

The Hamilton Community Foundation (HCF) was created in 1951 to improve the quality of life in our community. Each grant is a valued investment in our community. Please read through these instructions thoroughly and contact the Foundation at 513-863-1717 with any questions.

Our Priorities

The Hamilton Community Foundation focuses on funding to support its Strategic Goals. *The goals include economic vitality, education and community quality of life.* Priority will be given to organizations requesting funds that are aligned with these goals.

HCF is also interested in other innovative programs that are responsive to community needs, partnerships, and enhance collaborative efforts. Lower priority is given to equipment requests, requests to pay staff for existing services, and duplication of existing services.

Eligibility – Geographic Focus

Organizations must be *located in or provide services to residents within the greater Hamilton area.* Grant seekers outside Butler County must provide information describing how area residents are served. Generally grants will only be awarded to tax-exempt organizations classified as 501(c)(3) charities by the Internal Revenue Service. *If your program does not have a tax-exempt ruling from the IRS, please complete the Fiscal Sponsor Information Form.*

Key Factors in Evaluating Proposals

- Capacity of the organization to undertake the project
- Extent that the project builds upon existing resources and services
- Quality and effectiveness of the project
- Level of coordination and cooperation with other organizations
- Potential for leveraged funding, especially from national sources
- Opportunity for project replication by other organizations
- A plan for continued funding after the grant period

Restrictions

Reporting requirements from prior grants must be fulfilled before applying again. Grants will not be made to individuals, for debt reduction, loans, for-profit businesses, tickets for benefits, annual appeals, telephone solicitations, political campaigns or religious activities. **Grant seekers may only apply for one project per year.**

Grant application deadlines:

<u>Grant Cycle</u>	<u>Application Deadline</u>	<u>Board Decision Mailed</u>
February	January 1 st	late February
April	March 1st	late April
June –* Capital Requests	May 1st	late June
October	September 1st	late October
December	November 1st	late December

** Completed application must be emailed (PDF documents only), mailed or delivered to the Foundation office by 4:30 pm. If the application deadline falls on a weekend or holiday then the deadline will be the next business day.*

Capital Grants

In addition to program/project requests at the June meeting, the Foundation will consider capital grants for building construction, renovation and specialized equipment. Decisions are based on Foundation priorities, degree of community need, potential impact, and a determination of whether the Foundation can make a significant difference in the proposed project.

Please note: The deadline for submitting your Capital Grant Request is May 1st. Capital grants are reviewed ONLY at the June board meeting.

How to apply

- Type your information on the application forms completely. Incomplete applications may result in your grant application being deferred to another grant cycle or declined.
- If you are needed to present your proposal to the Board of Trustees at the Board meeting, you will be notified with the details for your attendance. *Only one person from your organization is permitted to attend this presentation.*

Materials to include in your request

- A cover letter signed by the board president and executive director indicating approval by the Board to submit the request.
- Completed application forms (*place these immediately behind the cover letter*).
- A narrative that includes the following: (*Type must be no less than 12 pt. font & numbered pages*)
 - Agency's history; describe all services and constituents served, proposed program description, e.g., needs assessment (reference sources of data), precipitating factors, goals and objectives, methodology, time line, project outcomes, and funding secured.
 - How does this proposal support the Hamilton Community Foundation's Strategic Goals?
 - How does this proposal fit with your mission?
 - Describe your organizational capacity to carry out the project (examples: staff qualifications, best practices), collaboration (documented by letters of support or memorandums of understanding), community impact, outcome measurements and sustainability.
 - How many people will your program serve?
 - What kind of impact will we see in their lives?
 - Please provide a baseline of behaviors that you expect your program to directly impact.
 - How will the program's effectiveness be monitored, evaluated and measured?
 - How will you secure future funding?
- Detailed projected program budget including a budget narrative.
- Three years organizational budget comparison is **required** for ALL grant proposals
- The actual budget for two prior fiscal years, the current projected annual budget and year-to-date financial report detailing revenue and expenses. Itemize funding sources, e.g., government (federal/state/county/city), program fees (separate programs), individual donations, corporate contributions, foundation grants, federated campaigns, endowment, fundraisers, etc. What percentage of your budget does each line item comprise of your total budget? Example, what percentage of your income is from foundation grants? What percentage is from program fees?
- List of current board members. (*Indicate any members who are paid staff.*)
- If support letters are used, they should be sent with your application and not sent separately.
- Most recent audit (*full copy with notes*) and a copy of the Management Letter. (***If emailed, send as separate PDF document.***)
- Copy of your most recent IRS Form 990 filed. (***If emailed, send as separate PDF document.***)
- Most recent Annual Report. (***If emailed, send as separate PDF document.***)
- IRS tax-exempt letter for new grant seekers and non-profits with an IRS Advance Ruling Status or if the IRS recently confirmed your tax-exempt status (after an advance ruling). (***If emailed, send as separate PDF document.***)

Email your application and supporting materials (PDF Documents only) to dmast@hamiltonfoundation.org or if you wish to provide paper copies, send one copy of the materials to the Foundation office. PLEASE DO NOT BIND, STAPLE or FOLD your documents. Do not send items not requested in the application.