
Basic Information

Discretionary grants are made from unrestricted pool of funds at The Foundation. Our grants committee, made up of members of our community with diverse backgrounds, seeks to fund capital projects that support the Arts & Humanities, Education, Environment & Animals, Health, Human Services, and Public/Society Benefit.

We have 4 main grant cycles per year. Except for Field of Interest grants, we only grant for capital projects or program startup expenses. We encourage you to reach out any time you have a question about applying for a grant.

Important Dates

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| 1. | NOW Grants - FUNDS STILL AVAILABLE
NOW grants are available beginning January 1 until November 30, or until funds are expended (whichever comes first). NOW grants support capital projects less than \$10,000. | < \$10,000 |
| 2. | Spring Grants - March 13, 2024, noon
The spring grant cycle deadline is typically in late March and support capital projects \$10,000 and up. | \$10,000 + |
| 3. | Field of Interest Grants - May 24, noon
Field of Interest endowments have been established to support specific needs within our community. These grants may support non-capital projects like programs or operational expenses. Available funding varies by interest area and will be posted on our website annually. | AMOUNTS VARY |
| 4. | Fall Grants - July 31, 2024, noon
The fall grant cycle deadline is typically in late July and supports capital projects \$10,000 and up. | \$10,000 + |

Who Can Apply?

The Foundation invests in Tippecanoe County nonprofit organizations that are tax-exempt under section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Service Code and who have a clear mission, effective operations, proven successes, strong staff and board leadership, responsible accounting and fiscal management, and sustainability.

How to Apply

Our application is available online throughout the year. We recommend you prepare all required materials before beginning your application. A list of required documents is detailed below.

- Basic organization information (contact information, address, tax ID, mission statement)
- Project request information (amount requested, total project budget, project title, concise project narrative that addresses each of the questions in the application)
- Attachments including:
 - Project Budget Form (we require use of our template, available on our website)
 - Bids or Estimates (we require at least 2 bids/estimates for each item included in your project budget unless special circumstances prevent multiple bids)
 - Operating Budget Form (we require use of our template, available on our website)
 - Summary Financial Form (we require use of our template, available on our website)
 - Board of Directors
 - IRS Determination Letter
 - Audit Management Letter (other audit forms accepted)
 - Annual Tax Return (from the most recent year you have a return)

Timeline

Following the submission of your application, our staff will do a preliminary review of all applications to ensure they are complete and ready for review by our grants committee. During this time, we may follow up with you to ask questions about your project or gather additional information.

The grants committee will review applications around 2-3 weeks after the grant deadline. Decisions will be announced (typically via email) following board approval of the committee's decisions. This could be 6-8 weeks after the application deadline, depending on our board schedule.

Decision-Making

Our grants committee's priorities change as the needs in our community change, but below are some factors that are generally considered during grant cycles.

- Thorough and complete application
- Timely application
- Expressed need for project
- Organization has strong board and solid financial practices
- Organization fills unique and necessary service need in community
- Other funding sources
- Need versus want requests
- Potential impact of project

Frequently Asked Questions

My project is very expensive, I do not want to be too greedy, how much should I ask for? While we frequently receive more requests than funds available, our grants committee is very diligent about reviewing all applications to prioritize needs. The committee also often provides partial funding for projects so long as there is some evidence the project will still be funded through other sources.

I just received a grant earlier this year, should I wait to apply again next year? While we appreciate your consideration of grant timing, we understand that unpredictable needs often arise and projects occur on varying schedules. Do not hesitate to re-apply for funding even if you have received funding in the current calendar year. Still not sure? Reach out and discuss your project with us before submitting an application.

I have needs that do not necessarily work for a grant, what should I do? We keep a running "wish list" of organizational needs. We refer to this list when donor advisors are looking for current community needs and when we meet with donors.

We are working on a few projects at once, should I submit multiple applications? We love to see organizations look at their funding needs proactively and efficiently. Even if the projects are not in the same category or for the same overall initiative, it is often better to submit a single application if you know the need exists as opposed to submitting several applications back-to-back.

I do not have one of the required documents, what should I do? Often, we will accept a word document that outlines why you do not have the document required for the application. If we have any questions upon review of your submission, we will reach out to clarify.

