

Dallas Community Foundation Grant Program Guidelines

Through its annual grant distribution, the Dallas Community Foundation gives back, investing in solutions to address local needs. The Foundation funds a wide variety of programs and projects, reflecting the diverse needs and opportunities in the Dallas community, benefiting residents of all ages. Preference is given to proposals that serve urgent needs and/or have a broad and meaningful impact on the community. The Foundation grant funds are intended to assist those in need and improve quality of life to make Dallas a better, more vibrant place, in every corner of the community.

Program Details

The annual grant distribution amount is determined in December. Grant applications are accepted beginning January 1, with a deadline of the last business day in January. Awards are made in March, and unless otherwise negotiated, funds should be expended by December 31 of the year awarded. Applications are available online at www.dallascommunityfoundation.com/grants.

Applicants are encouraged to contact the Foundation office to discuss their project prior to applying. Grant awards typically range from \$1000-\$3000, with a maximum award of \$5000. There is no match requirement, but larger grant requests should have more than one funding source.

Eligibility Requirements

- Applicants must be a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization, as determined by the Internal Revenue Service, or other qualified tax-exempt entity.
- Projects or activities must primarily serve those residing within the boundaries of the Dallas School District.
- Applicants must not have any open DCF grants or outstanding grant reports.

Ineligible Grant Funded Activities

- Purchases or activities that occur prior to grant award
- Purchases or activities outside of the scope of the grant award
- Events*
- Lobbying to influence legislation / political activities
- Religious activities**
- Scientific research
- Debt retirement
- Annual fund appeals or fundraising

* Events which solicit sponsorships for funding are typically a more appropriate fit with the Foundation's sponsorship program. The Foundation considers sponsorship of events that contribute to community livability, promote arts and culture, or support significant community causes. As the availability of sponsorship funds is limited, applicants are encouraged to submit sponsorship requests early in the year. Contact the Foundation office for additional guidance on whether an event or event-related project aligns with the sponsorship or grant program.

**Faith-based organizations may be eligible for grants if the grant-funded activity benefits the community regardless of religious belief and does not require participation in a religious activity, as defined as prayer, worship, proselytizing, devotionals, or studies, as a condition of receiving services. Grants cannot solely benefit a religious organization.

Funding Priorities

The Foundation will prioritize funding requests for the following project types and funding categories:

- Project types: new or existing projects/programs, equipment purchases, general operations. The Foundation may consider, but does not encourage, applications for capital projects or capacity building.
- Funding categories: educational, charitable, civic, recreational, cultural, youth, seniors, health and safety, general welfare.

For the 2026 grant distribution, the Foundation will focus particularly on the following funding priorities:

- *Health and Wellbeing of Vulnerable Populations*
- *Opportunities for Youth and Seniors*
- *Community Livability*

Developing a Competitive Application

Foundation grants are an investment in the community. In considering grant requests, we look at the quality and potential for positive impact to make a meaningful, long-term difference in Dallas; we also consider the capacity of the organization to successfully carry out the grant activities.

Organizational Qualities

- Sound management, technical and resource capacity to effectively carry out proposed grant activities
- Responsible fiscal management
- Demonstrated ability and track record to address community needs
- Solid knowledge and understanding of the organization's constituency and their needs

Project Qualities

- Clearly articulated, well-defined need, objectives, reasonable and comprehensive budget, and measurable, achievable outcomes
- Address community concerns and urgent needs
- Demonstrate strong potential for long-term impact
- Encourage more effective use of community resources
- Enhance opportunities for people with limited resources and limited access
- Foster cooperation and avoid duplication of effort
- Align with organization's mission, expertise and long-term goals
- Provide direct service to individuals in need or direct benefit to the broader community