



GRANT APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY & GUIDELINES

The Schenectady Foundation was established in 1963 as a charitable trust intended to improve the well-being of people who live or work in Schenectady County, NY. The following are the requirements of grant applicants:

- Applicants must be non-profit corporations registered with the New York State Office of Charities Registration and designated as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization by the IRS.
- Organizations without 501(c)(3) status may apply only if a qualified tax-exempt charity serves as a fiscal agent for the grant.
- Applicants must primarily serve Schenectady County residents, especially those focusing on marginalized or underserved populations.
- Applicant organizations must be in good standing with the IRS and the NYS Charities Bureau.
- Before submitting a new grant application, current grantees must have substantially completed their grants and submitted timely, informative progress reports demonstrating their impact.

The Foundation does not fund:

- Individuals seeking grants or loans.
- Private businesses seeking grants or loans.
- Requests to fund endowments or quasi-endowments.

Local governments (counties, cities, towns, or villages) are generally ineligible to receive grant funding from the Foundation. Interested local government applicants should first discuss their project with Foundation staff.

Grant Guidelines

- The Foundation supports projects and programs with a focus on meaningful, measurable outcomes.
- Priority is given to applicants who actively involve impacted communities in planning and decision-making.
- Applicants must demonstrate the ability to complete and sustain projects beyond the Foundation's support.
- Proposals that utilize other sources of funding, rather than relying solely on the Foundation, are strongly encouraged.
- The Foundation discourages applications from organizations with unrestricted reserves exceeding 200% of their annual operating expenses.

Capital Campaigns

The Foundation recognizes the importance for organizations to periodically conduct capital campaigns. Such is often the case with large non-profits, hospitals, health care institutions, theatres, colleges and universities whose business models require them to maintain sizeable facilities and hard assets.

While the Foundation remains open to requests for capital campaigns, it is our policy that capital campaign grant requests:

1. shall *not be a significant percentage* of the Foundation's annual grant budget (\$2 M);
2. align with our established community impact statements and focus areas: Equitable Access to Healthy Food; Neighborhood Revitalization; and Emergent Needs.
3. Applicants shall demonstrate how the components of the capital campaign contribute to better outcomes for residents of Schenectady County – particularly those most marginalized or lacking resources;
4. parties should notify the Foundation at least six months in advance of any significant funding requests, defined as those exceeding \$200,000. This advance notice ensures that, should we choose to support the request, we have adequate time to plan and allocate resources effectively for our funding season.

Grant Size

There is no specific minimum or maximum size for grant requests. Foundation grants have ranged, in recent years, from \$1,000 to \$500,000. Over the past three years (2022 – 2024) the average amount granted has been about \$90,000.

Micro Grants

The Micro-Grant program offers an abbreviated application process. Micro Grants are often utilized for planning, research, and development of future projects, or to get pilot projects off the ground. While the maximum Micro Grant award is \$10,000, the majority of them fall into the \$3,000 - \$7,000 range.

Multi-Year Grants

While organizations may apply for multi-year awards, the Foundation rarely approves awards that extend beyond a two-year commitment. Organizations that have received Foundation funding are allowed to make subsequent requests once their most recent grant is substantially completed.

Matching Grants

Occasionally, the Foundation will approve a grant with a matching condition, which entitles the grantee to the grant funds once a particular amount has been secured from other sources.

References

The Foundation may seek the perspective of other funders, community leaders, constituents, and customers of the applicant organization to add value to its understanding of the proposal