



# GRANT GUIDELINES

## COMMUNITY GRANTS

The Community Foundation of Abilene (or "Foundation") is a public foundation committed to improving the quality of life in the Abilene area. In 1985, the Foundation was established with a permanent unrestricted endowment whose earnings benefit the local community through grants to charitable nonprofit organizations serving within Taylor County. These funds give the Foundation the flexibility to support the changing needs in our community through competitive community grant cycles, offered yearly each fall and spring.

### ▶ ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible, your organization must qualify under the nonprofit status and geographic restrictions listed below. If you are unsure of your organization's status, please inquire with staff prior to applying for funding.

#### Nonprofit Status

Eligible organizations must hold a current tax-exemption status under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code. This includes traditional nonprofit agencies with current 501(c)(3) status, recognized government entities requesting funds for public charitable purposes, K-12 schools, community/junior colleges, colleges and universities, or faith-based organizations with programs or projects that benefit the community at large.

#### Geographic Restriction

Grant funds are restricted to nonprofits serving populations within Abilene and Taylor County, Texas.

#### Grantee Standing

Eligible organizations can receive one community grant per 12-month period. Organizations who receive a fall community grant are not eligible to apply in the spring cycle immediately following, and vice versa. Organizations that do not submit community grant evaluations will be ineligible to apply for future grants.

### ▶ AREAS OF FOCUS

- |                       |                           |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Animal Services       | Fine Arts and Culture     |
| Children and Youth*   | Health and Mental Health  |
| Community Development | Human and Social Services |
| Education             |                           |

*\*Organizations serving Taylor County children and youth are also eligible to apply for the Future Fund grant cycle. Visit [cfabilene.org](http://cfabilene.org) for application details. The Future Fund grant cycle opens November 1.*

### ▶ FUNDING GUIDELINES

Requests should range from \$5,000 to \$35,000. Occasional capital requests of up to \$50,000 may be considered. Grants exceeding \$20,000 are awarded infrequently.

**Any request exceeding \$35,000 requires an applicant interview with staff prior to application submittal.**

Grants through the community grant cycle are awarded from the unrestricted endowment and field of interest funds held at the Foundation. The Foundation maintains full discretion over all grantmaking decisions.

In regard to funding, the Foundation considers the following: operating expenses, special projects, innovative programs, capacity building, and capital requests.



The likelihood of your organization's proposal being funded are increased if the project or program:

- Proposes practical solutions to community problems
- Responds to changing or emerging community needs
- Addresses prevention as well as assistance for a problem
- Promotes cooperation among nonprofit agencies without duplicating efforts
- Leverages or generates other funding or resources
- Promotes volunteer participation and citizen involvement in the community

Consideration is also given to the capability of the organization and its personnel to achieve expected results, past stewardship of the organization, the adequacy and professionalism of the budget, and the support and cooperation of organizations involved in similar projects.

## ▶ INELIGIBLE REQUESTS

In regard to funding, the Foundation does not award grants for:

- Activities which do not benefit the citizens of Abilene, Texas, or Taylor County
- Medical or scholarly research
- Membership fees
- Tickets or sponsorship sales for charitable fundraising efforts
- Church-related activities unless they involve the community as a whole
- Travel for groups, such as school classes, clubs or sports teams
- Deficit budget expenses or retroactive funding for current projects, programs or equipment
- Capital debt reduction
- Individuals, except through the Foundation's educational scholarships
- Political projects

## ▶ LIMITING FACTORS

Before submitting a grant application, the following should be considered:

The Foundation may choose to award funding to an organization for the same project or program for consecutive years. However, organizations should take care not to become dependent on this funding as other community needs may be considered a priority from year to year. The Foundation does not approve multi-year grants.

## ▶ APPLICATION PROCESS

### Online Access

The Foundation utilizes an online grants management system called, "Foundant GLM." Application information must be submitted through this online system. A login link to Foundant GLM, as well as system tutorials, is available on the Foundation website, [cfabilene.org](http://cfabilene.org). Paper applications are not accepted.

★ **Fall grant cycle: the online application opens June 15, application deadline is August 1.**

★ **Spring grant cycle: the online application opens December 1, application deadline is January 15.**

Application deadlines and other important details are available on the Foundation website.

If you believe your organization already has a profile in Foundant GLM, but are unsure of the login information, please do not create a new profile. Doing so could result in the loss of historical data for your organization. Instead, contact the Foundation's grants team for login assistance.



## Required Documentation

Organizations are required to upload the following documents with their online application:

- Project/program budget specific to the request
- Annual operating budget for the organization
- Competitive bids for capital support, if applicable
- Balance Sheet for the organization
- Board of Directors listing

*Requests of \$10,000 or more* will require the following, in addition to all listed above:

- Impact story
- Financial audit (or 990 tax filing)

*Requests of \$20,000 or more* will require information on the following, in addition to all listed above:

- Organizational qualifications and collaborations
- Organizational leadership and board engagement
- Future project/program sustainability

The Foundation and grant committee reviews applications throughout the weeks after applications close. If requested, please provide additional information promptly. A site visit to your organization or presentation from your organization may also be requested.

## ▶ TIMELINE AND NOTIFICATION

Community grant applications are reviewed in two stages:

### 1 Review Phase I

Your organization will receive an email notification on whether your request is moving beyond the initial review phase to then be featured in "Community Connections," the Foundation's giving guide for the public. **The first review phase takes about six weeks from the application deadline.**

### 2 Review Phase II

A grant committee then makes funding recommendations to the Foundation Board, who is responsible for final approval of grant funding. Upon Foundation Board approval, applicants will be notified via email of award status. **Award notifications are made about 12 weeks from the application deadline.**

## ▶ EVALUATION

The Foundation requires organizations to report on the programmatic impact of funds. The evaluation includes details about the needs the program attempted to meet, objectives, measurable outcomes, role of partners, future plans, opportunities for improvement, and accounting of expenditures.

The online evaluation form is required prior to the following year's grant cycle. Organizations that do not submit evaluations will be ineligible to apply for future grants.

Online evaluation forms are submitted using Foundant GLM. All forms referenced in the grant guidelines are available to preview on the "How to Apply" page found on the Foundation's website, [cfabilene.org](http://cfabilene.org).

## ▶ MORE INFORMATION

Questions? Contact Cassidy Nygaard, *community grants manager*, at [knygaard@cfabilene.org](mailto:knygaard@cfabilene.org) or 325-676-3883.