



Community Priorities Cycle

Purpose and Process

Revised 2/9/2021

The mission of the Charlevoix County Community Foundation (C3F) is to enhance the quality of life for all citizens of Charlevoix County, now and for generations to come. The Community Foundation helps people make a difference close to home by accepting contributions of all sizes. Each year, the Community Foundation makes grants that support a wide variety of organizations, schools, and municipalities in their work.

What is the purpose of the Community Priorities Cycle?

The purpose of the Community Priorities Cycle is to offer all eligible non-profit partners the opportunity to apply for project support through the Community Foundation. Individuals, couples, families, and businesses who advise funds at the Community Foundation (donor advisors) may choose to make grants through the cycle as well. In 2021, requests for general support will also be considered for funding, as part of the Community Foundation's ongoing response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Eligible applicants include:

- 501(c)(3) tax-exempt nonprofit organizations;
- All units of government;
- All educational institutions (preschool through college);
- Organizations described above that serve Charlevoix County residents;
- Organizations that do not discriminate in hiring of staff or the provision of services.

Fundable organizations must be current with final reports for all previous grant awards and be in good standing with the IRS.

When is the application deadline?

The Community Priorities Cycle deadline is May 1 by 11:59 PM (Eastern), regardless of whether this is a weekday or weekend. The simple application will be available annually at www.c3f.org beginning in early March.

What kinds of projects or programs are most likely to receive grant funding?

The Community Priorities Cycle aims to attract requests that are focused on the people of and places in Charlevoix County. Successful requests will include one or more of the following:

- demonstrates collaboration,
- addresses new needs or tries new approaches for existing needs,
- encourages people to help themselves,
- focuses on prevention of problems,
- avoids duplication of services, and/or

- builds capacity of an organization.

Community Endowment funds are unrestricted dollars that are available in this cycle, which can be granted to eligible organizations for any purpose. Additionally, funds in the following, more specific, topic areas are available:

- Arts & Culture – fine arts and music, classical music
- Health – health and wellness, healthcare
- Veteran’s Needs
- Substance Abuse – prevention and/or treatment

What kinds of grants are generally not funded?

The Community Foundation’s grant cycles generally do not fund annual fundraising campaigns, political campaigns, deficit spending, sectarian projects, or services normally supported by tax dollars.

What size grants are available in the Community Priorities Cycle?

This cycle encourages grants of all sizes. This format does not limit the request to what the Community Foundation might be able to fund, but instead shows the organization’s need. Endowed funds provide specific amounts for grantmaking, but donor advised funds may also contribute. Community Foundation staff can provide additional guidance and information.

All grant applications require a cash contribution. How much is necessary?

It depends on the topic and scope of the project, but the expectation is that nonprofit partners will contribute to the budget of the project or program.

How does the Community Foundation make Community Priorities Cycle grant decisions?

The Distribution Committee will review grant applications and recommend funding to the Board of Trustees. The Community Foundation will also share these opportunities with donor advisors, who may choose to make grants through this cycle.

When will grant funding decisions be announced?

Community Foundation staff will notify grant applicants following approval from the Board of Trustees in early June.

What kind of follow up reporting is required?

The grant period is one year. A simple follow up report is available through the online grant portal to share about the successes of the program or project as well as the lessons learned. Providing photos is encouraged. Funded organizations will receive a reminder from administrator@grantinterface.com two weeks before the follow up report is due, then again one day prior to the due date, and once more if the report has not been submitted by the deadline. If the program or project is delayed or cannot be completed within the time period, the organization’s representative should call the Community Foundation.

Are there any other requirements?

- The governing board is responsible for appropriate use of funds and project implementation.

- Grantees must be current with final reports for all previous grants in order to apply.
- Proposals from faith-based organizations must address community needs and
 - Have a clearly demonstrated public benefit;
 - Be fully accessible to all persons regardless of religious beliefs and lifestyle choices;
 - May NOT require anything in return for services provided. Examples: attending services or prayer groups and/or volunteering, etc.

How to Apply for a Community Priorities Grant

Step 1: Contact Ashley Cousens to discuss your eligibility. If you are approved to apply, you will receive an access code for the online grant application. Email acousens@c3f.org.

Step 2: Visit www.c3f.org to log on to the online grant application (“Accepting Applications” link for the Community Priorities Grant Cycle).

- If you have an account already, you may log on and proceed to the application using your access code.
- If you do not already have an account, you will need to create one. Each user needs their own username (email address and password) before proceeding to the application using the access code. The user who starts the application has editing rights for the application going forward. This person can invite others to contribute to the application once started.

Step 3: Complete the online grant application. You may save your work and return at any point prior to submitting your application. Once you submit your application, you will receive immediate confirmation via email.

If Funded...

The Community Foundation will share news of the grant decisions by phone after the Board of Trustees approves recommendations from the Distribution Committee. Applicant organizations will also receive a letter detailing the funding decision.

Request the grant check. In order to receive the grant check, the organization must contact the Community Foundation to confirm that the program or project is moving forward and requires the grant.

A simple follow up report is required following your project completion within one year of the grant award.