Community Priorities Grants Guidelines

The Community Priorities Fund is the Community Foundation’s largest fund and has been established by donors to meet today's needs in southwestern Alberta. These donations are held in a permanent endowment fund that generates investment income. As you will see in the lists of previous grant recipients, approximately $400,000 is distributed from this fund each year to fulfill our mission and make our communities stronger, healthier and better places for everyone.

The Community Foundation distributes this financial support through its granting program. Once applications are received, the advisory Grants Committee reviews and decides which projects are the best match with our granting criteria and the identified needs in southwestern Alberta. The requests for funding always far exceed the funds available. This makes the information that you provide in the grant application very important in helping the committee make its granting decisions. Their recommendations are sent to the Foundation’s Board, and once approved we share the good news with successful applicants.

How the Community Priorities Grant Program Works
The following diagram shows the process of how donations translate into grants and eventually into making a difference in the lives of others.
Granting Areas
Grants are awarded to organizations with activities and programs in the three funding streams:
- Basic and Special Needs
- Community Vitality
- Healthy Living

Grant Application Deadlines
We accept community priorities grant applications twice a year (if dates fall on a weekend, applications are due on the closest weekday):
- March 31
- October 15

Applying for grants
Before spending your valuable time in completing a grant application, please read through the following information and answer the specific questions to determine if your organization and your project meet our eligibility requirements.

Note: The Foundation does not provide grants to organizations that were approved for grant funding in the previous year. This does not apply to school districts or municipalities.

Step 1: Is your organization eligible for funding?
Are you located within our territory which stretches from the U.S. border north to Arrowwood, and from the B.C. border west to Grassy Lake?

Are you a registered charity with Canada Revenue Agency?

- The Foundation cannot grant to organizations deemed, ‘societies’ under the Alberta Societies Act unless they are also federally registered charities with a BN number. If you are in doubt about your organization’s status, please check your organization’s name against the official charities list on the Canada Revenue Agency website, or telephone the Community Foundation Office at 403-328-5297 for assistance.

- Municipalities and School Districts are eligible to apply and application forms have been developed specifically for each.
  - Municipal organizations may apply for a grant to support a service that is operated by a non-charitable society or board (such as libraries, community hall, and recreation facilities).
  - Schools may apply for a grant through their school district.

If your organization is eligible for funding, please continue with Step 2 to determine if your project is eligible.
Step 2: Is Your Project Eligible?
To help you determine if your project is eligible, review the following list.

NOT ELIGIBLE – Please be aware that the Community Priorities Grants Program does NOT fund:
• Core operating costs for ongoing programs and services
• General fundraising campaign contributions or sponsorships
• Fundraising events or activities
• Retroactive expenses
• Deficit reduction
• Regular advertising and marketing of an organization
• Activities that serve primarily the membership or purposes of religious or political organizations
• Seminars, conferences, workshops, festivals, or the publication of studies that do not support the funding objectives of community priorities grants funding streams
• Team or group tours or travel outside the community, or travel reimbursement paid directly to individuals
• Projects that do not benefit residents of southwestern Alberta
• Individuals

If your project does NOT fall into any of the categories that are not funded, please continue to Step 3.

Step 3: Does Your Project Display the Following Strengths?
The Grants Committee will use the following criteria to assess both your organization and your project. Before spending valuable time completing the grant application, please review these points to ensure your project is a good match. The Community Foundation is interested in supporting projects that demonstrate the following strengths.

The project:
• Fits with the mission and mandate of your organization
• Improves the services provided
• Delivers benefits to the majority of your beneficiaries
• Demonstrates a real need for funding that is not otherwise available
• Demonstrates a search for funding from other sources for this project
• Demonstrates an investment in the project through contributions from your organization, the community and/or support from other funding sources
• The project is well developed, achievable within the next year, and:
  o proposes an innovative and practical solution
  o strengthens your organizational capacity or sustainability
  o if applicable, promotes collaboration and sharing among agencies
• The grant will cover:
  o one-time costs to build capacity in fulfilling your mission; or
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- one-time capital costs such as equipment purchase, facility construction and renovation projects; or
- one-time operating costs such as funding to launch a pilot project; or
- funding for the initial phase of a program which you can demonstrate will be funded in the future from other sources; or
- funding to strengthen the governance and sustainability of your organization.

If you believe that your project is a good match for the above criteria, then the next step is to complete the grant application.

Step 4: Completing Your Grant Application
You can access the grant application through our online grant management system. The Application process has two parts:

- First you will complete a brief summary of the project proposal. The staff will discuss the project with you over the phone.
- If the project is eligible and ready for submission, you will proceed to the full application stage.
- Staff will be available to help you through the application process.

Step 5: Contact Us
We're here to help....
Grant applicants are encouraged to contact the Foundation office at 403-328-5297. Your application has the best possible chance of receiving serious consideration by the Grants Committee if it is explained clearly and accurately. Our goal is to have informative and complete applications presented to the committee members for evaluation.

The Foundation staff is available to assist you in the following ways:

- We will assist in clarifying the charitable status of the organization.
- We should be involved if the application is being submitted by a municipality – we need to ensure that it is eligible within the rules of the Canada Revenue Agency.
- We will review a draft application and provide feedback if requested.
- We will suggest ways of presenting the project, especially if this application is for a part of a larger project.
- We will help with any aspect of the application so that it is as clear as possible for the committee to consider.

Contact:
- Charleen Davidson, Executive Director
- Caitlin Gajdostik, Grants Coordinator

Phone: 403-328-5297
Email: office@cflsa.ca