Urgent Needs Cycle
Purpose and Process
Revised 1/5/2022

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 to organizations, schools, and municipalities to make positive change in Charlevoix County.

What is the purpose of the Urgent Needs Cycle?
The purpose of the Urgent Needs Cycle is to offer all eligible nonprofit partners the opportunity to apply for support through the Community Foundation to help friends and neighbors in greatest need. Individuals, couples, families, and businesses who advise funds at the Community Foundation (donor advisors) may choose to make grants through the cycle as well.

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

Eligible organizations must be current with follow up reports for all previous grant awards from C3F and be in good standing with the IRS.

When is the application deadline?
The Urgent Needs Fund has a rolling deadline, so applications are accepted throughout the year. The application is available at www.c3f.org.

What kinds of projects or programs are most likely to receive grant funding?
The Urgent Needs Cycle aims to attract requests that are focused on helping to meet individual needs of people in Charlevoix County. Specifically, requests from organizations helping Charlevoix County residents access food, shelter, safety, healthcare, mental health services, utility assistance, transportation, and other basic and urgent needs will be prioritized, along with capacity building support for organizations focused in these areas that will help to strengthen and/or improve delivery of services or outreach to people in need. Examples of capacity building grants include strategic planning activities, executive coaching, DEIJ training for inclusivity and/or growth of the organization, activities that will increase or strengthen the delivery of or access to services or outreach to people in need, and more.

Successful requests may include any of the following characteristics: demonstrate collaboration, address new needs or try new approaches for existing needs, encourage people to help themselves, focus on prevention of problems, and/or avoid duplication of services.

Urgent Needs grant proposals will additionally be evaluated on the following specific criteria:
- Organization's impact in the community
- Organizational capacity (leadership, staffing, planning, etc.)
- Potential impact of funds on organization's success and sustainability
- Directness and duration of funds on community and individuals in need
- Organization's solvency and sustainability
- State of the community at time of request

What kinds of grants are generally not funded?
The Community Foundation's Urgent Needs Cycle generally does not fund annual fundraising campaigns, political campaigns, deficit spending, sectarian projects, or services normally supported by tax dollars.

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.

What size grants are available in the Urgent Needs Cycle?
This cycle encourages grants of all sizes. The request size should reflect the organization's need for the project or program. Donor Advisors may also decide to contribute through their Donor Advised Funds. Community Foundation staff can provide additional guidance and information, if needed.

How does the Community Foundation make Urgent Needs Cycle grant decisions?
Community Foundation staff 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 grant recommendations from their funds.

When will grant funding decisions be announced?
C3F staff will generally notify grant applicants within a two-week period from the time the application is submitted.

What kind of follow up reporting is required?
The grant period is six months to one year. A 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 of the organization is responsible for appropriate use of funds and project implementation.
- Applicants must be current with follow up 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 people 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 an Urgent Needs Grant

Step 1: Contact Ashley Cousens to discuss your eligibility. If your organization's need is a good fit for the Urgent Needs Cycle, you will receive an access code for the online grant application. Email acousens@c3f.org to get started.

Step 2: Visit www.c3f.org to log on to the online grant application ("Accepting Applications" link for the Urgent Needs 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 your access code. The user who starts the application has primary editing rights for the application. This person can invite others to contribute to the application once they have started.

Step 3: Complete the online grant application. You may save your work and return at any point prior to submitting your application. The application can be shared with others who may be sharing the responsibility of writing the grant proposal and completing the application. To utilize this feature, click on "collaborate" at the top of the application and enter the email address of the person needing access. Contact Ashley Cousens if you need help troubleshooting this feature. Once you submit your application, you will receive immediate confirmation via email. You may be contacted with further clarification questions regarding your application and/or eligibility.

Step 4: The Community Foundation will share your applications with donor advisors to encourage grant support.

If Funded...

The Community Foundation will share news of the grant decisions within two weeks of you submitting the application. This will allow time for a decision to be made and for the C3F Board to approve the funding. The grantee organization will receive notification detailing the funding decision.

Grant check requests will be submitted by grants staff and mailed out on the next check run date. Checks are cut every two weeks. Funds must be utilized in the manner described in the application within the grant period identified at the time of the award. Any unused grant dollars will be returned to the Fund.

A follow up report is required when the project is complete. If the project is completed early, the follow up report can be submitted sooner.