

2026 Community Grants Program

Community Foundation Serving West Central Illinois & Northeast Missouri

Instructions & Program Expectations

Program Description

Please be sure to read the entire Community Grant Program Description, which outlines the details and priorities of the program.

Important Notes

- Eligible organizations may only submit one application for this year's program. If more than one request is submitted, only the first application submitted will be reviewed.
Note: Organizations that have a fiscal sponsorship relationship with another non-501c3 nonprofit may apply for themselves as well as the sponsored entity.
- Grants awarded will be between \$1,000 and \$7,500.
- You may apply for specific project or general operation support.
- Partial funding may be awarded. You will be asked to indicate if you will accept a partial award.
- Please read the instructions for each question carefully and provide all requested information and materials.

Expenditure and Reporting Requirements

All grants awarded through the *Community Grants* program must be expended and a report submitted by **June 1 of 2027**.

(A 60-day grace period for final report submission will be allowed for grantees who are not applying for a 2027 Community Grant).

An organization is not eligible to receive another Community Grant until all past Community Grant funds are expended and final grant & budget reports have been submitted online to the Community Foundation.

Check your dashboard in our grant portal for past awards and reports due.

Please contact the Community Foundation at (217) 222-1237 or email grants@mycommunityfoundation.org with expenditure or reporting questions.

Organization & Request Summary

Request Category*

Community Grant applications may be submitted for either general or project support. However, only one application per organization is permitted.

- **General Support**

Unrestricted funds that may cover any of a nonprofit's expenses, without restrictions, including operations. General support is for the overall mission of the organization rather than a specific program or project.

- **Project Support**

Support of a program, project, activity, or purchase that is tied to a specific outcome or activity. There must be a defined timeline for implementation. The grant is restricted for the specific purpose or project. Project Support requests must provide a project budget including line item income and expenses. (Please use the *Project Budget Form* in the *Required Documents and Financial Information* section.)

Select your request category.

Choices

General Support

Project Support

Request Name*

Please create a name for your project or request. See examples below.

- *If your request is for the purchase of item(s), please include the name of the items such as, "iPads for Student STEM Curriculum."*
- *If your request is for general support, please name your request, "General support of [Organization Name]."*

Character Limit: 100

Amount Requested*

Enter the amount requested.

- Do not exceed the program limit of \$7,500

Character Limit: 20

Applicant's Organization Type*

Select the legal type/classification of your organization.

If your organization is not legally classified as one of the organization types listed below, it is not eligible for this program. For those organizations using a fiscal sponsor, grant awards will be paid to the fiscal sponsor.

Choices

501(c)3 Nonprofit

Charitable group/project using a 501(c)3 Fiscal Sponsor
Unit of Government for a public, charitable purpose
Religious Organization for a public, charitable purpose

Mission*

Please state your organization’s mission.

Character Limit: 500

Area of Interest*

What is the primary charitable interest area of this request? *(Self-Reported)*

- Arts & Culture - (creative & cultural activities including fine arts, music, history, & architecture)
- Community Betterment - (requests intended to generally enhance a defined community)
- Education - (requests that support primary, secondary, higher education and schools, or technical/trade education)
- Health - (requests intending to improve the health & well-being of community members)
- Human Services - (requests aiming to help community members with basic human needs and to live productive, safe, and rewarding lives)
- Youth Development - (requests that intend to support developmental progress helping young people reach their full potential)

Choices

- Arts & Culture
- Community Betterment
- Education
- Health
- Human Services
- Youth Development

Area of Interest - Internal Assignment by CF Staff

Choices

- Arts & Culture
- Community Betterment
- Education
- Health
- Human Services
- Youth Development

Request Summary*

Provide a brief summary (4-6 sentence) of the funding request.

Whether you receive this grant or not, this summary will be included in our annual Book of Opportunities catalog, which is distributed to all Community Foundation Donor Advised Fund

advisors for grant considerations throughout the year. This summary will help make your needs known to an audience outside this program.

Character Limit: 1000

Geographic Service Area*

Please select the county or counties that will be directly impacted by the funding you are requesting.

