

## **Guidelines for Grantseekers**

This document provides guidelines for organizations seeking funding from the Racine Community Foundation. They are not a guarantee for success in obtaining a grant. Each proposal is evaluated with respect to available dollars and alignment with the mission of the Racine Community Foundation. Due to the large number of funding requests, the Foundation cannot fund all the requests it receives. It is also possible that funding will be awarded, but not at the full amount requested. A decision to deny a grant request does not imply that the Foundation rejects the merit of the proposal, the need it addresses or the organization itself.

Please read these guidelines in their entirety and understand the information that is outlined. If you have any questions please contact Tracy Middlebrook, Program Officer at the Foundation. Tracy can be reached at (262) 632-8474 or [tracy.middlebrook@racinecommunityfoundation.org](mailto:tracy.middlebrook@racinecommunityfoundation.org).

In considering grants, the Foundation operates without regard to race, creed, color, religion, sex, age, ancestry, national origin, disability, genetic information, military service, sexual orientation or marital status and awards grants only to organizations that observe similar nondiscriminatory policies.

### **Who is eligible to apply for a grant from the Racine Community Foundation?**

Organizations applying for a grant from the Racine Community Foundation must be not-for-profit with 501(c)(3) status and must have received their tax-exempt determination letter from the Internal Revenue Service. All organizations seeking funding must be located in, or provide services in Racine County.

### **Can an organization use a Fiscal Sponsor?**

Organizations that have not received their tax-exempt determination may apply for a grant if they have an established relationship with a fiscal sponsor that is a qualifying charitable organization under the following conditions:

- The non-exempt group operates as a not-for-profit and has an oversight committee or advisory board comprised of more than one individual.
- A signed copy of the [Fiscal Sponsorship Certification Form](#) must be submitted to the Foundation with the grant application. Also required with the Fiscal Sponsorship Certification form are a copy of the detailed written agreement between the fiscal sponsor and the sponsored grantee and a copy of the minutes of the meeting where the fiscal sponsor's Board of Directors approved this agreement. The Fiscal Sponsorship Certification Form can be found at <http://www.racinecommunityfoundation.org/downloads/FiscalSponsorshipCertification.pdf>.

### **How often may an organization apply for a grant from the Racine Community Foundation?**

An organization is eligible to apply for a grant once in a given 12-month timeframe.

### **What does the Racine Community Foundation typically fund?**

The Foundation supports projects and programs related to arts and culture, community development, education, the environment, health and human services.

Grant proposals should meet the following criteria:

- Attend to basic community needs;
- Demonstrate the ability to achieve and sustain significant and long-term impact;
- Possess well-defined objectives and measurable outcomes that improve the quality of life in our community;
- Include financial commitments from funding organizations other than the Racine Community Foundation; and
- Illustrate plans for long-term sustainability that do not depend on recurring support from the Foundation's competitive grant program

### **What does the Racine Community Foundation typically not fund?**

The Foundation **will not** fund grant proposals for:

- Lobbying efforts or political action groups
- Labor unions
- Individuals
- Multiple-year projects
- Annual fund drives or fund-raising events
- Endowment-building campaigns

The Foundation **may** decline grant proposals for:

- Building funds
- Grant-making foundations
- Unanticipated short-term deficits
- Fraternal organizations
- Requests solely to defray travel or lodging expenses for either individuals or groups

The Foundation reserves the right to decline a request if it does not meet eligibility requirements or for any other reason as determined by the Foundation. All decisions to decline a grant request are made at the sole discretion of the Foundation and may not be appealed.

### **What is the grant application procedure?**

The basic steps in the grant application process are highlighted below:

1. Submit a Letter of Intent by 4:30pm on January 31<sup>st</sup>. Letters of intent are to be emailed as an attachment to Tracy Middlebrook at [tracy.middlebrook@racinecommunityfoundation.org](mailto:tracy.middlebrook@racinecommunityfoundation.org).

Please follow the instructions carefully as failure to provide the requested information could result in the rejection of the letter of intent. The Foundation will evaluate each letter of intent and notify organizations by March 1<sup>st</sup> if their letter of intent was accepted. Accepted proposals do not signify that funds will be awarded, only that an organization is approved to complete a full grant application. The letter of intent can be found at [https://racinecommunityfoundation.org/downloads/letter\\_of\\_intent.pdf](https://racinecommunityfoundation.org/downloads/letter_of_intent.pdf).

