



2020 Community Grants Frequently Asked Questions

Funding Criteria and Priorities

What types of projects or programs are you prioritizing?

Sonoma County Vintners Foundation Community Grants is pleased to continue our commitment to four key program areas: Health and Human Services, Education, Environment and Arts and Culture. Applicants in any of the four areas will be considered only if the primary mission of the organization aligns with the stated funding priority.

Program Area	Funding Priority
Health and Human Services	Supporting the most fundamental needs around behavioral health, housing, homelessness, and hunger, funding will target programs or projects that specifically address one of these four areas.
Education	Collaboration between schools and community based organizations provides unique opportunities to leverage efforts and achieve greater impact. Education funding will support programs or projects whose impact on children or youth is realized through strong partnerships between K-12 schools and nonprofits.
Arts & Culture	Knowing that access to arts education can foster a love of learning, improve personal dignity and enhance creativity, funding for the arts will focus on educational experiences for both youth and adults.
Environment	Recognizing the unique beauty and vulnerability of our natural resources, funding will target programs or projects that conserve and/or restore environmentally significant land, waterways and wildlife habitats.

What criteria will you use to make your decisions?

- The project or program aligns with the Community Grants funding priorities
- The goals, implementation timeline and staffing are clearly defined and achievable
- The goals for the program are achievable within the one-year grant period
- Any proposed collaboration with other organizations has been formalized. If the success of the program is dependent on the participation of key partners, a letter(s) of collaboration is required.
- Reach of program impacts a meaningful number of clients
- People impacted by this grant represent the diversity of our community

Can current Fund the Future grantees also apply for Community Grants?

We are honored to provide significant support to our Fund the Future partners and seek to broaden our reach with the Community Grants program; therefore, we only accept applications from organizations that are current partners if the program or project is different from the Fund the Future program.

Do you prioritize organizations that are past grant recipients or do you prefer to fund organizations that are new to Sonoma County Vintners Foundation?

We are interested in funding new organizations and innovative projects in our community, and we value the partnerships we have already created with many organizations; we do not prioritize one over the other. Please do keep in mind that being a former grantee does not guarantee future funding.

Do you prioritize programs that have a light touch with many people over in-depth programs that serve fewer individuals?

We prioritize programs that fully address the criteria and have the greatest possible impact on outcomes as defined in your application.

Funding

How will you distribute the funding among the four Program Areas? Across geographic regions?

We recognize that there are needs in all four Program Areas as outlined in our funding priorities. We will allocate a percentage of funds available in proportion to the number of applications received in each program area. Additionally, we strive to allocate funding equitably across the different geographic regions of our county.

What is the minimum and maximum amount of funding we can apply for?

The minimum grant request amount is \$5,000; the maximum funding amount is \$20,000.

What proportion of applicants received funding last year?

About half of last year's applicants received funding. We encourage interested organizations to self-select by weighing their proposed project's alignment with our criteria and funding priorities before beginning the application process.

Do you provide funding to sponsor events or scholarships?

No, the Community Grants program is not designated to sponsor events or fund scholarships.

Are public schools eligible to apply?

The Community Grants program accepts applications from public schools. If a school is applying in partnership with a nonprofit organization, a letter of collaboration is required. If a school is applying on its own, we require evidence that the school's administration is supportive of the project.

Is there a limit to the percentage of overhead that can be included in a project or program proposal?

There is not a specific limit to the percentage of administrative expenses that can be included in a proposal, however, we encourage you to select an amount that is reasonable to the project or program request.

If my nonprofit organization is based outside of Sonoma County, can I still apply for a grant?

Nonprofit organizations that have a significant presence in Sonoma County but are based outside of Sonoma County are eligible to apply.

How many applications can an organization submit? What if our organization has several departments that work independently?

In general our priority is to provide broad community-wide support, and prefer only one proposal from any one nonprofit organization within a given grant cycle. However, if your organization is very large, with distinctly different programs, you may consider submitting more than one application.

Will it hurt my chances if I apply for the same program that I applied for last year?

We accept applications for the same project or program that you applied for last year. Generally speaking, if your application was declined it may indicate that the project or program was not a good fit for this funding.

Who reviews the grant applications?

The Sonoma County Vintners Foundation Grants Committee, in partnership with Community Foundation, reviews proposals and makes final funding decisions.

In the case that a grant is awarded, is there a deadline by which an organization must expend the funds?

The grant timeline for the 2020 Community Grants program is from June 15, 2020 to July 14, 2021. The funds must be expended within the grant year. We understand program timelines may change due to unforeseen circumstances; in this case, we ask the grantee to submit a Grant Modification Request Form as indicated in the grant contract.

How do we apply for a Fund the Future grant?

Fund the Future is a separate, invitation-only grants program.

Can I apply to both a Sonoma County Vintners Foundation Community Grant and a Community Foundation Sonoma County grant?

Yes. These grant programs are separate and you may apply to both the Community Foundation and Sonoma County Vintners Foundation's grant programs.