Please do not select every county that your organization serves, only those impacted by this grant.

Choices

- Adams, IL
- Brown, IL
- Hancock, IL
- Pike, IL
- Clark, MO
- Lewis, MO
- Marion, MO
- Ralls, MO
- Pike, MO
- Knox, MO
- Shelby, MO
- Monroe, MO

Acceptance of Partial Funding*

In some cases it is not possible for us to fully fund a request, due to the limited program budget and restrictions on the funds that support this grant program.

Will you accept partial funding if it is granted?

Choices

- Yes
- No

Request Narrative

Need or Opportunity & Population Impact*

What need or opportunity does this request address, and who will it impact (target population)?

Character Limit: 2000

Proposal Plan*

Describe your plan for implementing your request. What activities will take place, and how will they impact the stated need/opportunity?

Character Limit: 2000

Expenditure & Activity Timeline*

When will purchases be made or services paid?

NOTE: Programs or projects funded by Community Grant awards may not start before August 15, 2025, and must be completed by June 1, 2026 if you plan to apply for a 2026 Community Grant next year.

Character Limit: 250

Who will carry out these activities?*

Which key staff or volunteers will implement your plan?

Character Limit: 250

Number Served or Impacted*

How many individuals in the defined geographic service area will be served?

Character Limit: 10

Collaboration*

Are you working with any other organizations to implement or fund this project? Please describe who is involved and how you are working together.

Character Limit: 500

Evaluation*

Describe how you will determine your success or progress.

- What goals will be achieved?
- What will you measure and how?

Character Limit: 500

Community Foundation Past Funding*

Has the Community Foundation funded this program or request in the past 5 years? Briefly summarize the results, growth, and/or changes from your previous requests or funding.

Character Limit: 1000

Funding Impact*

Briefly explain how Community Foundation funding will impact the success of this project, program or your operations. If this request will be used towards a match or will be otherwise leveraged for additional funding, describe that here.

Character Limit: 1000

Financial Information

Current Annual Operating - Budgeted Expenses*

What is the total dollar amount of your organization's budgeted expenses for the current fiscal year?

Character Limit: 20

Total Project or Program Cost

If applying for project support, what is the total cost of the project?

Character Limit: 20

UPLOADING FILES

When uploading files for the following questions, please use one of the following file types: [xlsx \(Excel\)](#), [docx \(Word\)](#), [pdf \(Adobe\)](#), [jpg \(image\)](#)

NOTE: When creating/exporting pdf or jpg files, especially from Excel, please make sure your page is set to a standard 8.5 x 11 page, either portrait or landscape orientation.

Please sure your columns and rows are set to fit the page.

Current Operating Budget*

Attach your organization's current fiscal year budget.

Your budget is a detailed projection of anticipated income and expenses for the current fiscal year.

If needed, [click here to download a simple budget template.](#)

File Size Limit: 2 MB

Audit OR Year-End Financial Statement*

1. If you are required to conduct an audit, please attach it for the most recently completed fiscal year.
2. If not, please submit your organization's most recent completed fiscal year-end financial statement or balance sheet. *The financial statement must include the most recently completed fiscal year's actual income and expenses.*

ILLINOIS Audit Requirements

Effective Jan. 1, 2024, a charitable organization with annual contributions of more than \$500,000 must file an audited financial statement prepared by an independent CPA. A charitable organization with contributions between \$300,000 and \$500,000 must file a financial statement with the Attorney General.

File Size Limit: 8 MB

Board of Directors List*

List or upload the names of your current board members and officers. Specific contact information such as phone numbers and email addresses for officers and directors is not necessary.

Character Limit: 1000 | File Size Limit: 2 MB

Project Budget (not required for general support requests)

**** Required for project support requests ****

If your request is for project support, provide the project budget by uploading it here.

- The project budget should include all planned income and expenses related to the project.
- Your requested grant from the Community Foundation should be listed as a portion of the total project income and its status should be "Pending".
- Click here for a sample template.

