

Information for Grantseekers

Who We Are:

The Community Foundation of Abilene is a public foundation committed to improving the quality of life in our area. The Foundation is a pool of charitable funds whose earnings are used to benefit the Abilene community. This is done largely by making grants to nonprofit organizations.

What We Fund:

Grants are awarded from the discretionary and field of interest funds of the CFA. The Community Foundation maintains full discretion over all grantmaking decisions. CFA will consider funding for special projects, innovative programs, equipment and building needs. Most grants are in the \$1,000 to \$25,000 range. Larger grants have been made on occasion. The chances of your agency's proposal being funded are substantially increased if the program or project:

- ◆ Proposes practical solutions to community problems;
- ◆ Responds to changing or emerging community needs;
- ◆ Addresses prevention as well as assistance for a problem;
- ◆ Promotes cooperation among nonprofit agencies without duplicating efforts;
- ◆ Leverages or generates other funding or resources;
- ◆ Promotes volunteer participation and citizen involvement in the community;
- ◆ Promotes grants that enhance and encourage sustainability.

Consideration is also given to the capability of the agency and its personnel to achieve expected results, past stewardship of the agency, the adequacy and professionalism of the budget and the support and cooperation of the agencies involved in similar projects.

Eligible Organizations

The Community Foundation welcomes proposals from nonprofit organizations in the Abilene, Texas area with an IRS tax exempt status. To be eligible to submit a grant proposal, an organization must be in compliance with any previous grant reporting requirements or conditions.

Some organizations have independent divisions that fall under the same 501 (c) 3. If there is a legitimate need, more than one division may apply for a grant within a 12-month period. For example, an organization serving as a fiscal agent for an agency or division requesting a grant may also apply for a grant in the same 12-month period.

Geographic Location

Priority is given to agencies located in and serving Abilene. Consideration will be given to awarding grants to agencies serving Abilene and outlying areas. An agency is not required to have a location in Abilene, but it is preferred that there is a chapter or representative in Abilene.

Ineligible Requests

CFA generally will not make grants for:

- ◆ Activities which do not benefit the citizens of Abilene;
- ◆ Maintenance expenses;
- ◆ Medical or scholarly research;
- ◆ Membership fees;
- ◆ Ticket sales for charitable fundraising efforts;
- ◆ Church related activities unless they involve the community as a whole;
- ◆ Travel for groups, such as school classes, clubs or sports teams;
- ◆ Deficit budget expenses or **retroactive** funding for current projects, programs or equipment;
- ◆ Capital debt reduction;
- ◆ Individuals, except through our educational scholarships;
- ◆ Political projects.

Limiting Factors

Before submitting a grant, the following should be considered:

- ◆ The CFA does not award more than one proposal to an organization from the Discretionary Grant Cycles within a twelve-month period;
- ◆ The CFA may choose to provide funding to an organization for the same program or project for consecutive years. However, agencies should take care not to become dependent on this funding as other community needs may be considered a priority from year to year.
- ◆ The CFA generally will not approve multi-year grants.

How To Apply For a Grant:

Online Access

The Foundation utilizes an online grants management system called Foundant GLM. All requested data must be submitted through this system, and applicant tutorials are available on the CFA website. Paper applications are no longer accepted for Discretionary or Future Fund Grant Cycles. Online forms for the upcoming grant cycles will be accessible June 30, 2016 by visiting www.cfabilene.org/nonprofits.

Timeline and Notification

Before a Grant Proposal will be considered by the Foundation, a **Letter of Intent** must be submitted online. Please note that the Letter of Intent functions as a preliminary proposal and requires specific organization, project, and financial information. Letters of Intent must be submitted and received online no later than 5:00 p.m. on the deadline date:

- ◆ Fall Cycle: August 26, 2016, for Letters of Intent
- ◆ Spring Cycle: January 20, 2017, for Letters of Intent

The Grant Distribution Committee will review Letters of Intent and determine which organizations will be requested to submit a **Grant Proposal**. Submitting organizations will be notified by letter and email, with the full proposals due no later than 5:00 p.m. on the deadline date:

- ◆ Fall Cycle: October 28, 2016, for Grant Proposal
- ◆ Spring Cycle: March 3, 2017, for Grant Proposal

After the full grant proposals have been reviewed and funding recommendations have been made, the CFA Board will meet to approve the funding recommendations. Upon their approval, applicants will be notified.

Evaluation

The Community Foundation of Abilene requires nonprofit organizations to report on the impact of programs it funds. The evaluation includes details about the need the program attempted to meet, its objectives, elements, measurable outcomes, the role of partners, plans for the future, opportunities for improvement, and an accounting of expenditures. The online evaluation is generally required within 6 months of the grant's issuance, or prior to the next year's grant cycle. Organizations that do not submit program evaluations will be ineligible to reapply for future grants.

If you have any further questions, please contact Michelle Parrish at 676-3883
or by email at mparrish@cfabilene.org.



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of Abilene