

Grant Program & Funding Application Information

About BCCF's Grant Program

Purpose of the Grant Program

The Community Foundation believes that when people work together they can accomplish anything. Therefore, we work to make a significant impact by combining financial and human resources whenever possible, and we give priority to applicants and projects that share that philosophy.

In general, grants are made to projects that will benefit Branch County and/or Colon, Michigan. In making grants, the Community Foundation attempts to understand both the specific objectives of each grant request and the long-term benefits that the community will receive from the initiative. All eligible grant applications are carefully considered by review committees whose membership includes a broad representation of the community.

Successful applications will be for projects which

- promote development or strengthening of community assets,
- will have a positive long-term impact on program participants and/or the community,
- lead to prevention of recurring need,
- promote cooperation among area organizations with related or supportive missions, and
- will be financially sustainable without continuing grant funding.

An expression of interest or the provision of an application should not be considered a guarantee of funding. All grant requests go through a complete review process before any funding decision is made.

Baseline Eligibility Requirements

Grant proposals must meet these basic eligibility requirements:

Tax Exempt Status: The organization submitting a proposal is exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code. *If your organization is not tax-exempt, please contact us before submitting a grant request.*

Charitable Purpose: The *project's purpose* is clearly eligible under IRS Code Section 501(c)(3)

State Filings: The organization's Michigan License to Solicit and Michigan Nonprofit Corporation filings are current.

Prior Grant Evaluations: The organization has submitted evaluations for prior grants.

NOTE TO PRIOR GRANTEES: Your organization is NOT eligible to be considered for new grants if you have outstanding evaluations from prior grants. Evaluations from prior grants must be submitted and approved prior to submitting a new request for funding. If the prior project is not yet complete, please contact us prior to completing an application.

Community Status: The organization is in good standing with legal and regulatory agencies, in the community and in good standing with the Community Foundation (e.g. has filed tax returns on time, pays bills to local vendors on time, has used prior BCCF grant funds appropriately, etc.).

Service Area: Grants from community funds will be made to projects that will specifically benefit Branch County and/or Colon, Michigan.

Grants to Faith-Based Organizations

Grants from **community-based funds** (including the Youth [YAC] Funds) will not be made, nor may funds be utilized, for religious programs or for community programming that incorporates a religious philosophy in its delivery. Some characteristics of faith-based programs eligible for grants from **community-based funds**:

- Programs may be located in a house of worship if religious programs are separated from non-religious programs;
- Programs are open to all, regardless of religious affiliation or lack of religious affiliation;
- Programs do not require statements of belief from participants; and
- Program providers (including volunteers) abstain from religious worship, instruction, or proselytizing (attempts to convert to a religion or religious recruitment).

Example 1 – Program **eligible** for a grant from a community-based fund

Local churches coordinate volunteers to provide food and lodging in the evening to homeless families at the churches. The policies of the program prohibit staff or volunteers assisting the families from making any attempt to expose participants to religious education or even inviting participants to attend church services.

Example 2 – Program **not** eligible for a grant from a community-based fund

A 501(c)(3) youth organization provides summer activities, such as recreation, leadership-building skills, and field trips to museums, for children ages 7-14. Participation is open to all children regardless of faith or lack of religious affiliation.

Activities include opportunities for participants to learn about the Buddhist faith and participants are encouraged to attend religious services at a local Buddhist church of their choice.

The above list and examples are intended to be illustrative only and should not be considered all-inclusive.

Grants from **donor-advised funds** at the Community Foundation (such as the *Faith Based Initiatives Fund*) are distributed according to the individual fund agreements, with recommendations from donor advisors, and final approval of the Community Foundation Board of Directors. Many of these funds award grants for specific religious purposes.

