



Grant Seekers Frequently Asked Questions

What is a 501(c)(3) designation and how can I get one?

A 501(c)(3) designation refers to the specific section of the Internal Revenue Code that defines a nonprofit organization as a public charity. For more information on the Code and how to obtain a 501(c)(3) designation, contact the Internal Revenue Service.

Does my nonprofit organization need a 501(c)(3) designation from the IRS before I can apply for and receive grant funding?

Your organization must have a 501(c)(3) designation, be fiscally sponsored, a public school, or be an entity of government in order to apply for and receive funding.

We are an entity of government (public educational institutions, departments of government, etc.). Do we need a 501(c)(3) designation?

No, entities of government will not have 501(c)(3). It is suggested that you contact The Community Foundation for eligibility.

I'm not a nonprofit organization; I'm just a person who needs some extra help. Can I apply for a grant?

No. The Community Foundations makes grants to qualified 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations. We are unable to award grants to individuals, except in the case of scholarships, which are awarded directly to the educational institution on behalf of the student. If you are a student, please go to the Scholarship Section. If your family is in need of help, there are various community resources that may be able to assist.

If my organization has received grants in the past, are there limitations to how many years we can receive grants?

No, there is no limit to the number of grants an organization may receive. We do, however, strongly recommend that your organization does not seek continuous funding for the same program year after year. The Community Foundation should not be viewed as a source of permanent funding.

Does my organization have to be located within Dutchess, Putnam or Ulster County to receive funding?

Not necessarily. The Community Foundations does not have geographic restrictions on our overall grant making, but our competitive programs do. Please review all eligibility criteria for the program and/or contact the Foundations for clarification.

Does The Community Foundations fund faith-based organizations?

The Community Foundations has the ability to fund faith-based organizations. Through the competitive grant programs, we generally will not fund any programs of a religious nature or programs requiring participation in religious activities or adherence to a particular set of beliefs as a condition for receiving services.

How often may I apply for a grant, and how many applications can I submit?

The Community Foundations accepts applications as specified in each individual grant process on our website. Your organization may only submit one application per grant process/type.

If I know members of The Community Foundation's Board of Directors, staff or a donor, does it increase the likelihood that my proposal will be funded if I contact them?

No, it does not.

Who decides which applications are awarded grants?

The Board of Directors has created committees who contribute time, thought, and knowledge of our community to the process of reviewing applications. Their recommendations are presented to The Community Foundation's Board of Directors for final approval. The Community Foundation staff assists each committee by conducting preliminary research and site visits, where necessary.

Will you review a draft of my proposal and offer comments?

*If time permits, we would be happy to review your proposal. We cannot promise that we will be available to help you if it is too close to the deadline. **Please note that any suggestions or recommendations made by staff DOES NOT guarantee or constitute funding.** Contact by email at cmcpeake@cfhvny.org or by phone at 845-452-3077*

What happens after my organization's proposal is funded?

Nonprofits who are awarded grant funding will receive a grant agreement to sign and return before a check can be issued. You will have to accomplish what was described in the grant proposal. You may receive a site visit from The Community Foundations within that grant period.

What happens if my budget changes or there is a shift in the program from what was originally proposed?

*If there are changes, large or small, to your proposal either during the consideration of your proposal or after a grant is awarded, you will need to contact The Community Foundations to discuss the changes with you and advise you on how to proceed. **DO NOT ASSUME** that you are able to change the purpose of your grant without first consulting with Community Foundations staff.*

Will I need to submit reports?

*Yes. As an organization that has contributed funding to your program, The Community Foundations **requires a final report from you**. These reports are an accounting of the program and fiscal results that were outlined in your organization's grant request. The reports are part of your responsibility to The Foundations as defined by the grant agreement that was given at the time of the grant award. **Failure to submit your reports on time will affect consideration of future requests**. We encourage you to share your insights into what worked and what did not. Through your candor and open feedback, we can learn more about the ingredients for program success. This, in turn, helps both your organization and ours meet our common goal of service to the community.*

The Community Foundation declined to fund our proposal. Why? Will we be able to submit another application next year?

The decision to decline a grant proposal is not necessarily a reflection on the value of the program. As a general rule, it only indicates that The Community Foundation's funds are limited. We receive many more requests to support programs than our relatively limited resources will permit. Feel free to reapply the following year and as always The Community Foundations staff is available to answer questions. Contact the Director of Programs by email at cmcpeake@cfhvny.org or 845-380-1379.