I have an idea for a potential grant but I am not sure if I should apply, what should I do? We highly encourage you reach out to discuss your potential grant application. We can talk through the project needs and ensure you are fully prepared to submit the application. We can never guarantee your application will be approved, but we can help you put together a complete application.

How much information should I include in the narrative of my application? Is there a quirk about your project that would be relevant for the committee to know? Include that information! Background information and history (as well as plans and goals) are very helpful for the committee to consider throughout the review process, but we do ask you be as concise as possible. The committee often reviews 15+ applications at once and the more concise you are in your narrative, the easier it will be for the committee to discuss.

Frequently Asked Questions (continued...)

When will I find out if we received the grant? For NOW grants, we try to have responses back within 2 weeks. Field of Interest grants are typically announced by the end of June. Fall and Spring grants are typically announced within 6 weeks of the application deadline.

I have an emergency need, do you have expedited funding options? NOW grants are perfect for emergency needs. We recommend you reach out to us by phone or email as soon as possible to give us a heads up and we can expedite the review process.

I already purchased items for my project, can I apply and reimburse our organization? Unfortunately, we do not allow for funding for in-progress or completed projects.

If my application is approved, when will I receive the funds? We operate under a reimbursement granting model. That means you will need to wait until you receive notification that your grant has been approved before you start to purchase items for your project. We prefer that you compile all receipts and invoices for one reimbursement request, but we understand that route is not always possible for all organizations. Additionally, we will accept invoices (that haven't been paid yet) but keep in mind that it will take around 2 weeks for you to receive the funds. Additionally, we will send payment directly to your organization, not any vendors.

My grant application helps us get started on this project, but there are ongoing annual fees. Will you provide funding for the ongoing costs? No, we only fund short-term projects. In situations where there are ongoing fees, we ask you to include how you plan to budget/fund the fees in the future in your application. We also will not consider grants in subsequent years to fund those ongoing fees because the costs become operational in nature.

I am fundraising for my project now, but it will not be able to launch for a year, should I apply now or closer to the project launch? We prefer funds are expended within one year. It allows us to meet the most pressing needs in the community at the time. Our preference would be for you to wait until you are within 6-9 months of needing to utilize the funds before submitting an application.

I have needs beyond capital expenditures, do I have any funding opportunities through The Community Foundation? We would love to hear about your needs at any time! We can add them to our wish list to show to donors or donor advisors. Additionally, your needs may be eligible for Field of Interest funding, which has broader funding ability beyond capital expenses.

My organization rents our space, am I eligible for capital grants? Yes! We can fund things like furniture or equipment, but we will not fund projects related to facility improvements.

Ineligible Requests

- Grants to individuals
- For-profit organizations
- Religious organizations where the project is limited to individuals associated with the religious organization (i.e. church congregations or private school students)
- Political organizations
- Projects outside of Tippecanoe County (or where Tippecanoe County residents may not participate)
- Reimbursement of previous project expenditures
- Research projects
- Projects resulting from delinquent planning or preparation by the organization
- Organizations with weak financial controls or board

Top Tips!

- Read through this guide! It is full of information to help you submit a stellar application.
- You do not have to be an expert grant-writer! If you can speak clearly about your organization's purpose and mission, how this project fits that mission, and the potential impact of the project, you are set for success!
- Differentiate your organization from other similar organizations in the community, know your strengths.
- An incomplete (or late) application is the easiest way to receive a declination. Start early to ensure everything is finished on time.
- Make sure your project budget is complete! If the committee has to fill in the gaps or assume details about your application, you are more likely to receive a declination or partial funding.
- Try to outline how you will sustain funding for this project - the committee likes to see you have it all planned out.
- Use our templates! They are required.
- Strike a balance between concise and thorough. One short paragraph to tell about your organization's mission and history is usually sufficient (unless you're brand new and need to share more details), followed by a project description that also covers all of the bullet points in the application should be sufficient to tell the committee about your project.

Most importantly, never hesitate to reach out to discuss what your organization is doing. We would love to have a conversation or take a tour to learn more!

Grants Contact:
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