



AKRON
COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

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Grant Application Tips

We understand applying for grants can be a strenuous process. Each funding source may look for something different, so it's difficult to know what's most important to share.

Akron Community Foundation offers a variety of competitive grants, including our Community Fund grants, which are chosen each quarter by the foundation's Community Investment Committee. These grants provide broad-based funding to benefit residents today, while also creating systemic change for the future.

If you focus on these key elements when applying for our Community Fund grants, you'll be in good shape for funding consideration:

1. **Demonstrate significant community support.** As a community foundation, we want to ensure that the programs we fund have backing from both the citizens and the key institutions within Summit County. This can be shown in numerous ways, including in-kind support, volunteer hours and funding diversity.
2. **Discuss how your program fits into collective efforts.** We want to see that you have developed strong collaborative relationships with other agencies and are working toward a jointly identified goal. One organization cannot solve a problem alone; it takes many interested parties with regular, collaborative activities built into their culture.
3. **Communicate how your proposal fits into the overall vision of your organization.** We need to understand how our funding will advance not only the individual program we're funding, but your vision for your organization's future, too.
4. **Be clear on your challenges and shortcomings.** We do not expect perfection, but we do expect transparency. This helps us understand the risk involved in the grant, while developing a trusting, honest relationship with you. It also lets us identify areas in which we may be able to lend non-monetary assistance, such as connecting you with other funders, volunteers and potential collaborators.
5. **Describe your measurement systems.** We prefer evaluation plans that capture lasting change and incorporate both quantitative and qualitative measures. We do, however, understand that is not always feasible. It's OK if you are unable to evaluate everything on your list – just show us what you are doing to ensure you are getting the desired outcomes.
6. **Include plans for sustainability.** Whether this is a one-time or ongoing request, we want to know how you will maintain the program if/when funding from Akron Community Foundation is no longer available. Many nonprofits in the area have developed creative solutions to leverage sustainable resources. If you're not sure about your sustainability plans, reach out to organizations you've collaborated with to help you brainstorm possibilities. You may also consider establishing an endowment fund at Akron Community Foundation to create a perpetual stream of income for your organization.