

Discretionary Grant Guidelines

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 grant making decisions. CFA will consider funding for operating expenses, 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 (operating under the same tax ID) may apply for a grant in the same cycle. 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 grant period.

Geographic Location

Funds are restricted to agencies located in and serving Abilene populations. Consideration will only be given to agencies serving Abilene and immediate surrounding 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;
- ◆ 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 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.

Online access for the upcoming cycle will open on July 15, 2020. Visit www.cfabilene.org/grants for a quick link to GLM. If you believe your organization already has a profile but you are unsure of the login information, please do not create a new profile. Doing so could result in loss of historical information for your organization. Instead, please contact Michelle Parrish at the CFA for information.

Timeline and Notification for Fiscal Year 2020-2021

New grant guidelines are available for the 2020-2021 fiscal year. Changes from previous grant cycles include:

- Only one cycle for entire fiscal year (July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021)
 - We will conduct one cycle in the fall, as opposed to a fall cycle and a spring cycle.
 - All applicants (even those that were awarded in Spring 2020) will be eligible to apply in Fall 2020.
 - The single, fall cycle will be the ONLY discretionary funding opportunity until the next fiscal year (July 1, 2021 - June 30, 2022).
 - All funds will be distributed by mid-November.
- One-step application process
 - We will not require a letter of intent and an application. Instead, applicants will only submit one application online. The requirements have been streamlined and include targeted COVID-19 related questions.
 - Application deadline is Friday, September 11, 2020.
 - Additional online requirements will be required for requests of \$10,000 and above, and for requests of \$25,000 and above.
- Grant priorities
 - Each Field of Interest (Arts and Culture, Education, Children/Youth, Health, Human Services, and Community Development) will receive an allocation (based on percentage) of the total discretionary funds. These percentages will be established by the CFA grant committee.
 - Volunteer committees will review the requests within each Field of Interest (FOI), and distribute the total FOI funds accordingly.
 - New applicants will be considered, but previous grantees will receive priority.

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 questions, please contact Michelle Parrish at 676-3883
or by email at mparrish@cfabilene.org.

