

Unrestricted Multiyear Grants Program Frequently Asked Questions

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How do I know if I can apply for an Unrestricted Grant?

Applicants must be recognized as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or have a tax-exempt organization serve as a fiscal agent (see next question). Organizations with an active unrestricted multiyear grant (received in December 2021 or 2022) are not eligible to apply for a new award in 2023.

The Community Grants program does **not** make Unrestricted Grants to:

- Municipal, County or State Government
- Public, Charter, or Private Schools
- Religious Organizations, unless all services being funded are non-discriminatory, non-sectarian and benefit the larger community
- Hospitals
- Colleges and Universities

The Foundation does not accept proposals through the Community Grants Program that are focused on substance use disorders prevention, treatment and/or recovery services. Such proposals are by invitation only and are administered outside of the Community Grants program. For information on our Substance Use Disorders Portfolio and to discuss grant opportunities, please contact Foundation staff.

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. If your organization does not hold a 501(c)(3) charitable tax status, please contact us prior to submitting an application to discuss your options. See below for further examples of non-(c)(3) entities.

Do you fund start-up, grassroots, or emergent organizations?

Generally, yes, but for this grant program a new organization must have either a fiscal agent or the 501(c)3 designation in hand. If not, the NHCF welcomes new organizations to contact us to discuss other options for funding.

What financial information does my organization need to provide?

Community Grant applications require **up to** three years of organizational budgets and historical budget-to-actuals. We realize that newer organizations may have difficulty providing this information – please contact us if you have questions.

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 unrestricted 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. This type of grant would take place by invitation only and not through the Community Grants program. 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.

How much should we ask for when applying for an Unrestricted Grant?

Organizations can apply for up to \$20,000 over one year. Because the grants are competitive and funding is limited, please consider carefully the right amount to request for your organization. We're here to help - please contact NHCF staff if you have questions about how much to apply for.

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

The Eligibility Checklist is 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 preparing a grant application—we want to prevent you from spending the time to prepare 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](#). 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 Community Grants program. Religious organizations are only eligible to receive funding through this program to provide services that are non-discriminatory, non-sectarian and that benefit the larger community. Contact NHCF staff if you have questions about what constitutes religious activity.

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

Yes.

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

Organizations that are headquartered outside NH and working in NHCF's service area (a map of which can be found on our website), or headquartered inside NH but working outside NHCF's service area may be eligible for an unrestricted grant. If awarded, funding will be restricted to work in NHCF's service area. The application narrative should focus on NH work only, and applicants will be required to submit an overall organizational budget and a budget specific to the NH work. Organizations receiving funding will be expected to report on the NH portion of their work. We welcome multistate organizations to contact staff before applying.

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 Unrestricted Grant?

Generally, no. Applications for Unrestricted 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, even if they have an active grant from one of these other programs. If, however, your organization has recently received operating funds through an invited grant, please contact your program officer before submitting an application.

[If we apply for an Unrestricted Grant and are declined, are we eligible to apply next year?](#)

Applicants whose proposals are declined are welcome to submit another proposal at the next open call for proposals.

[What if I am currently in the midst of a multi-year Unrestricted Grant?](#)

If an organization has an active Unrestricted Grant (awarded in 2021 or 2022), they cannot apply.

[My organization has lost significant public funding. Can we apply for an Unrestricted Grant to fill that loss?](#)

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

[If we receive an Unrestricted Grant this year, can we apply for your new multi-year program in 2024?](#)

Yes.

[Does the Foundation fund advocacy? What about lobbying?](#)

Yes! Systems-change work and advocacy activities such as lobbying can be important tools for 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 to support any or all of these activities in appropriate circumstances and within relevant limits.

[What is meant by “Unrestricted Grant”? Are there limits on how my organization can use such a grant, if received?](#)

Unrestricted Grants (sometimes called “operating grants”) are not attached to any particular project, activity or line item in an organization’s budget. An organization receiving an Unrestricted Grant is free to use those funds as needed to further the overall work of the organization. This may include salary, overhead expenses, program costs, equipment purchases or any other aspect of the organization’s annual budget.

[In the past you required audits or financial reviews. Is that the case this year?](#)

No. We are asking organizations to provide **up to** three years of organizational budgets and historical budget-to-actuals. We realize that newer organizations may have difficulty providing this information – please contact us if you have questions.

[If an applicant is applying under a fiscal sponsorship, do we use the fiscal agent's financial and board-of-directors' information?](#)

The application will require submission of the board lists and financial information for both organizations. Please contact us if you have any questions.

Do we need a strategic plan to apply for an Unrestricted Grant?

No, but if your organization has one, please upload to your organization's profile on the Org Info 2 tab.

Is there a limit on the amount we can apply for in Unrestricted support in relation to our organization's size?

Organizations may apply for up to \$20,000. While there is no specific limit, please consider your request carefully - organizations requesting a large percentage of their overall annual budget as an should explain (in the application narrative) why such a large percentage is needed and how the organization plans to increase funding from other sources. Please contact us if you have any questions.

What are the expectations about grant reports?

All grants require a final report at the end of the designated grant period. Contact your regional Program Officer if you'd like to have an (optional) conversation about the status of another current (non-Community) grant.

Is there a deadline for the grant funds to be used?

This is a one-year grant program. The grant award letter will state the terms of the award and any deadlines for the funds to be expended.

What if I need more time than originally planned to expend my 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.

How should grant reports be submitted?

Log in to GrantSource and submit your progress or final report via the online portal. You can also contact your regional Program Officer.

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. 249.

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

Yes. The Foundation encourages organizations to include any in-kind or financial support from other sources on both project budgets and organization 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.

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.

[How do I know to which region of the Foundation I should apply?](#)

We are a statewide foundation, but we operate with a regional structure. 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 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 Community 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 Community Grants program. Strong proposals that align with donor interest are shared with donors. To this end, it is important 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 I discuss my application with someone before I start?](#)

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. 249.