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**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**EXPRESS GRANTS**

***What specifically can Express Grants support?***

Express Grants are project grants, so they are designed to support a particular project your organization would like to undertake.

***How much can we apply for when submitting an Express grant application?***

Up to $10,000.

***Can we submit an Express Grant application for unrestricted or operating support?***

No. An Express Grant can only be used for a defined project. Express Grant budget items may, include staff or other overhead expenses, but Express Grant funds will be tied to the particular project and its activities as described in the application narrative and budget.

***Do you ever provide partial funding?***

Whenever possible, the Foundation aims to fully fund a request that has been selected for an award, and we encourage applicants to ask for the precise amount of grant funding that they hope to receive. However, there are circumstances where partial funding may be awarded due to limits on funding availability or other reasons.

***My organization/project has lost significant public funding. Can we apply for an Express Grant to fill that loss?***

In general, the Foundation does not make grants to fill in gaps left by the elimination of public funding. However, the special circumstance of the pandemic may mean that your project could be aligned with specific sources of funding and/or specific donor interest. Please contact NHCF staff to discuss your situation before applying.

***Is there a deadline for Express Grant funds to be used?***

The grant award letter will state the terms of the award. In general, Express Grants must be expended in one year.

**EXPRESS GRANT ELIGIBILITY**

***Who is eligible to apply for an Express grant?***

Tax-exempt 501 (c)(3) charitable are eligible to apply. Previous grantees must have filed progress, interim or final grant reports on their most recent grants in order to be eligible to apply for new grant support. Through the Express Grant program, we do not make grants to:

* Public and Private Schools
* Religious Organizations, unless all services being funded are non-discriminatory, non-sectarian and benefit the larger community.
* Hospitals
* Colleges and Universities

Note: The Foundation does not accept proposals through the Express Grant program that are focused on substance use disorders prevention, treatment and/or recovery services. Such proposals are by invitation-only, and administered outside of the Express Grant program. For information on our Substance Use Disorders Portfolio and to discuss grant opportunities with appropriate staff, please visit our Substance Use Disorders Portfolio.

***My organization is not a 501(c)(3). Can I still apply to the Foundation for funding?***

Non tax-exempt organizations can only apply through a fiscal agent which is a 501(c)(3) and which signs a fiscal sponsorship agreement as part of the application process. When using a fiscal agent, your organization must still meet other qualification guidelines. If your organization does not hold a 501(c)(3) charitable tax status, please call us prior to submitting an application to discuss your options with staff. See below for further examples of non-(c)(3) entities.

***What if my organization is a non-charity, such as a 501(c)(4) or 501(c)(6)?***

We may only make grants to support charitable work, and thus cannot make Express Grants to (c)(4) or (c)(6) organizations. We can, under limited circumstances, consider project support for a chamber of commerce, trade group or other group that falls under another provision of the tax code, but only for charitable activities, and then, preferably through a fiscal agent that holds 501 (c)(3) charitable tax status. Under no circumstances can we support activities such as membership services not available to the general public, electoral work, or other activities that are not considered charitable in nature.

***What if my organization is headquartered outside NH, or we are headquartered inside NH but also work in other states?***

Organizations that are either headquartered outside NH and doing work in NHCF’s service area, or headquartered inside NH but also working outside NHCF’s service area (NH and portions of east-central Vermont and southern Maine. See the Foundation’s service-area map under “Geographic Focus”) may be eligible for Express grants. If awarded, funding will be restricted to work being implemented in NHCF’s service area. It is important that reviewers are able to get a sense of your NH-specific work, so your application narrative should focus on the NH portion of your work. You can also use the final, open question on the application to further elevate your NH work. We welcome multistate organizations to contact staff to discuss your specific circumstance before applying.

***Can you tell me more about the Eligibility Checklist we are asked to submit when completing our profile?***

The Eligibility Checklist is a tool used to ensure that nonprofits applying for grants from the NH Charitable Foundation are in compliance with all legal requirements for NH nonprofit organizations and have implemented very basic financial controls and oversight of operations. We require that all organizations complete the Eligibility Checklist, and if the answer to any question on the checklist is “no” we provide a space to provide an explanation. Answering “no” to any of the questions on the Eligibility Checklist may disqualify an organization from receiving a grant. If you answer “no” to any of the questions on the checklist we suggest you contact staff to discuss those instances prior to beginning an grant application—we want to prevent you from taking the time to prepare and submit an application if it will be declined on these grounds. You can find more information about the legal requirements for NH nonprofits at the NH Department of Justice Charitable Trusts Unit website [HERE.](https://www.doj.nh.gov/charitable-trusts/) If you are not a New Hampshire 501(c)3, you are not required to complete the checklist.