Grants to Tax-Funded Entities

The Community Foundation will consider grant proposals from units of government, schools, and other tax-funded entities. Grants from **community-based funds** will generally be made for programs, goods, or services that would not be considered essential and are therefore not typically funded through taxpayer dollars. These would normally be special, non-recurring projects that usually play no part in normal governmental funding.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The Community Foundation promotes diversity in employment, volunteer recruitment, and in grantmaking. Organizations that receive funding from the Community Foundation will agree that any program or activity funded in whole or in part with funds made available by the Community

Foundation, and any other program or activity funded in whole or in part with funds appropriated for grants, cooperative agreements, and other assistance administered by the Community Foundation will be inclusive of all persons regardless of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity (as defined in paragraph 249(c)(4) of title 18, United States Code), sexual orientation, marital or parental status, political affiliation, military service, physical or mental ability, or any other criterion protected by law.

Submission of an Application

Acceptance of an application or an advisory committee interview should not be considered a guarantee of funding.

Upon submission, your application becomes the property of the Community Foundation and will be used as deemed appropriate by the Community Foundation.

The Community Foundation reserves the right to request additional information from the applicant, and to set a *deadline* for submitting the additional information.

Typical Grant Allocations

Most grants awarded are between \$500 and \$7,000. To assure maximum consideration of larger requests, applicants may wish to break the project into prioritized sections to allow BCCF to fund one or more of these sections.

Electronic Submission

Submission of applications will be online through our website: **BrCoFoundation.org/Grants**. Please complete the online form and attached your application and any supporting documents. The complete application and supporting documents must reach us by the deadline posted on the grants page of our website. When you submit the application, you will receive an automatic reply confirming receipt.

Application Review

All applications undergo a baseline eligibility review by BCCF staff. Qualifying applications are reviewed by an advisory committee appointed by the Board. The committee will recommend funding for projects that best fit the Community Foundation's grant program purposed, specific fund criteria, funding priorities and community needs, and the dollar amount available for distribution.

Discovery Interviews

If selected for funding consideration, you may be asked to meet for an interview with one of BCCF's advisory committees. In that event, attendance at the interview is necessary to continue in the Application Review phase of the application process.

Notification

Everyone submitting a proposal will receive notification as to whether or not BCCF was able to fund the proposal. If you have not received notification within 90-days of submission, please contact us.

Funding Awards / Acceptance

BCCF is not able to fund all proposals submitted, and some proposal will not receive any funding. In addition, BCCF may award an amount less than the amount requested. When notified of the award amount, the applicant may refuse the grant award if the project cannot be completed without the full amount requested. The applicant may also seek to provide fewer services, reduce the number of participants, or request other changes in the original proposal based on the award amount. Discussions such as these will take place before the applicants accepts the funding and signs a grant agreement.

Grant Agreement

When your organization receives notification that the funding request was approved (usually by email), complete and return the **Grant Agreement** that is included in your notification.

Use of Grant Funds

These and other conditions become part of every grant agreement:

- Grant monies must be used for the purpose cited in your original grant proposal/application.
- Requests for changes must be submitted in writing.
- Grants are subject to review and modification and may be cancelled should performance suggest such action.
- A grant award does not obligate the Community Foundation to provide an organization with any additional support.
- Funds cannot be used for loan payments
- Funds cannot be used for work previously completed.

Payments

Within three (3) weeks after receiving the completed Grant Agreement, we will send the check (or make an electronic payment) to the payee/address indicated on the Grant Agreement.

Grant funds must be requested within 90 days of the award notification. If a time extension is necessary, please submit a **written** request to the Foundation office before the three-month period has expired giving the reason for delaying the project and a time line for completion.

Publicity

In an effort to build awareness of the Branch County Community Foundation's role in our community, the Community Foundation requires your organization to prepare and distribute a media release about your project, what you hope to accomplish, and that you received a grant to support the project from the Branch County Community Foundation. A media contact list and sample media release is available upon request. You should also give recognition of Community Foundation grants awarded in any media announcements, written materials, and other materials produced in conjunction with the grant project.

Evaluation

If a grant is awarded, our staff will, when appropriate, work with the grantee to determine the appropriate success indicators. Grant recipients are required to submit a **Grant Evaluation Report Form** at the conclusion of the project. Interim progress reports may also be requested. Evaluation information **must** be submitted by the due date specified. Grantees should request an evaluation form at least two weeks before the due date.

