Community Grant Program
2026 Update

Program Summary

The Community Foundation annually awards grants through its *Community Grant* process to meet needs and advance opportunities in its 12-county region. Through the *Community Grant* program, the Community Foundation seeks to strengthen nonprofit services to enhance the quality of life throughout the region that we serve. Due to the broad scope of this program, it is a competitive process and requests are evaluated by a volunteer committee based on the annual program budget and fund restrictions.

Eligibility Requirements

- Grants may be awarded to:
  - Nonprofit organizations that are recognized as exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code.
  - Government entities applying for grants that are exclusively for public or charitable purposes.
  - Faith-based organizations (e.g., church) applying for grants that benefit the public good, but not for specifically religious or sectarian purposes, or programs that require participation in a religious activity as a condition for receiving services.
  - Charitable groups or projects that have a documented fiscal sponsorship relationship with a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. *Note: serving as a fiscal sponsor does not exclude the sponsor from submitting an application for its own project.*
- Applicant organizations and grants awarded must directly serve at least one of the following 12 counties: Adams, Brown, Hancock, or Pike in Illinois; Clark, Knox, Lewis, Marion, Monroe, Pike, Ralls, or Shelby in Missouri.

Grant Criteria

- Grants will be made for programs and projects in the areas of arts and culture, community betterment, education, health, human services, and youth development.
- Applications may be submitted for specific project support or general operating support.

Priorities

Through the *Community Grant* program, the Community Foundation seeks to award grants that will enhance the quality of life in West Central Illinois and Northeast Missouri by:

1) Helping organizations better respond to defined needs or opportunities within the community they serve;
2) Encouraging community collaborations and partnerships to maximize the impact on the community and population served;
3) Reaching a significant number of community members or specific groups of underserved community members throughout its 12-county service area;
4) Supporting nonprofit organizations which are physically located in or have demonstrated, active services that directly benefit residents within the Community Foundation's service area.
5) AND making a significant impact on the success of the overall request (consider the size of the grant in relation to the total budget).

Submissions

Each applicant organization may only submit **ONE** application request to this program during a given year/ program cycle. However, applicants are welcome to submit additional request summaries for inclusion in our annual *Book of Opportunities* catalog, which is distributed to Donor Advisors and available publicly on our website.

Application Overview

1) Summary - Provide basic information about your organization, request, focus area, and geographic area served.
2) Community Need or Opportunity - Describe why the request is needed and the population it serves.
3) Proposal Plan - Provide a description of your plan for execution of the grant money and how it will be used, including timing, collaborations with other entities, and key staff members.
4) Goals & Measuring Results - Describe anticipated results and how you'll know if it's successful.
5) Budget & Financials - Provide a budget for the proposed project, current organizational budget, and most recent annual financial statement.

Amount Available

- Grants range from $1,000 up to $7,500.
- Partial funding is often awarded due to budget constraints. *Please consider whether or not you will accept the responsibility of completing your project with partial funding. Projects, as described in your request, must be completed in one year.*

Timeline:

- March 1: Application opens on Community Foundation grants portal.
- April 1 – April 17: Community Foundation staff are available to review your completed application. *Appointment must be scheduled online:* Book time with Kent Embree, Program Officer
- April 10: Deadline to schedule an application review with staff.
- April 17: Last date to participate in an application review appointment with Community Foundation staff.
- May 1: Application closes at 11:59 p.m.
- Early August: Applicants notified of award decisions.
- August 19: Grants awarded.