***If my organization or its fiscal sponsor is a religious organization that does non-sectarian or secular work, are we eligible to apply?***

We do not fund religious activities of any kind through the Express Grant program. Religious organizations are only eligible to receive funding to provide services that are non-discriminatory, non-sectarian and that benefit the larger community.

***If my organization serves as a fiscal sponsor for an applicant, are we eligible to submit an application for our own efforts separately?***

Yes.

***We have a grant from the Foundation from another program (donor-advised fund award, other grant program, special Foundation initiative etc.). Does that affect our eligibility to apply for an Express Grant?***

Generally no. Applications for Express Grants are typically open to organizations that have received funding from the Foundation through donor-advised funds, agency/designated funds or through other grant programs. The exception is the multiyear Unrestricted Grant program – An organization with an active multi-year unrestricted grant is ineligible for the Express program.

***Can an organization receive both an Express Grant and an Unrestricted Grant in the same year? What if I am currently in the midst of a multi-year Unrestricted Grant?***

An organization can only receive one of these grants in the same calendar year. Likewise, if an organization has an active Unrestricted Grant, they cannot apply for an Express Grant.

***If we received an Express Grant last year, can we apply for another immediately when that grant is concluded?***

Yes. You must submit a final report on the awarded grant prior to applying for a new grant.

***If we apply for an Express Grant and are declined, are we eligible to then apply for an Unrestricted Grant (or vice-versa)?***

Applicants whose proposals are declined are welcome to submit another proposal at the next open call for proposals. Please note, however, that the Foundation will not entertain a proposal for the same project, activity or scope of work if it has already been declined twice.

**REPORTS AND CHANGE REQUESTS**

***What are the reporting requirements for an Express Grant?***

Express Grants require a final report at the end of the designated grant period. All reporting must be up to date before an organization can apply for another grant (from any NHCF program).

***What if I need more time than originally planned to expend my Express Grant award?***

If you know you will need more time to complete the work and expend the grant funds awarded, you may submit a Grant Change Request. It is not unusual to approve an extension of up to six months. Any requests for substantially longer extensions should start with a conversation with Foundation staff. You begin the Grant Change Request process by sending an email to grantapp@nhcf.org. A Grant Change Request form will be created for you, you will find it on your dashboard when logging into GrantSource

***How should Express Grant reports be submitted?***

Log in to GrantSource and submit your final report or change request via the online portal.

***How do I know if I have an outstanding final grant report?***

When you log in to GrantSource you will see reports due on your dashboard. If you have any questions, contact Wendy Cahill at Wendy.Cahill@nhcf.org or 800-464-6641 ext. 21249.

**GENERAL QUESTIONS**

***How do I know to which region of the Foundation I should apply?***

We are a statewide foundation, but operate with a regional structure that allows regional staff and advisory boards to guide our grantmaking. The region you select when you fill out your organization’s profile and concept paper or application on GrantSource will direct your request to the appropriate region. You should select the region that describes where your organization does most of its work. If you feel that you work equally in two or three regions, please select only the primary one. If you choose “statewide” you must be able to clearly demonstrate that your work truly has statewide impact. We recognize that for some applicants selecting a region or statewide designation can be confusing. Don’t worry about “getting it right”— if we need to reassign your region we can do that internally and it will not have a negative impact on your application.

***What role do donors play in funding Express Grants? How can I get my work in front of the Foundation’s donors?***

The Foundation uses a mix of its discretionary and donor-advised funds in the Express Grant program. Strong proposals that align with donor interest are shared with donors. Along with this sharing of your applications with donors, the best way for you to get your work in front of the Foundation’s donors is to keep your organization’s profile in GrantSource up to date. We highly encourage all nonprofits, whether you plan to apply for a grant or not, to establish a profile on GrantSource as a means to help us locate information about your work should there be a possibility of aligned Foundation donor interest.

***Can we include volunteer time as in-kind contribution on our project budget?***

Yes. The Foundation encourages organizations to include any in-kind or financial support from other sources on project budgets as appropriate. For currently acceptable rates for volunteer time and information about including volunteer time on organization budgets, visit the Independent Sector web site.

***Does the Foundation fund advocacy? What about lobbying?***

Yes! We recognize that systems-change work and policy advocacy activities, including lobbying, are often an important tool for seeking to make positive community impact. Advocacy includes a wide range of activities from public education to messaging/communications, grassroots organizing, policy analysis, litigation, and legislative lobbying. The Foundation, like all nonprofits, is permitted in appropriate circumstances and within relevant limits to support any or all of these activities, and we do so through our Express Grant program.

***What if I have a question that is not answered here or on the website?***

Please feel free at any time after reviewing our online materials to direct additional questions to Wendy Cahill at Wendy.Cahill@nhcf.org or 800-464-6641 ext 21249.