Grant Application Instructions

The request process begins with completing the Cover Sheet, preparing the application Narrative and providing a project budget. **Community Foundation staff are available to assist you up to one week before the due date answering questions and offering advice. Just contact us at 517.278.4517.**

COMPLETING THE COVER PAGE

Please complete Sections 1 and 2 of the Cover Page by providing the indicated information.

Section 1 – Applicant Information

Date of Application

Date you are submitting the application/proposal

Name of Organization

Please give us the legal name of the organization that will be providing programming or services under the grant, be responsible for providing accounting for the grant funding, submitting evaluation reports, and communicating with the Community Foundation.

Organization Address

Enter the legal address of the organization that is applying for grant funding.

Website Address

Please enter your website address. If you don't have a website, but have a Facebook page, please give the searchable name or address of your page. If you do not have website or Facebook page, put "None".

Organization EIN

Employer identification numbers are issued by the Internal Revenue Service. This number is also the number we use to verify the organization's tax status, e.g. 501(c)(3)

Michigan Corporate ID#

If you are incorporated in Michigan you will have a corporate ID number. The identification number is located on your nonprofit corporation annual report or other annual corporate report.

Michigan Charitable Solicitation Registration

This number will show on the annual letter from the Attorney General's office that verifies your license to solicit donations in Michigan for the most recent year. If you do not have a license to solicit, please contact our office for further information.

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Section 2 – Project Information

Project Title

Choose a title that will be used for the project for all permanent records, publicity, and other communications. *Example: Housing Renovation Project*

Project Purpose

Please provide a very brief summary of what your project or program is about, why you're doing it. (Maximum 25 words.) *Example: To weatherize and address safety issues for the two housing units*

Project Start Date

Enter the date the project/program is scheduled to begin. Be sure to check the Notification Date from the schedule on our website. **Note: If your project's start date is before Notification Date for this grant cycle, your project cannot be funded during this grant cycle**

Project End Date

Enter the date the project/program is scheduled to be completed. If the project/program will continue, put "ongoing".

Amount Requested from BCCF

Enter the amount you are requesting from the Community Foundation. Maximum grant awards are generally \$7,000. If you would like to request more than \$7,000, please contact us for more information.

Total Cost of Project

Enter the **total cost to complete the project (or operate the program)**. This includes the organization's money and any other funding the organization will allocate toward the program/project.

Service Area

Choose one of the following geographic areas that your project will cover:

Bronson	Branch County	National
Coldwater	St. Joseph County	Worldwide
Colon	Multiple counties	Other [please explain]
Quincy	Multiple cities	
Union City	School-based	

Population Served

Choose one of the following populations that your project or program will offer services to:

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African American	General – all populations	Hearing Impaired
American Indian	Heterosexual	Adolescent
Arab American	Male	Child
Asian Pacific Islander	Female	Elderly
Latino	Learning Disabled	Homeless
White	Mobility Impaired	Substance Abuser
Gay Lesbian Bisexual	Visually Impaired	Other [please explain]

COMPLETING THE NARRATIVE AND BUDGET SECTIONS

Section 3 – GRANT NARRATIVE

In this section you will tell us about the program or project for which you are requesting financial assistance. **Please use the format and headings shown below in your narrative and provide all of the information requested within the maximum number of words allowed under each heading.**

Organization Profile

Enter a brief description of your organization's prior experience implementing the same or similar program or project: i.e., tell the reviewers why your organization has the experience and current capacity for success in the proposed activity. (Maximum 500 words.)

Project Description

Briefly describe how grant funds will be used your project/program, including the target population and how many people will it benefit. If you will be collaborating with other organizations, please explain how and include a letter of support from the organization. (Maximum 100 words.)

Project Outcome(s)

*Tell us what you want to accomplish using BCCF funding with this project/program? List up to three expected **measurable** outcomes/results. We will use your stated goals for evaluation purposes at the end of the project and ask you to provide documentation that you met these goals on the grant evaluation report form. (Maximum 250 words.)*

Alignment with BCCF's Grant Program Goals

Tell us how the project aligns with the Community Foundation's overall grant objectives as outlined in the "Purpose of the Grant Program" in the Grant Application Instructions. (Maximum 100 words.)

