprofits/grants/how-to-apply/>
* Login to the Community Foundation website to:
  + Update your Organization Snapshot before starting your grant application
  + Complete the online grant application:
    - Use this prepared document to copy responses into the online grant portal.
    - Do not copy and paste from a PDF or from a formatted table into the online application.
    - Upload required documents.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| APPLICATION CHECKLIST: |  | |
| * Application responses completed in this document | | Recommended |
| * Organization Snapshot (including Board list and their professional roles) updated before starting the application online | | Required |
| * Online application completed | | Required |
| * Organization Demographics Form completed and uploaded | | Required |
| * Community Foundation budget form completed and uploaded (form available at bottom of grant program page on website) | | Required |
| * Organization Statement of Financial Position AND Statement of Activities with end date no earlier than the end of the applicant organization’s fiscal year uploaded.   *The Statement of Financial Position (sometimes called the balance sheet) is a financial statement that reports the assets, liabilities, and equity of the organization on a given date. The Statement of Activities (sometimes called the income statement, the profit and loss statement, or the income and expenses statement) summarizes the revenues, costs, and expenses incurred by the organization during a specific period of time. (An example of a Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Activities can be found* [*here*](https://www.gcrcf.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Example-Statement-of-Financial-Position-Statement-of-Activities.pdf)*.) (Governmental applicants should use department budget.)*  **NOTE: Failure to submit the required types of financial documents with the required date will make the submitted application INELIGIBLE.**  *If your organization does not have any of the above, contact program officer to discuss.* | | Required |
| * Strategic Plan summary - contact Program Officer if the organization does not have a strategic plan in place | | Required |
| * Budget Explanation *(explaining unusual circumstances, one-page maximum)* | | Optional |
| * Supplemental materials | | Optional |

Who can see this information?

Staff and grant committee members review all grant application materials. Committee members receive two additional resources about applicant organizations:

* A list of all grant awards during the last five years from the following Community Foundation funds: Creating Safe, Equitable & Thriving Communities, Endowment Challenge Grants, Funds for the Community, Linn County Grants, Organization Support Grants, and Program Support Grants
* A financial summary from submitted IRS-990’s for the last five years

Questions?

Contact Casey Baustian, Program Officer, at [casey.baustian@gcrcf.org](mailto:casey.baustian@gcrcf.org) or at 319.774.2378.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Each application type – General Operating Support or Capacity-Building – has a separate set of questions within the application and different budget forms. *Reminder: General Operating Support applications can only be submitted by nonprofit organizations based in Linn County that are at least two years old, hold 501(c)(3) status, and with operating budgets less than $5M.*

If you have questions regarding the appropriate application type to use, please contact the Program Officer prior to beginning work on your application.

**Pre-Qualifying Questions:**

REMINDER: please see eligibility guidelines pertaining to when most recent grant was awarded.

Has the organization snapshot been updated in the last 12 months?

Does the organization have current 501(c)(3) status?

Will the proposed project/programming serve Linn County, Iowa?

**Proposal Title:**

Use a title that describes the program or project*.* *(This may be used in publications such as the Community Foundation website, annual reports, communication with donors, and other print or online publications.)* (*50 character-limit.)*

**Section 1: Proposal Summary**

Organization name: *(This will auto populate from Organization Snapshot)*

Proposal Summary Statement: Provide a two-three sentence summary of the project. The narrative, project budget, and objectives detailed in the application should align with the proposal summary. *(300-character limit. This may be used in publications such as the Community Foundation website, annual reports, communication with donors and other print or online publications.)*

Type of Request (pick one): General operating OR Capacity-Building

***The answer to this question will determine which specific set of questions are visible throughout the rest of the application. For General Operating Support applications, Sections 1 – 5 and 9 – 10 must be completed. For Capacity-Building applications, Sections 1 – 4 and 6 – 10 must be completed.***

Total dollar amount requested from this grant program: *(This amount should be based on information found at the beginning of this document along with eligibility criteria.)*

**Section 2: Organization Overview**

*All but one of these fields are auto-populated based on information in the Organization Snapshot. You may amend the content of the following fields for the purposes of a collaborative application.*

Mission statement: *(500-character limit)*

Brief organizational history: *(900-character limit)*

Target population description: *(250-character limit)*

Description of key programs: *(1,500-character limit)*

Please provide the number of individuals served annually by the organization: *(This calculation should count each individual once, regardless of the number of activities or services the person may have accessed.)*

Number of paid employees:

Total dollar amount of the current fiscal year organizational budget:

Fiscal year end date: *MM/DD*

Description of volunteer support within organization: *(250-character limit)*

Charitable status: 501c3, governmental or requires fiscal sponsor

IRS Ruling Year: *YYYY*

IRS Effective Date of Exemption (optional): *MM/DD/YYYY*

List of Board of Director names and professional roles: *(Do not copy and paste from a PDF or from a formatted table).*

**Section 3: Organization Practices**

Describe how the organization’s board and leadership staff work together in managing overall organization strategy and planning. *(1,000-character limit)*

Please describe where equity is reflected in the organization’s mission, vision, values, board leadership, and/or overall strategy. If not, please explain*. (1,000-character limit)*

Please describe the equity strategies the organization uses within internal operations and in serving the community. (*2,000-character limit*)

What future plans does the organization have for advancing its equity goals? *(1,000-character limit)*

**Section 4: Organization and Community**

Describe the organization’s value to the community, including its economic impact. *(2,000-character limit)*

Describe how the organization utilizes relevant resources, connections, and networks both in the community and more broadly. *(2,000-character limit)*

