

**LINN COUNTY GRANT APPLICATION**

2023 GUIDELINES

Purpose:

The Linn County Fund supports programs and projects that enhance the quality of life and community development outside the metropolitan area in Linn County, Iowa. \*

* Priority is given to applications from non-metro communities in Linn County.
* Capital projects are eligible for consideration.
* Priority is given to programs that are well designed, responsive to community conditions, innovative, make effective use of community resources, and test or demonstrate solutions to community issues.

*\*The metropolitan area in Linn County consists of Cedar Rapids, Marion, Hiawatha, Robins, and Fairfax.*

DEADLINE:

The Linn County Grant deadline is Tuesday, September 12, 2023 at 4:30 p.m. CST.

ORGANIZATION ELIGIBILITY:

* The Community Foundation accepts applications from nonprofit organizations with a 501(c)(3) status, governmental organizations, and non-501(c)(3) organizations that have completed arrangements to obtain a fiscal sponsor.
* Organizations based in the Cedar Rapids area may apply for projects benefiting non-metro Linn County with support and partners identified within the community being served.

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES:

* Fundraising events and activities
* Religious activities or efforts supporting an organization’s core religious mission - contact Program Officer for clarification
* Scholarships for primary and secondary education and post-secondary degree programs
* Expenses that have occurred or will occur during the grant review process
* Travel out of the region
* Re-granting funds to other nonprofits

MAXIMUM REQUEST AMOUNT:

$10,000

DURATION OF GRANT:

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 2023:**

Please note that 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 2023 will be made available through the Nonprofit Network: <https://www.gcrcf.org/nonprofits/nonprofit-network/>

Our grant applications and scoring process now 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 new 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 form(s) 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.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| APPLICATION CHECKLIST:  |  |
| * Application responses completed in this document
 | Recommended |
| * Organization Snapshot (including Board list) updated before starting the application online
 | Required |
| * Online application completed
 | Required |
| * **Organization Demographics Form completed and uploaded (new in 2023)**
 | 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 |
| * Budget Explanation *(explaining unusual circumstances, 1-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: Funds for the Community, Program, Organization Support, Endowment Challenge and Linn County, and a financial summary from submitted IRS-990’s for the last five years.

Questions?

Contact Sanjana Raghavan, Program Officer, at sanjana.raghavan@gcrcf.org or at 319.200.2279.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Each category – program or capital – has a unique set of questions within the application.

To determine the correct category for your program or project, look at the questions on the following pages of this document:

* Program Request questions begin on page 5
* Capital Request questions begin on page 6

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

**Pre-Qualifying Questions:**

Have you updated your Organization Snapshot in the last 12 months?

Charitable status: 501(c)(3), governmental organization, requires fiscal sponsor

Will your project serve non-metro Linn County communities?

**Proposal Title:**

*(50 character-limit)*

**Section 1: Proposal Summary**

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

Proposal Summary Statement: Please provide a two-three sentence summary of the project. *(This may be used in publications such as the Community Foundation website, annual report, and other print or online publications.) (300-character limit)*

Type of Request (check one): Program request OR Capital request
*Program request = Operational, activity, general programmatic support*

*Capital* request *= The building of or physical improvement of something*

***The answer to this question- Program based or Capital based- will determine which specific set of questions are visible throughout the rest of the application. Note: For Program request applications, Sections 1-5 and 8-9 must be completed. For Capital request applications, Sections 1-4, 6-9 must be completed.***

Total Project Budget inclusive of all funding:

What is the amount of funding already committed to the program/project? *(Dollar amount answer)*

Total dollar amount requested from this grant program:

**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: *(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)*

Is commitment to equity and justice reflected in the organization’s mission, vision, values, board leadership, and/or overall strategy? Yes/No

If yes, please describe where equity is reflected specifically. If no, please explain*. (2,000-character limit)*

What equity strategies does the organization use within its operations? *(2,000-character limit)*

What equity strategies does the organization use in serving the community? *(2,000-character limit)*

***Please note:*** *The Community Foundation Organization Demographics Form must be completed and uploaded to complete this application.*

PROGRAM REQUESTS

**Section 4: Program Requests**

Explain the proposal. Describe how the program or project will be carried out outlining the relevant activities and timelines. *(2,000-character limit)*

Who will benefit? Why will they want to be involved and how will you let them know about it? *(2,000-character limit)*

How many unduplicated individuals will this program/project serve? *(This calculation should count each individual once, regardless of the number of activities or services the person may have accessed).*

If providing such a count is not possible, please explain: *(500-character limit)*

Objective: *(200-character limit)*

* *A minimum of one objective is required for a Program Request.*
* *You may enter up to three objectives to fully explain the purposes of the project/ program 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)*

**Section 5: Organizational Impact**

Identify similar work in the community. What is the gap this program fills? *(1,500-character limit)*

*Please answer A or B below. Choose the one that helps describe the importance of your work.*

1. How does a typical participant interact with this program, and what impact would it have on them?

 **OR**

1. What impact does the program have on the quality of life in the community as a whole?

 *(2000-character limit)*

CAPITAL REQUESTS

**Section 6: Capital Requests**

Explain the proposal. Describe how the program or project will be carried out outlining the relevant activities and timelines. *(2,000-character limit)*

Describe how the space requirements have changed or developed over time and what led to the need for a capital project. *(1,500-character limit)*

How many bids did you receive for the proposed project/equipment/assistance? *(Numerical answer)*

How did you choose this bid over the others? *(2,000-character limit)*

**Section 7: Organizational Impact**

Please explain why the Community Foundation should invest in a capital project for the organization. What are its strengths? What is its value to the community? (2,000 character limit)

What other support, if any, is the community providing to this program/project? (This may include in-kind support.) (500 character limit)

**Section 8: 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 9: 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 that section is not required for this request type, 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.



A strong application will show that the organization addresses the criteria below in relation to the soundness of the proposal, the readiness of the organization to undertake this activity and measurable impact given the organization's size and longevity.

**LINN COUNTY GRANT**

**SCORING CRITERIA**

PLAN AND EVALUATION *(maximum 5 points)*

Consider the quality and potential impact of the proposal, an appropriate match between the program activities and the stated goals, as well as the likelihood of success.

* Program is well designed
* Activities and timeline are clear and achievable
* Outcomes are significant and measurable

BUDGET AND RATIOS *(maximum 5 points)*

* Budget is calculated correctly, is adequate and realistic
* Service delivery costs are reasonable
* Organization is financially stable

COMMUNITY VALUE *(maximum 5 points)*

Consider how the proposal relates to current community conditions. Does this project provide appropriate value to the right geographic area and is this the right timing for the project?

* Proposed activities address current conditions and opportunities
* Proposal fills a unique niche or is synergistic with other programs
* Application originated from a non-metro community group

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY *(maximum 5 points)*

Does the organization have the internal structure, staffing and skills necessary to implement and sustain the effort?

* Proposal clearly communicates internal workings of the program
* Initiative utilizes existing skills within the organization
* Volunteers or collaborative partnerships leverage dollars, provide expertise or expand programming (when appropriate)

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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