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Spring 2024 Community Foundation Capacity Building Grant Program Guidelines

Guidelines

The Capacity Building Grants Program supports opportunities for qualified community foundations and their affiliates to engage in activities that increase their ability for sustainable endowment building and endowed fund growth. Capacity building grants provide community foundations with support to implement projects or programs necessary to enhance their organizational capacity and address important issues of fund development and effectiveness.

Below are examples of capacity building activities and potential projects.

- Planning Activities: organizational assessments, strategic planning, creating a development plan/strategy, events—all tied to a fundraising strategy.
- Donor Development: marketing/communications, online donor portals, improvements to the donor experience.
- Board Development for Endowment Building: leadership training, defining the role of the board in fundraising, and strengthening volunteer roles in endowment building.
- Strategic Relationships: strengthening relationships with professional advisors and/or nonprofit partners.
- Internal Operations: improvements to donor database/financial management systems, volunteer management, or staff-like support for affiliate growth.
- Professional Development: staff, contractor, or affiliate volunteer(s) attendance at regional/national conferences, local trainings, or online trainings – focused on endowment building/growth.

Proposals that include a combination of strategies will be considered, so long as the proposal clearly demonstrates how multiple strategies align toward common goals.

Eligibility & Requirements

- This grant application opportunity is open to any qualified Iowa community foundation or affiliate in Iowa. Priority will be given to affiliate applications and host applications that support work with their affiliates. Standalone community foundations are also welcome to apply.
- Applicants are eligible to apply for funding once per fiscal year (July 1 through June 30 the following year).
- Applicant must demonstrate a 50% cash match. Example: Request = \$5,000; required match = \$2,500. Acceptable cash match contributions include:
 - Funds contributed by the host or affiliate
 - Funds from another source (donor, another funder, partnering organization, etc.)
- Requests in the range of \$1,000-\$15,000 will be considered.
- Proposal submission should include a completed application and a project budget saved in PDF format.

Application Process

- Applicants must submit an online, three-question Pre-Application, which will be made available beginning February 1. This is due as soon as possible or by 5 pm on March 1, 2024. The Pre-Application will allow ICoF staff to review the proposal concept and provide feedback to the applicant. Reviews and recommendations will be provided to the applicant within 5 days following receipt of the pre-application.
- The final grant application will be distributed on a rolling basis to applicants via email, following submission and staff review of their Pre-Application. Final applications are due to the ICoF office by 5 pm on April 1, 2024.
- Grant recipients will be announced no later than May 1, 2024 and recipients will receive their checks shortly thereafter.

Program Terms and Limitations

The period in which the grantee may utilize grant funds and the period in which the grantee is required to report with respect to the use of grant funds will run from June 1, 2024 through May 31, 2025. Grantees will be required to submit a year-end report (form available on the ICoF website) on how the grant funding was utilized to achieve their goals in endowment building/growth.

Contact Information

Please contact Jenna Manders, Community Foundations Services Coordinator, by phone at (515) 989-1188 or email at jmanders@iowacounciloffoundations.org with questions.