

IOWA COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS INITIATIVE

The success of the Endow Iowa Tax Credit Program and the County Endowment Fund Program is dependent on a strong community foundations network. To that end, the Iowa Community Foundations Initiative has become a core program area for the Iowa Council of Foundations (ICoF) in its role as the state's Lead Philanthropic Entity (LPE) — a designation the organization has held since 2004. This work is supported by the ICoF staff, the Community Foundations Services Coordinator and the ICoF Board of Directors.

OUR PRIORITIES:

The Iowa Council of Foundations is focused not only on marketing and administering the Endow Iowa and the County Endowment Fund Programs, but also on supporting the network of community foundations and affiliates across the state. This is accomplished by strengthening the community foundation field.

We do this by implementing strategies in five priority areas:

- **Promotion**
- **Education**
- **Grantmaking**
- **Convening**
- **Reporting**



PROMOTION

- Market the Endow Iowa Tax Credit Program and County Endowment Fund Program in paid and earned media channels across the state.
- Conduct strategic outreach to professional advisors including accountants, attorneys, financial advisors and estate planners.
- Create and design resources and tools for donors and professional advisors available on www.iowacommunityfoundations.org and for community foundation board members, staff and volunteers available on www.iowacounciloffoundations.org.
- Build awareness among potential donors and nonprofit partners through presentations and targeted marketing efforts.

EDUCATION

- Host the annual Connect Community Foundations Conference featuring regional and national experts on topics of interest to host community foundations and affiliates.
- Produce the monthly *CF Snapshot* e-newsletter which provides information to community foundations and affiliates on upcoming ICoF events, grant opportunities, monthly blog posts, peer pointers, learning opportunities and articles of interest.
- Coordinate quarterly Peer Learning Calls to connect our community foundation colleagues around the state on topics of interest to them, process improvements and best practices in the field.
- Host, in partnership with regional and national experts, the Community Foundations Boot Camp training for staff members and volunteers every other year in Iowa.
- Monitor sector trends to develop our Informed Grantmaker Series, an occasional series featuring articles, webinars and in-person training opportunities focused on various topics and how the philanthropic sector in Iowa can be involved.

GRANTMAKING

The Iowa Council of Foundations provides funding through three Iowa Community Foundations Initiative grant programs:

- **Capacity Building Grants:**

These grants support projects or programs necessary to enhance community foundation and affiliate organizational capacity and to address important issues of fund development and effectiveness. These grants are available annually in both the fall and the spring and have a 50% match requirement.

Activities associated with these grants might include: professional development, strategic planning, individual donor visits, board development, professional advisor outreach, endowment building, technology improvements and marketing/communications efforts.

- **Idea Implementation Grants:**

These grants provide resources necessary for community foundations and affiliates to implement ideas they generate at the annual Connect Community Foundations Conference back home in their local communities.

- **Affiliate Training Mini-Grants:**

These grants provide funding to host foundations specifically for learning, educational or training opportunities they offer for affiliate volunteers and/or staff in their region. The goal is to provide more local training opportunities in partnership with host community foundations.

CONVENING

The Iowa Council of Foundations convenes two community foundation networks regularly.

- **The Community Foundations CEO Network** is comprised of the CEOs of the community foundations in Iowa that are accredited through National Standards for Community Foundations. The network meets twice annually to discuss topics of importance to community foundations statewide.

- **The Affiliate Liaison Network** is comprised of host community foundation staff that have direct responsibility for affiliate funds in their region. The group meets twice annually to network, share best practices and educate themselves on effective ways to support their affiliates.

REPORTING

In partnership with the Iowa Economic Development Authority, the Iowa Council of Foundations supports reporting processes for the Endow Iowa Tax Credit Program and the County Endowment Fund Program.

- Each year, the ICoF partners with the Iowa Gaming Association to produce an annual report providing detailed information on the County Endowment Fund Program endowment growth and the grants awarded in each of the 84 counties in Iowa. The report also features a section on the grantmaking activities of the 15 nonprofit gaming license holders across the state.
- Annually, ICoF gathers the required annual board resolutions from accredited Iowa community foundations for participation in the Endow Iowa Tax Credit Program. ICoF also tracks and ensures each accredited community foundation continues their accreditation with the National Standards for Community Foundations, a requirement to participate in both state programs.

- Annually, the ICoF collects data points related to community foundation asset growth, fund growth, endowment growth and grantmaking. These data points are shared with the Iowa Economic Development Authority and shared in various communications efforts.
- At the beginning of each legislative session, the ICoF provides the State Legislature with a formal report of activities from the previous year. This report details the supports and services the ICoF provides for Iowa community foundations and affiliates. In addition, it highlights the positive impacts of community foundations in Iowa.



FOR GOOD.
FOR IOWA.
FOR EVER.



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