2. Complete a full [Grant Application](#). Organizations with an accepted letter of intent will be invited to complete a full grant application and informed if they should apply during the spring, summer or fall grant cycle. For the spring cycle applications should be submitted by April 15<sup>th</sup> but not before March 1<sup>st</sup>. For the summer cycle applications should be submitted by July 15<sup>th</sup> but not before June 1<sup>st</sup> and for the fall cycle applications should be submitted by October 15<sup>th</sup> but not before September 1<sup>st</sup>. The Foundation determines the timing of the grant application and failure to apply during the cycle assigned will result in the rejection of the application. The application is completed online and the required documents must be attached with the application. The application and can be found at <https://racinecommunityfoundation.org/grant-application.php>. Attachments required include the following:
  - Detailed agency budget for the current year
  - Current financial statements (balance sheet and operating statement)
  - Detailed budget for the program/project for which the grant is being requested
  - List of organization's current board members
  - Copy of the Internal Revenue Service ruling or determination letter of status under Section 501(c)(3) and 509(a) of the Internal Revenue Code
  - If relevant, at least two estimates for any purchases or repairs
  - If relevant, Fiscal Sponsorship Certification Form (including additional documentation outlined on the form)
3. Grants Committee Review. Shortly after the grant application deadline a member of the Foundation's Grants Committee will contact your organization to set up a meeting to discuss your application. The Grants Committee then meets and determines funding recommendations to be presented to the Racine Community Foundation Board of Directors.
4. Board of Directors Review. The Foundation's Board of Directors reviews the Grants Committee funding recommendations and makes final funding decisions.
5. Notification. After Board of Directors approval, your organization will be mailed a letter notifying you whether or not you have been approved for funding, and at what amount.

### **What is required of organizations that receive a grant from the Racine Community Foundation?**

If an organization's proposal is funded a Grant Agreement will be send along with your notification letter. The Grant Agreement outlines the limits and conditions under which the grant has been

authorized. Before a proposal is submitted, please ensure that your organization can meet the terms of the following items which appear on the Grant Agreement:

- The Racine Community Foundation logo and a link to our website must be placed on your organization's website.
- The funds received must be used as outlined in the grant request, and not for any other purpose. Any portion of the grant not used for the purpose outlined must be returned to the Foundation.
- The Foundation must be listed as a funding source on all printed materials referring to the project/program. This includes flyers, programs, posters, advertisements, press releases, newsletters, brochures and annual reports.
- The Foundation must be listed as a funding source on all forms of social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) when referring to the project/program.
- The Foundation must be notified if there is a change in the organization's legal or tax status, a change in the key staff responsible for executing the terms of the grant or a change in the organization's ability to use the grant for the purpose indicated in the grant application.
- The Racine Community Foundation logo must be included where applicable.
- A [Grant Follow-up Report](#) must be submitted by the due date assigned by the Racine Community Foundation.
- The Foundation must have access to various records relating to the grant should the need arise for any audit or verification. The organization must maintain such files and records for a period of a minimum of four years following the completion of the project.
- Additional project/program or organization information must be provided as requested by the Foundation.
- The Foundation must be allowed to use information about this grant in the Foundation's periodic public reports, press releases, social media postings and the Foundation's website. This includes the amount and purpose of the grant and other related information.

The Foundation reserves the right to end, alter or withhold any payments under an approved grant or to require a total or partial refund of any grant award if the Foundation finds in its sole discretion that: your organization has not complied with the terms of the grant; has failed to protect the purpose and objectives of the grant or other charitable activities of the Foundation; or has not complied with any law or regulation applicable to your organization, the Foundation or the grant.

### **Timelines**

If your organization has been invited to apply for grant you will be instructed to apply during the spring, summer or fall cycle. The timeline for each cycle is as follows:

- Spring Cycle
  - Grant application should be submitted between March 1<sup>st</sup> and April 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - A member of the Foundation's Grants Committee will contact you to conduct an interview at some point during the last two weeks of April or the first week of May.

- The Grants Committee meets the middle of May to determine their funding recommendations.
- The Board of Directors issues final approval of all recommendations at their meeting on the last Friday in June.
- Notification letters are mailed to organizations on the last Monday in June.
  
- Summer Cycle
  - Grant application should be submitted between June 1<sup>st</sup> and July 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - A member of the Foundation's Grants Committee will contact you to conduct an interview at some point during the last two weeks of July or the first week of August.
  - The Grants Committee meets the middle of August to determine their funding recommendations.
  - The Board of Directors issues final approval of all recommendations at their meeting on the last Friday in September.
  - Notification letters are mailed to organizations on the last Monday in September.
  
- Fall Cycle
  - Grant application should be submitted between September 1<sup>st</sup> and October 15<sup>th</sup>.
  - A member of the Foundation's Grants Committee will contact you to conduct an interview at some point during the last two weeks of October or the first week of November.
  - The Grants Committee meets the middle of November to determine their funding recommendations.
  - The Board of Directors issues final approval of all recommendations at their meeting on the second Tuesday in December.
  - Notification letters are mailed to organizations on the second Wednesday in December.