



Community Investment Grants

Community Investment Grants are made available from our unrestricted pool of resources. Grants are encouraged to support projects or programs which address our three **priority areas** with the ultimate goal in mind of improving the quality of life in Elkhart County.

<p>Kids and Families</p> <p><i>To improve the living experience for Elkhart County citizens by investing in projects which support and strengthen safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments, with a particular focus on impacting the next generation of Elkhart County citizens</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early Childhood Services • Mentoring, After-School Programs • Summer Programs • Parental Support • Youth Programming • Social Service Related Issues such as Disabilities, Senior Care, Health & Wellness & Rehabilitation Services 	<p>Placemaking</p> <p><i>To create communities in Elkhart County which inspire, attract, engage, and connect people, enriching their living experience</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entertainment & the Arts • Downtowns • Neighborhoods • Cultural Opportunities • Transportation • Environment & Agriculture • Disaster Relief • Care for Animals • Public Safety • Parks, Paths & Trails, & Other Recreational Amenities 	<p>Career Pathways</p> <p><i>To improve the quality of life for Elkhart County residents by generating, developing and supporting career advancement and educational opportunities</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Awareness & Exploration • Internships & Apprenticeships • Post-Secondary Access • Talent Development, Attraction & Retention
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Basics

- Submit an application!
- Application online and available 24/7
- Requests of all sizes
- Single year, multi-year or challenge/matching
- Projects, programs, sponsorships, capacity building, professional development, etc.
- Address one or more of our priority areas
- 10 business days initial follow-up by your Program Officer
- Requests up to \$25,000 evaluated by staff with 2-6 weeks response time
- Requests greater than \$25,000 evaluated by committee with 2-6 months response time
- Committees meet for funding decisions in the months of October and April
- Each committee has a \$1-2 million dollar budget for the year
- Our Fiscal year is July 1 – June 30
- We strongly encourage a 60-90 day lead time on all requests for events

Timeline

- Application online 24/7
- 10 business days initial follow-up
- Committees meet in October and April (Requests > \$25,000)
- Committees also meet in December and June for Time Sensitive Projects

10 helpful tips

- Carefully read through the Community Foundation's three priorities and our guidelines
 - ✓ Kids & Families, Placemaking, Career Pathways
- Be clear about the population you serve
- Be clear about why this project or program is important
- Know what your "like" organizations are in the community and the work they do
- When appropriate, collaborate with other like nonprofits
- Make sure you have a project or program budget for your application
- Be specific on how grant monies will be spent
- Be clear about your goals (*SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely*)
 - a. How do you define success?
 - b. How do you measure success?
 - c. What is your target goal (measure/#) for this project or program?
- Have a plan on how you will fund this project or program ongoing, if applicable to your application
- Be concise (we encourage brevity); check your spelling and punctuation (twice!)

Who may apply?

Organizations classified as nonprofit tax-exempt public charities by the Internal Revenue Service. Most will be identified as a 501(c)(3), however, a few other institutions such as public entities, Schools*, Municipalities*, Libraries, and Chambers of Commerce may also qualify.

(*) Due to the number of departments, schools, and clubs within each school corporation and our municipalities; the Community Foundation requires all applications be approved by the highest ranking official within your governing body (i.e. superintendent's or mayoral office) before an application may be submitted.

Who reviews and makes decisions on grants?

The Community Foundation would not exist without "community." We believe it is our responsibility to maintain a process which preserves community volunteers as decision makers in the grant making process with support from foundation staff. Therefore, the Community Foundation has developed a structure consisting of three committees, representing our three priority areas, each made up of a broad spectrum of volunteers within our community. After committee recommendations are made a summary is then forwarded to our Board of Trustees for approval.

Reports and site visits

Most recipients will complete a follow-up report and (may) complete a site visit on or before the 1 year anniversary of their grant date. Some projects or programs may take longer, therefore due dates are provided to you. Recipients of a multi-year grant should expect an annual progress report and possibly a site visit before the distribution of their next year's grant. Also, depending on the nature and size of your grant, an additional comprehensive report may be required following the end of the grant (typically applied to multi-year or long term programs). Site visits, when requested, typically fall in the month after your report is due to allow our Program Staff time to review the information before your visit. However, site visits are flexible (especially when dealing with Indiana weather). Again, these dates will be provided to you.

Publicity

The Community Foundation loves to share in our partners' success and in telling your story. We encourage our grant recipients to download our logo and samples of our press related materials. In addition, we also encourage you to reach out to our Advancement Team to discuss additional marketing or promotions you would like to consider in support of your project and how we may be of help.