Community Builder Grant Guidelines

Greater Toledo Community Foundation is a public charitable organization created by citizens of our community to enrich the quality of life for individuals and families in our service area. The Foundation serves northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan with a particular emphasis on the greater Toledo area. Grants from the Community Builder grant program support a variety of services in the fields of education, social services, physical and mental health, neighborhood and urban affairs, natural resources, and the arts. Emphasis is placed on programs that will: Create safe, positive living environments; Enable families to develop the skills/resources needed to support and nurture each member; and Foster the development of responsible young people who are capable of achieving their fullest potential.

The Community Builder grant program offers grants of up to $25,000 in the following three categories: 1) to provide seed money for new, innovative programming that addresses unmet community needs, 2) to expand successful programming in order to reach unique audiences, or 3) to provide capacity building benefits to existing nonprofit organizations.

Eligibility
Eligible requests can focus on one or more of the three categories above. Grants will only be awarded to nonprofit, charitable organizations which have been designated as having tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service code. Applications must propose to provide services benefitting residents of northwest Ohio or southeast Michigan.

Grant Review Criteria:
Competitive grant proposals will address the following:
- Promote coordination, cooperation and sharing among organizations. Applications which propose deep partnerships among organizations will receive high priority consideration.
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of other organizations providing similar services in the immediate geographic area and represent an unduplicated opportunity to meet a significant community need.
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of relevant community planning efforts and how the proposed program may correspond to and advance those plans.
- Encourage more efficient use of community resources.
- Test or demonstrate new approaches and techniques in the solution of community problems.
- Propose a specific program rather than general operating support for the organization.
- Include a thoughtful, reasonable plan for obtaining continuing financial support once Foundation funds are expended.
- Propose to generate matching funds, thus leveraging additional support.

In the area of capacity building, the foundation is specifically interested in requests that illustrate how funding will advance the applicant organization to a higher level of operational, programmatic, financial or organizational sophistication. Proposals that promote continuous improvement strategies aimed at increasing sustainability and impact will be prioritized. The following activities are eligible for consideration through the capacity building category:

- *Evaluation*: funds may be requested to support costs associated with a high-quality, third party assessment designed to ascertain a program's impact or increase the effectiveness of an organization's internal process.
- *Business Planning*: funds may be requested to support costs associated with a high-quality consultant to evaluate the organization's fee structure, staffing configuration and other business practices and create a business plan designed to increase efficiency and sustainability. Funding to support regularly occurring organizational expenses like strategic planning processes will not be a high priority.
- *Leadership Development*: funds may be requested for agency leadership or board members to attend training opportunities. In this category, a high priority will be placed on joint-training sessions that incorporate leadership from multiple organizations. Recurring professional development opportunities like attendance at annual conferences are not eligible for consideration.

The Foundation usually will not make grants from its Community Builder program to:
- Support the general operating budget or budget deficit of established organizations.
- Annual campaigns.
- Capital campaigns or building projects.
- Exclusively purchase equipment, such as computer hardware/software, phones, motor vehicles, etc.
- Produce films, videos, television programs, and the like.
- Support sectarian activities of religious organizations.

Grant Application Process

The Foundation considers grant requests two times annually. The deadline dates for proposals are: **January 15 and July 15.** Proposals must be submitted through the Foundation's online application process. The online application can be accessed via the Foundation's website at www.toledocf.org. Proposals must be received by 11:59 p.m. of the application deadline in order to be considered for funding.

All grant applications are carefully reviewed by the Foundation's professional staff and Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees meets approximately two to three months subsequent to each deadline date to make decisions. Applicant organizations are notified, in writing, of the approval or denial of funding requests within one week after the Board of Trustees takes action. Project expenses incurred by an applicant organization prior to notification cannot be paid by the Foundation.

Contents of a Proposal

The following describes broad content areas of the application. Interested applicants should view the online proposal for a full listing of questions.
- **Purpose and Need** – State the goals and objectives of the project. Identify the problems or needs which will be addressed. Identify the population that will benefit from this project or program.
- **Population to be Served** – Identify the population that will benefit from this program.
- **Implementation** – Summarize the plans and timeframe for implementation of this project. Identify the individual(s) who will be responsible for overseeing the program and briefly describe their qualifications.
- **Evaluation** – State the criteria and procedure that will be used to evaluate the success of the proposed program. Relate this evaluation to the stated goals and objectives.
- **Sustainability** – Identify plans for securing ongoing support for this project once Foundation funds are expended. Include anticipated future financial needs of the program, potential sources of funding, etc.
- **Project Budget** – Attach a one-page project budget, which:
  (1) specifies the requested grant period;
  (2) delineates line-item expenses that clearly detail the proposed use of grant funds; and
  (3) lists projected income (both solicited and received) and expenses for the proposed project.

- **Independent Consultant Attachment –** *Required only for Capacity Building requests related to evaluations and business planning requests –* Attach the following:
  (1) Professional qualifications or biography of the organization's selected independent, third-party evaluator or continuous improvement specialist; and
  (2) Proposal/quotation from selected independent, third party evaluator or continuous improvement specialist.

Attachments – The following attachments must be submitted with every grant application made to Greater Toledo Community Foundation. Please pay close attention to the details or your application may be considered incomplete. Acceptable file types include Word, Excel and PDF only. Required attachments include:
- **Board List –** The names and affiliations of the organization's Board of Trustees.
- **IRS Letter –** A copy of the organization's tax exemption letter from the Internal Revenue Service.
- **Background –** Brief background and history of the organization, including when and how the organization was established, its mission or purpose, accomplishments to date and a listing of all current programs and services.
- **Financial Statements –** There are two options for submission of financial statements, which include:
  - Option 1 – If the organization has had an audit prepared within 12 months of the date of application, please provide the full audit; or
  - Option 2 – If audited financial statements for this timeframe are not available, provide the unaudited income & expense statement (P&L) and balance sheet for the organization's most recent fiscal year-end. Note that both statements must be submitted if this option is selected.
- **Operating Budget –** A board-approved operating budget for the current fiscal year of the organization.
- **Project Budget –** (as referenced in the previous section).

For additional information, please contact:
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