Organization's Resources

Tell us about the resources your organization is allocating toward the program or project. This can include money, staff and/or volunteer time, equipment, supplies, space, etc. (Maximum 250

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words.)

What will happen if BCCF is not able to fund this project?

Please let us know what role BCCF funding will play in your ability to initiate, implement, and/or complete the project/program. (Maximum 250 words.)

Proposals for the Youth Grant Cycle

Complete this section **ONLY** if applying for funding specific to the Youth Grant Cycle.

Grant applications are accepted for projects that directly and exclusively support young people ages 0 – 21.

Our Youth Advisory Council makes reviews and makes recommendations for grants from our Youth Project Fund. To qualify for fund from the Youth Project Fund, projects must be designed to serve youth **AND** involve youth in a significant way. Tell us how you partnered with youth in at least one of the following ways: 1) the applicant has youth on its **governing board**, 2) the applicant has youth on a **standing committee**, 3) the applicant has youth on its **advisory committee** who assisted in project design and/or 4) youth **wrote or assisted in writing the grant proposal and had input in project design**

Please **attach a complete board or committee roster with youth name(s) and contact information highlighted.**

Proposals for Technology Funding

Complete this section **ONLY** if your request is for computers, technology services, software, or other technology-related costs.

If technology is part of your grant request, you **MUST** address the following questions in your narrative:

- How would you assess your use of technology compared to other agencies with similar missions?
- What type of financial resources does your organization have available for technology? Are you prepared to seek additional funding from other sources?
- What do you see as the most pressing issues for your organization that technology might address? What role does the implementation of new technologies play in your strategy for the next five years? Do you need new technology in order to grow? Would new technology allow you to respond to new opportunities?
- What is management's attitude and role in the organization with regards to technology?
- What are the obstacles to your organization's effective use of technology, including both training and budget?
- Who has been or will be involved in making recommendations for technology staffing, training, and system requirements prior to purchase?

- Who (please include their experience) has been or will be involved in day-to-day technology troubleshooting and maintenance tasks?
 - Who will be involved in the implementation of new technology efforts?
 - What type of training have staff members completed in the past? How useful was it?
 - Will all technologies—current and proposed—be compatible? For example, if you propose purchasing a computer will the current printer, software, etc. work with the new computer?
 - Please provide system requirements regarding the technology. For example, if you're purchasing a computer, list the components that will be used to build the computer--- such as processor, motherboard, sound card, video card, etc.
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Section 4 – PROJECT BUDGET

The budget for the project or program should be submitted on a separate sheet.

Reminder: Most grants awarded are between \$500 and \$7,000. **Please note that the total project income must match total expenses and the total the amount of the project and BCCF request on the cover sheet.** Please include a *budget narrative* explaining any excess expenses over expected revenue, or other **discrepancies** (financial information that does not tie together or to stated project totals).

Using the Excel Spreadsheet

We have provided an Excel spreadsheet. The budget spreadsheet provided contains three tabs: budget, explanation, and additional sources. Most applicants will only need to complete the "budget" tab.

- Under BCCF Request, input what amount you are asking from the Community Foundation toward funding the project.
- Under Your Organization, please input all money and in-kind contributions your organization is allocating toward funding the project.
- Finally, under External Sources list any funding or in-kind goods or services others are donating toward the project.

Alternate Budget Formats

You do not have to use the spreadsheet, but your budget should include the following information (preferably in a table format):

- total cost of the project

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- applicant organization's resources – any actual money and the value of in-kind resources *your organization* is contributing (in-kind resources include things like paid time for employees implementing the program, materials like paper, pens, etc.)
- resources from other sources – both actual money and in-kind (including other grants and donations)
- total requested from the BCCF and a *complete breakdown* of how BCCF funds will be used (e.g. if you propose purchasing science workbooks and Chrome books with BCCF funds, how many workbooks will be purchased, as what cost per workbook and how many Chrome books and the cost for each)