

## **Grant Program General FAQ's**

### **Q: Whom does the Foundation fund?**

A: Nonprofit, public benefit organizations with evidence of tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

### **Q: What if an group is not a 501(c)(3) organization?**

A: Those group who are not 501(c)(3) organizations who are doing charitable work can seek funding for a project through a fiscal sponsor (not CFWM). These arrangements must be approved by the Foundation before funds can be requested. If a grant request is awarded, the 501(c)(3) organization serving as the fiscal sponsor must agree to the terms of the award and they will receive the funding. For more information on CFWM's requirements for organizations applying through a fiscal sponsor click [here](#).

Note: The Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts does not serve as a fiscal sponsor.

### **Q: What will not be funded by the Foundation competitive grant programs?**

A: While the breadth of our granting is significant we do have a list of ineligible activities that can be found [here](#).

### **Q: What are the available grant programs?**

A: The Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts currently offers five grant programs for nonprofits. Click [here](#) to view our Grants Program Overview. We also have a Scholarship and Loan program for individuals. Click [here](#) to learn more about this program.

### **Q: Can an organization request more than one grant in a calendar year?**

A: Organizations are welcome to submit one total funding request per calendar year to any of CFWM's three main competitive grant programs: Capacity, Capital or Mission. Since our Innovation and Critical grants are unique funding opportunities they are not included under this funding restriction.

### **Q: Can an organization submit more than one application to a particular grant program?**

A: Generally no. There are some exceptions when it comes to large organizations with associated entities. Please contact a Program Officer to discuss the criteria for this exception.

### **Q: How do I submit an application?**

A: Please read the eligibility requirements for the grant carefully. Most grant programs require a phone conversation with the appropriate Program Officer to be eligible for consideration. Go to [www.communityfoundation.org/grants/](http://www.communityfoundation.org/grants/) to locate the link to the online grant application.

### **Q: Can a paper application be submitted instead of those that are online?**

A: The Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts has moved to an online application process. We can serve you better with the online process and do require an online application for all grant programs except the Critical grant program. To allow for any technical or computer issues, you may want to get started with the application early. We also recommend that when you set up your user name and password for the first time that you do it during our regular business hours in case you need assistance.

### **Q: I have more than one idea for a grant proposal, can I submit a draft?**

A: CFWM does not review drafts of proposals and incomplete applications are not accepted. Your initial phone conversation with a Program Officer is the perfect opportunity to seek input about your funding request. If you have questions after the initial phone conversation you may always email the the program officer with follow-up or additional questions.

**Q: What is the grant review process?**

A: Applications will be screened for eligibility and completeness by Foundation staff. Staff will work with our volunteer committees to determine which applications meet our programmatic intent and will move forward in the review process. Organizations under consideration will be offered either an in-person or telephone review meeting with a Foundation volunteer and/or staff. Final funding decisions will be determined by CFWM's Distribution Committee. All grants will also be approved by our Trustees. Please review the "Grant Process" of the program for which you are applying for more details.

**Q: What is the process for CFWM's final grant report?**

A: The terms of all CFWM grant awards include the submission of a final grant report to CFWM upon completion of a grant. This grant report, in most cases, will be generated electronically from a CFWM grant officer and will be accessible to the grantee through the CFWM grant portal. The project completion date was identified by the grantee in the original grant application.

One of CFWM's strategic priorities is collecting measurable impact data on all our grant programs. Starting with our 2017 grant programs, grantees must submit a final grant report for any CFWM grant program. In order to be considered complete, the grantee must be able to report on the completion of the project's activities and short term outcomes. A final grant expenditure report must also be submitted at that time.

Once the grant report is submitted a CFWM Program Officer will review it. The program officer either approves the grant report or contacts the grantee for additional or missing information. A grantee must have an "approved" designation, via email from CFWM, dated at least 30 calendar days prior to the grant deadline of the desired grant program in order to be eligible to apply for a subsequent grant cycle. Timely submission of grant reports is strongly encouraged as program staff will need sufficient time to review and determine the status of your report.

**Q: Do you provide multi-year funding?**

A: Most of our grant programs provide funding for one year (or less). The exception to this is our Innovation Grants program which makes multi-year implementation grants.

**Q: How will I be contacted to learn the outcome of my application?**

A: Decision letters will be sent electronically by email.

**Q: If our proposal does not get funded, can I learn why?**

A: We endeavor to be responsive to questions from applicants. If you have questions about your application or would like feedback please contact the appropriate program officer.

**Q: Our 501(c)(3) organization is the fiscal sponsor for a group that plans on applying for a grant and our organization would like to apply for the same funding opportunity. Will you accept more than one application from our organization?**

A: Starting in 2018 we will consider more than one application from a 501(c)(3) organization provided that only one of the requests is for the 501(c)(3) organization and any additional request is in support of a fiscally sponsored project. Please note the following:

- 1) Our funding is limited so when submitting more than one funding request from an organization you are reducing the odds of receiving funding, especially if both projects serve the same county.
- 2) Organizations that are applying under a fiscal sponsor must complete our Fiscal Sponsor Agreement Form and submit required documentation 10 business days prior to the deadline of any grant competition.

**Q: Does the Mission Grants program support funding requests for coalitions?**

A: The focus of our Mission Grants is programmatic requests of non-profit organizations. Strong funding requests are based on a set of activities conducted during a specific period of time with clearly stated results. We will consider a funding request of a coalition provided that it is focused on programming or has a discrete project that aligns with the coalition's programming. We do not provide general operating support to nonprofits who are administering coalitions. A request that supports the general operating of the coalition, such as covering the costs of a coordinator, or coalition meeting expenses, are considered operating costs of a coalition and would not meet the programmatic eligibility requirements for a Mission grant.