File Size Limit: 2 MB

Bids or Quotes (for items or services \$2,500 or more)

If you are requesting funds for the purchase of items, equipment, construction/landscaping, or services that will be performed by an outside vendor, two bids or quotes are required for each item or service that equals or exceeds \$2,500.

Examples: If you are requesting funds to purchase a new appliance that exceeds \$2,500, like a walk-in refrigerator for your program, please include quotes from two different vendors.

Construction or other services over \$2,500 would also require two bids.

Note: If there is only one possible or preferred vendor for the item or service, please explain why in the space provided.

Character Limit: 500

Bid #1

File Size Limit: 2 MB

Bid #2

File Size Limit: 2 MB

Additional Documents for Consideration

This space is for any additional documents you would like to have considered with your application.

File Size Limit: 4 MB

If your organization is using a Fiscal Sponsor, additional documents are required in the next section labeled Required Documents from Fiscal Sponsors.

Fiscal Sponsor Documents (Only for non-501c3 organizations)

IMPORTANT: This section is only for non-501c3 charitable organizations who must partner with a Fiscal Sponsor in order to be eligible for this program. 501c3 and other eligible organizations may skip this section.

Organizations or groups without 501c3 status from the IRS may still apply for Community Foundation grants, provided they have a formal, documented relationship with a Fiscal Sponsor. This section is only required for such organizations.

The applicant should include the Fiscal Sponsor's name in their Organization Name in their online account as shown here.

[Fiscal Sponsor Name] / [Sponsored Organization Name]

Example: Community Foundation/Michael's Food Pantry

Fiscal Sponsor Approval

On your Fiscal Sponsor's letterhead, submit a letter signed by the Fiscal Sponsor's Executive Director and Board President indicating the following information:

- Willingness to administer the grant if awarded.
- The duration of time and nature of the cooperative relationship between the entities.
- List the services and frequency that the Fiscal Sponsor will provide to the sponsored organization - bookkeeping, payroll, benefits, space, grant reporting, reports to the IRS, etc.
- A list of all fees charged by the Fiscal Sponsor to the Sponsored Organization.

File Size Limit: 1 MB

Fiscal Sponsor's Audit OR Year-End Financial Statement

1. If your Fiscal Sponsor conducts an audit, please attach it for the most recently completed fiscal year.
2. If not, please submit your Fiscal Sponsor's most recently completed fiscal year-end financial statement or balance sheet.

The financial statement must include the most recently completed fiscal year's actual income and expenses.

File Size Limit: 2 MB

Fiscal Sponsor's Board of Directors

List the names of your Fiscal Sponsor's current board members and officers. Specific contact information such as phone numbers and email addresses for officers and directors is not necessary.

Character Limit: 500

Electronic Signature

Prior to the release of any grant monies, grant recipients must sign a grant agreement, which will be provided prior to our awards presentation.

- Grantees must agree to use grants as specified and file an online follow-up report including a Budget Report.
- Failure to comply with the terms of the grant agreement or to submit a completed report will make a grantee ineligible for future grants from the Community Foundation.

Electronic Signature*

- Enter your full name, business title and the date of submission. (e.g.: Erin Smith, Executive Director, May 1, 2025)
- By entering your signature and information, you agree to the terms stated in this application and certify that the statements contained in this application are true and correct to the best of your knowledge.

Character Limit: 250

Final Instructions and Recommendations

If your organization or its fiscal sponsor received a grant from a previous Community Grant cycle, you must submit your final follow-up report online prior to submitting this application. See your dashboard for due or overdue follow-up reports.

Application Reviews

Should you desire it, a one-on-one staff review of your application is available *once it is ready to submit*. (All application questions should be answered, all required documents should be uploaded, etc.) These reviews will be conducted over Zoom by appointment only. No reviews will be conducted offline without an appointment with the applicant.

Appointment requests must be made on or before April 11, 2025 using the following scheduling link:

[Book an application review with Kent Embree](#)

Please contact Kent Embree, Program Officer at the Community Foundation, ph (217) 222-1237 or email grants@mycommunityfoundation.org with questions.

Don't forget to click SUBMIT below! The deadline for application submission is on or before 11:59 p.m.(Central Time) on May 1, 2025.