

Request for Proposals – Resilient Organizations

9/10/2025

Grant Program Overview

The Community Foundation Sonoma County (CFSC) is entering into a new partnership with the County of Sonoma through our Resilient Organizations Program, which was created to strengthen the financial stability and long-term resilience of our local nonprofit sector.

Nonprofits have been on the front lines of every major challenge our community has faced, from wildfires and floods to the pandemic and ongoing economic pressures, stepping up to meet growing needs even while resources shrink.

With the end of Covid-era funding and deep reductions in government support, nonprofits are being asked to do more with less. Local governments are facing similar budget constraints, which underscores the need for strategic collaboration between the public and philanthropic sectors.

Through this grant program, we aim to provide **targeted support for nonprofit adaptations and innovations that 1) address the operational challenges of reduced funding and policy changes and 2) protect essential services, especially for people experiencing unique challenges in 2025. These grants are not intended to replace reductions in funding.**

In acknowledgment that community needs will outweigh the resources available through this grant program, CFSC will also **collect and share aggregated data** on funding reductions reported in nonprofit applications with relevant stakeholders and the broader community to inform additional giving.

Grant Program Process & Timeline

The 2025 cycle will follow this timeline:

- Request for Proposals Released – September 10, 2025
- Applications Due – October 10, 2025
- Applicants Informed of Grant Awards – Early November
- Awarded Organizations Publicly Announced – By November 26, 2025
- Mid-Term Check-In – March 2026
- Final Check-In – August 2026

Total Available Funding: \$525,000

Grant Size: We anticipate awards in the range of \$25,000 to \$75,000, with a median grant size of \$50,000. Approximately 5-10 grants will be awarded. There will be 1-2 organizations with a strong physical presence in each supervisorial district funded. Collaboration with other nonprofits in your region is encouraged.

Grant Period: One year.

As part of the application, you will be asked to:

- Describe the specific funding reductions your organization is experiencing.
- Explain your organization's strategic response to these challenges, and how Resilient Organizations funding would provide necessary support.
- Share how your organization is addressing unique community challenges in 2025.
- Describe the geographic areas and populations you serve.
- Indicate whether you would like to opt-in to share specific information from your application with CFSC's donor-advised fundholders and other funders to enhance their understanding of the needs facing your organization when applicable.

Program Objectives

This program aims to:

- Support **strategic operational and programmatic adaptations** that address challenges caused by reduced funding and policy changes.
- Increase **nonprofit resilience and innovation** in a rapidly changing funding and policy environment.
- Invest in planning for **coordinated responses**.
- Support urgent operational or programmatic shifts intended to preserve key services and programming in **areas greatly impacted by funding cuts and policy changes in 2025**.
- Ensure strong **geographic coverage** through a well-rounded grantee cohort.
- Prioritize basic human services, especially for those **uniquely impacted by challenges in 2025**, but this is not a requirement for proposal submission.

Please note, grants will not be made to fund typical, ongoing operations unrelated to the organization's response to recent funding or policy challenges. Grant funds should not be used to directly replace lost funding.

Eligibility & Evaluation Criteria

To be considered, applicants must:

- **501(c)(3) Status** – Be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit (or fiscally sponsored by one) with offices and services based in Sonoma County.
- **Grant Objective Alignment** – Clearly demonstrate alignment with program objectives.

- **Designing to the Margins** – Show how the program is designed by and for communities significantly impacted by 2025 funding cuts.
- **Organizational Connection & Capacity** – Detail evidence of current/past impact in sectors with significant funding reductions and/or policy changes and the likelihood of sustained commitment in this area.
- **Partnerships** – Show a record of engaging in strong collaborations and provide a compelling plan to build or strengthen partnerships with grant program funds. Collaborative applications are encouraged but not required.
- **Geographic Focus** – Have a strong physical presence in a specified supervisorial district, such as a dedicated building for service provision or consistent services with physically present staff (i.e. a regular mobile unit route or office hours).

Examples of Projects

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Restructuring services to respond to new challenges caused by funding reductions.
- Changing program delivery methods, locations, or systems to address community needs related to reductions in funding.
- Planning, convening, coordinating, or collaborating among multiple organizations to bolster services and/or increase community resilience in the face of decreased funding.
- Implementing leadership development for staff and/or board members to address the increasingly complex organizational challenges posed by policy changes or funding cuts.
- Retraining staff and volunteers to address community needs by delivering services in new ways.
- Developing and implementing action plans to diversify and increase an organization's funding streams in response to recent, unprecedented changes in funding.
- Developing and implementing plans that increase an organization's overall resiliency in the face of funding reductions and policy changes.

Submission Process

To submit your application navigate to our website (www.sonomacf.org) and click GRANTEE LOGIN, located at the top right of the page. This will take you to our online application portal. Log in to your account or create a new account if needed. Then, select the “Apply” icon to access the [2025 Resilient Organizations Grant Program](#) application.

For questions related to the online portal, please contact Annette Williams at awilliams@sonomacf.org. If you have general questions about this grant program, please contact José Castro Gambino at jcastro@sonomacf.org.