GENERAL OPERATING REQUESTS

**Section 5: Organization Impact**

Describe the organization’s data capacity for assessing programmatic impact. *(2,000-character limit)*

Describe the organization’s accomplishments and impact in the past year, including summary metrics and outcomes if possible. *(2,000-character limit)*

Describe the anticipated impact of receiving the funding requested in this application. *(2,000-character limit)*

CAPACITY BUILDING REQUESTS

**Section 6: Proposal Background**

What type(s) of organizational capacity will this project build? *Please list up to two capacities from the list below.*

*Types of Organizational Capacities:*

* + - *Mission, Vision, Strategy, and Planning*
    - *Management Team Leadership*
    - *Board Leadership*
    - *Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*
    - *Program Design and Evaluation*
    - *Human Resources Management*
    - *Legal Resources*
    - *Financial Management*
    - *Fund Development*
    - *Marketing, Communications, and External Relations*
    - *Information Technology*
    - *Collaboration*

Is this part of a multi-year project? *(Yes/No)*

If yes, outline the overall project briefly. *(1,000-character limit)*

What led to the decision to pursue this project? *(1,500-character limit)*

**Section 7: Proposal Details**

Explain the proposal. Describe how the project will be carried out outlining the relevant activities and timelines. NOTE: f*or organizations based outside Linn County or serving a larger geographical area, please detail activities and impact specific to Linn County only. (2,000-character limit)*

Total project budget inclusive of all funding:

What is the amount of funding already committed to the program/project?

How many bids did you receive for the proposed project/equipment/assistance?

Please explain either how you chose this bid over the others or why only one or no bids were appropriate/necessary for the proposed project. *(1,000-character limit)*

Will there be ongoing costs resulting from this project? If so, describe and explain how these costs will be funded going forward. *(1,000-character limit)*

Describe the anticipated impact of the proposed project*. (2,000-character limit)*

**Section 8: Objectives**

Objective: *(200-character limit)*

* *A minimum of one objective is required for a Capacity-Building request*
* *You may enter up to three objectives to fully explain the purposes of the project and describe how you will gather data to measure the impact of the project or program*
* *For each objective, please click the "Add" link to add a new objective table*
* *Be specific. The objective must be measurable – e.g., provide 5,000 lunches to students under the age of 18 or provide four exhibits with educational opportunities for working artists*

Evaluation method: how will you collect data to report on how well this objective was met? *(300-character limit)*

ALL REQUESTS

**Section 9: Organization Contact Information**

*This will auto-populate from the Organization Contact Information in our system.*

Tax ID:

Name of organization primary contact and organizational role: *This must be the Executive Director, Board Chairperson, or organization President.*

Address information:

Website address:

Organization phone number:

Primary contact phone and extension:

Primary contact email:

**Section 10: Submission Information and Signature**

Name of the person we should contact with questions regarding this specific application:

Application contact’s organizational role:

Application contact’s phone and extension:

Application contact’s email:

Submitter’s name/Electronic Submission Authorization:

Submitter’s organizational role:

TO COMPLETE THE APPLICATION

Please open each section of the application, including the ones you do not need to answer for this application. If a section is not required, simply click "Save and Go Next" to move to the next section. The “submit” button will appear when all sections are complete with green check marks and all mandatory documents are uploaded. The review process takes approximately 10 weeks from the application deadline.

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**ORGANIZATION SUPPORT GRANT SCORING CRITERIA**

A strong application will provide compelling reasons for the Community Foundation to invest in this organization.

ORGANIZATION and community *(maximum 5 points)*

* Organization provides value to the local community
* Organization has significant support from the community
* Organization effectively utilizes relevant resources, connections, and networks both in the community and more broadly

ORGANIZATIONAL impact in community *(maximum 5 points)*

* Organization’s work has measurable impact given the organization's size and longevity
* Organization has both short-term and long-term goals and a plan for achieving them
* Organization plan for coming year reflects both current realities and vision for its future

IMPACT OF PROPOSED PROJECT OR IMPACT OF REQUESTED FUNDING *(maximum 5 points)*

* Anticipated impact clearly stated/appropriate
* Anticipated impact is aligned with organization’s mission/goals

ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT *(maximum 5 points*

* Organization has existing strong governance practices in place
* Organization budget is balanced and appropriate to age, circumstances, and size

Organization Equity Practices *(maximum 5 points)*

* Organization collects and has shared current organizational demographics for both board and staff in this application
* Organization’s commitment to equity and justice is reflected in their self-description and strategic documents
* Organization’s commitment to equity is reflected in their internal operations
* Organization’s commitment to equity is reflected in how they serve the community

**Total Score** *(maximum 25 points)* \*

*\* See next page for additional information about scoring matrix values.*

SCORING MATRIX VALUES

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| SCORE | MEANING |
| 1 | Unacceptable response:   * None provided * Demonstrating a significant misunderstanding of the question * Not meeting the criteria even to a minimum extent |
| 2 | Weak response:   * Meeting certain aspects to a minimum extent but fails in others * Little evidence of ability to meet or deliver to the proposed criteria |
| 3 | Fair response as:   * Meeting the majority but not all aspects of the criteria * Adequate evidence of ability to meet or deliver to the proposed criteria |
| 4 | Good response:   * Meeting all aspects of the criteria * Comprehensive, clear proposal demonstrating a good understanding of the criteria * Clear evidence of ability to meet or deliver to the proposed criteria |
| 5 | Response which exceeds criteria:   * Materially exceeding the criteria, through a creative or innovative response or where additional ‘added value’ areas have been identified * Clear evidence of ability to exceed the proposed criteria |

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