



GRANTMAKING GUIDELINES

The Community Foundation is a public charity organized as a collection of permanent endowments. The income from these endowed funds is awarded through a grant application process to provide charitable funding to nonprofits classified by the IRS as 501(c)(3) organizations and other eligible entities (such as municipalities, schools and faith-based organizations), *for projects that predominantly benefit residents of Clinton, Eaton and Ingham Counties, Michigan.*

Community Foundation Grant Categories

Detailed information and applications can be found at www.ourcommunity.org/grants

A nonprofit organization may qualify for more than one grant category per year. However, because funding is limited, organizations should be thoughtful before submitting applications for multiple categories. Only one grant application per category will be accepted from each organization.

1) Impact grants - \$10,000 - 75,000

TIMELINE: The Impact Grant Preliminary Application period is approximately December 1 – February 1. This may vary slightly, please consult our website for up to date timelines. A volunteer grant committee reviews the preliminary applications. Those which meet our criteria will be invited in March to submit a full grant application for funding consideration by committee in late June, with notification of grantees and availability of funds in early July. Funds must be requested within one year of grant approval date.

CRITERIA:

- A. Impact grantees are not eligible for funding in consecutive years.
- B. All Impact Grants must fulfill or leverage a 1:1 cash match.
- C. To apply for Impact funding, projects must meet at least one of the following Impact Criteria:
 - **Significantly increase the long-term impact of an organization or program, not to provide cash assistance for ongoing operations.** *Operating expenses are defined as routine expenses in an organization's operating budget, including expenses related to existing, ongoing programming, occupancy, administration, etc. Our committee will not provide grants that simply fill a gap in a nonprofit's operating budget. For example: Impact grants will not purchase food for a pantry, but our committee may consider purchasing equipment that would allow a food pantry to stock healthier fresh food options.*
 - **Significantly increase the organization's ability to reach underserved populations, not to simply serve more people.** *For example: Impact grants will not be made to support additional people utilizing an existing program, but our committee may choose to fund some costs of starting a satellite program to serve people in a different area of town. To qualify, the need for expanded services must be substantiated along with a detailed sustainability plan for long-term increased services.*
 - **Enable two or more nonprofits to work collaboratively to create transformative and sustainable community change.** *For example, two organizations serving the same constituents may implement a new or expanded program together that would otherwise be impossible without collaboration.*

2) Capacity Building Grants – up to \$40,000

TIMELINE: Capacity Grant Preliminary Application period is approximately December 1 – February 1. This may vary slightly, please consult our website for current timelines. A volunteer grant committee reviews the preliminary applications. Those which meet our criteria will be invited to submit a full grant application for funding consideration in April, with notification of grantees in May. Capacity grants are paid to the organization as a reimbursement.

CRITERIA:

- A. Eligible organizations must have at least one paid staff and an annual operating budget of at least \$100,000.
- B. Special consideration will be given to grant applicants that invest some of their own funds (or funds from an alternate source) toward capacity-building efforts.
- C. These grants are made to support capacity building efforts that increase a nonprofit's sustainability and effectiveness by **strengthening management systems and governance**.

Projects that may be eligible for Capacity Building grants include:

- Fund development education and planning
- Diversification of revenue streams
- Board and/ or staff training and development
- Additional staffing to strengthen management systems (must provide a detailed plan for financial sustainability of new staffing)
- Organizational assessment and evaluation of overall effectiveness
- Organizational restructuring and mergers
- Strategic planning (must include substantial attention to capacity building)
- Strategic marketing plans (not marketing materials)
- Strategic IT system improvements (not general IT upgrades and maintenance that should be included in the organization's operating budget)

The Community Foundation can provide referrals to the following pre-approved consultants for capacity building assistance and educational opportunities.

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| ▪ Non-Profit Network | ▪ Erin Skene-Pratt, Momentum Associates |
| ▪ Michigan Nonprofit Association Tech Services | ▪ Cathy Adcock, Adcock CFO Solutions |
| ▪ John Cauley, Cauley Coaching and Consulting | ▪ Carol Pence, Pence Consulting |
| | ▪ Rebecca Bahar-Cook, Capitol Fundraising Associates |

3) Mini-Grants - \$2,500-5,000

TIMELINE: Application period is approximately December 1 – February 1. This may vary slightly, please consult our website for current timelines. A summary of Mini-Grant requests will be provided to the Community Foundation's donor advised fund-holders for their consideration. Grants can be made at any time after February 15. While there is no guarantee that Mini-Grant requests will be funded, we do keep these requests available to donors until December 31 for their year-end giving.

CRITERIA:

- A. Mini-Grants can be requested for ongoing programming and/or capacity building
- B. Annual organizational budget cannot exceed \$350,000
- C. Meeting Impact Criteria is recommended but not required (see Impact Grant criteria)

4) Youth Action Committee (YAC) Grants - \$500-5,000

The Community Foundation's Youth Action Committee consists of teens age 14-18, in one of the three YAC branch areas: Charlotte, St. Johns and Greater Lansing. Using survey tools, YAC members conduct a Needs Assessment of youth in their local community. Local nonprofit organizations that address the issues identified in the survey will be personally invited to apply for a Youth Grant.

TIMELINE: Youth Action Committee members invite agencies to apply in January and February. Grant decisions are made during March and April, with notification of grantees and availability of funds in May. Funds must be requested within one year of grant approval date.

CRITERIA:

- A. Organizations eligible for grants must be one of the following:
 - A public or non-profit private school, or a registered student organization within the school, in Ingham, Eaton or Clinton Co.
 - A non-profit charitable organization serving tri-county youth, or a governmental entity serving tri-county youth
- B. Priority will be given to proposals that address the specific youth and teen issues identified in the youth Needs Assessment survey.
- C. Special consideration will be given to proposals that involve area teens in each phase of the project/program (planning, grant writing and implementation)
- D. Special consideration will be given to proposals that will use the grant to generate the greatest amount of activity (by involving volunteers or by attracting additional funding for the project from other sources.)

What our Community Foundation generally will not fund

The Community Foundation is **unable** to fund the following through the grant application process:

- Individuals
- International organizations
- Sectarian or religious programs
- Endowment funds
- Annual meetings
- Existing obligations, debts or expenses incurred before the grant approval date

Regarding colleges, universities and schools

Our Community Foundation will not support routine operating expenses, projects and activities, or equipment which are within the primary instructional and service responsibilities of a college, university or school, or which benefit only the college, university or school faculty, staff and students. Applications for funding of projects and activities sponsored or provided by colleges, universities and schools must: 1) demonstrate benefit to the broader community, beyond the academic institution, and 2) include letters of support from community organizations with their applications.

Regarding Capital Campaigns:

The Community Foundation will consider leadership gifts at the beginning of capital campaigns in order to leverage other giving. Please contact us for information.

Inclusion/Non-discrimination Statement *The Capital Region Community Foundation values projects and agencies that promote inclusiveness and that do not discriminate in hiring staff or providing services on the basis of race, gender, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, age, national origin or disability.*