community foundation

Oceana County

GUIDELINES FOR GRANTMAKING

The Community Foundation for Oceana County was established in 1989 to serve the needs of the people of Oceana County. We envision a community where **everyone** has access to resources to thrive.

The Community Foundation accepts and administers gifts from many sources to help meet the needs of the community. Some Foundation grants are discretionary, while other grants are competitive with applications reviewed by independent grantmaking committees. Some grants are made from Funds designated by donors for specific organizations and institutions.

Criteria for Grantmaking

We give grants to 501(c)(3) organizations, churches, schools, nonprofits and governmental units serving Oceana County. Grant applications must be submitted electronically, via our eGrant system. Foundation staff and Grant Review Committee volunteers carefully review all applications. The Board of Trustees makes all final funding decisions. We value your partnership and understand that multiple organizational funding needs may arise, therefore we have changed our grant guidelines to allow for more than one submission a calendar year. Grant recipients are subject to Final Report requirement upon completing of the grant project timeline.

Because of limited financial resources at this time, the Foundation will generally make one-year grant commitments up to $5,000. Longer term commitments may be considered for initiatives that show exceptional promise for community impact.

Program Areas of Interest

The Board of Trustees believes that with limited competitive funds, it is necessary to prioritize where funds can be best targeted to have the greatest impact on the needs and growth of the community. The following represent priority grant interest areas for the use of Foundation funds:

Arts
- Encourage quality arts programming benefiting a diverse audience
- Support arts education and programs for youth
- Improve access to cultural programs, especially for children and youth
- Promote financial stability and organizational development for arts organizations

Education
- Promote educational opportunities through post-secondary scholarships
- Find opportunities that can impact all public and private K-12 districts. Programs and projects serving multiple districts would receive greater consideration
- Support projects that encourage High School completion and success in school
- Promote educational opportunities for the unemployed, under-employed, returning adult learners
- Support for college and career readiness programs & projects (any post-secondary education & training)

Health and Human Services
- Promote healthy lifestyles through education and prevention
- Improve access to quality health care for all residents
- Promote health programs and projects that increase the quality of health care available in Oceana
- Support programs that encourage families to become self-sufficient

- Support programs targeted to the elderly and youth

Community Development
- Support projects that promote downtown development throughout Oceana County
- Support capital projects with wide public impact and benefit
- Support capital renovation projects, especially if they provide new and expanded programming
- Support civic improvement and economic development efforts
- Support projects that improve the image and perception of the community, including projects that

Other Special Funding Areas
- Urgent Needs in response to COVID-19 pandemic
- Child Neglect & Abuse Prevention
- Environment – support for environmentally oriented programs and projects
- Golden Township – support capital improvement projects within Golden Township and Silver Lake area
- Homelessness Prevention – supportive housing programs and projects
- Parks – support programs and projects that beautify and enhance current and future parks
- Hesperia area – support programs and projects in Hesperia Village & Township

Emerging Community Needs

We know our standard grant categories don't cover all community needs. The Distribution Committee and dedicated grant committees address other important or emerging community issues when they arise and as we are able to respond. Just give us a call to discuss your emerging issue and we can brainstorm together.

Qualities of the best grant proposals:
- Collaborative, comprehensive, and sustainable
- Designed to prevent problems, rather than simply addressing the effects of problems
- Provide start-up or seed funding for innovative projects
- Leverage grant dollars to bring in additional funds; have multiple sources of funding

The strongest proposals are submitted by organizations who have:
- Adequate staff/organizational capacity to achieve the proposal goal
- Sound fiscal policy and responsible financial management
- Staff and board of directors reflective of the organization's audience
- Ability to measure the impact of grant money and report the results
- Proven record of cooperating with other organizations
- Capacity to understand and explain how the project will relate to other area services/organizations
- Broad base of community support

The Foundation does not usually award grants for:
- Regular operating expense
- Vehicles
- Special events & endowment campaigns
- Religious programs that serve, or appear to serve, specific religious believers or require participants to practice or adhere to specific religious beliefs
- Individuals

Grants are submitted from the online eGrant application. Register to create your log in credentials at -
https://oceanafoundation.org/grants/applying-for-a-grant/
 For a list of prior grant awards, please visit the Foundation website at:
https://oceanafoundation.org/grants/past-grant-awards/