Foundation for the Tri-State Community Grants Guidelines

Investing in Innovation and Strong Organizations

Through its Community Grant Program, the Foundation's Board of Trustees invests in projects that leave our community stronger. Preference is given to proposals that create lasting community benefit by:

- advancing innovative solutions to community challenges;
- improving community amenities and expanding opportunities that enhance the quality of life; or
- strengthening nonprofit organizations that have demonstrated effective stewardship of prior Foundation investments.

Whether proposing a new initiative or strengthening an established organization, applicants should demonstrate how the requested investment will produce benefits that extend beyond the grant period.

Applicants should apply under **one** of the following priorities.

1. Community Innovation and Enhancement

The Foundation encourages projects that introduce new ideas, expand successful programs, or enhance community amenities that improve the quality of life in the Tri-State.

Organizations applying to the Foundation for the first time are generally encouraged to apply under this priority.

Examples may include:

- Create or expand a recreational, cultural, or educational amenity
- Improve an existing amenity to increase community access
- Pilot a program that addresses an unmet or emerging community need
- Build partnerships or collaborative models
- Demonstrate innovative approaches to persistent social, educational, health, environmental, or economic challenges that can be replicated or expanded by other organizations or communities.

2. Strengthen Organizational Capacity

The Foundation also invests in strengthening nonprofit organizations by supporting projects that improve their long-term effectiveness, sustainability, and capacity to serve the community.

Because these grants represent an investment in an organization's long-term capacity, this priority is generally limited to organizations that have previously received Foundation funding and have demonstrated sound stewardship and successful implementation of prior grant awards.

Examples may include:

- Equipment that improves organizational efficiency or service delivery
- Strategic planning, financial sustainability planning, or succession planning
- Governance and board development
- On-site organizational training or technical assistance provided by qualified consultants or subject matter experts that strengthens the knowledge and capacity of multiple staff members, volunteers, or board members. Individual conference registration, travel, and lodging expenses are not typically eligible.
- Data systems and analytics that improve organizational decision-making, performance measurement, and impact evaluation
- Operational improvements that reduce ongoing costs or increase organizational effectiveness
- Collaborative systems or shared resources that strengthen multiple organizations

Projects are **not required to meet both priorities**. Applicants should select the priority that best aligns with the purpose of their proposal.

Grant Information

- Grant awards of up to **$10,000** are available.
- Organizations may submit **one application per Community Grant funding cycle.**
- Community Grants are awarded **twice annually** (spring and fall). Organizations funded through Community Grants must wait a full year before applying again.
- **Next application deadline:** October 30, 2026 at 5pm.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants include:

- Organizations recognized as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- Governmental entities, schools, and other charitable organizations sponsoring projects that meet the Foundation's charitable grantmaking guidelines.

To be eligible for funding, project activities **must take place in** one or more counties in the Foundation's service area, including:

- Boyd and Greenup Counties, Kentucky
- Cabell and Wayne Counties, West Virginia
- Lawrence County, Ohio

Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact Foundation staff before starting an application to discuss project ideas, eligibility, and funding priorities. Early conversations often strengthen proposals and help applicants determine the most appropriate funding opportunity.

The Foundation recognizes that every proposal is unique. While the Board of Trustees retains discretion to consider requests on a case-by-case basis, the following requests are generally not eligible for Community Grant funding:

- Fundraising events, galas, festivals, or one-time celebrations
- General operating support
- Individual conference registration, travel, lodging, or meals
- Major capital construction or building renovation projects
- Ongoing salaries, wages, or employee benefits
- Operational deficits
- Payments to individuals
- Retroactive funding
- Scholarships
- Sectarian activities of religious organizations

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