

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS GRANT GUIDELINES

2023 Community Grants Program



PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Since 1953, the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois has made more than \$80,000,000 in grants and scholarships to nonprofits and students. This is possible through the generosity of CFNIL's donors—individuals, families, and organizations committed to improving the region's quality of life.

Some donors choose to make one-time or legacy gifts to address the challenges and opportunities of future generations. These endowed gifts support Community Grants, CFNIL's largest and broadest grantmaking program. Some donors have created named funds which support the Community Grants Program, some of which support specific populations or a cause that falls within one or more specific Focus Areas. View a list of these named funds at cfnil.org/donor-named-funds.

CFNIL is pleased to continue its tradition of grantmaking with the Fall 2023 Community Grants cycle. This document describes who can apply for Community Grants, how to apply, and what kind of charitable activities are eligible to receive funding. Community Grants are made in seven Focus Areas: Arts & Humanities, Career Pathways, Complementary Education, Health, Human Services, Sustainable Communities, and Youth & Families.

We rely on your feedback to guide our grantmaking process. Please do not hesitate to approach us with questions or comments. During the open application period, CFNIL staff do not offer specific guidance on the design or implementation of your proposal but are happy to clarify any aspect of our application.

Full details about the Community Grants Program may be found online at cfnil.org/community.

2023 Community Grants Program Key Dates

Application Opens: June 20

Application Closes: August 15

Award Notification: By end of November

Start an application and view full program details at cfnil.org/community

2022 COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM BY THE NUMBERS

Arts & Humanities



10 grants for \$178,823.24
Average grant: \$17,882.32
Range: \$2,750 - \$74,700

Education



26 grants for \$863,766.28
Average grant: \$33,221.78
Range: \$2,830 - \$80,000

Health



8 grants for \$172,749.00
Average grant: \$21,593.63
Range: \$4,000 - \$50,000

Human Services



17 grants for \$205,984.30
Average grant: \$12,116.72
Range: \$4,000 - \$30,000

Sustainable Communities



7 grants for \$145,860.73
Average grant: \$20,837.25
Range: \$5,000 - \$43,961

Youth & Families



9 grants for \$171,345.88
Average grant: \$19,038.43
Range: \$5,000 - \$40,000

TOTALS:

77 grants for \$1,738,529.43 | Average grant: \$22,578.30 | Range: \$2,750 - \$80,000

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

The application for Community Grants has seven sections:

1. **Summary:** The basic information about your proposal, including your proposal's Focus Area (see below).
2. **Proposal Plan:** A detailed description of your activity.
3. **Community Need:** Why the activity is needed and who it will serve in terms of location, age, ethnicity, and gender.
4. **Proposal Budget:** A detailed proposal budget and narrative.
5. **Evaluation Plan: Measuring Results:** The activity's anticipated results and the plan to track and measure those results (see page 3).
6. **Organizational Background:** General organizational information including financials for requests over \$5,000.
7. **Grant Applicant Agreement:** The terms and conditions for applying for and administering a grant from CFNIL's Community Grants Program (see page 4).

Sections 1, 6, and 7 are not scored by reviewers. Sections 2 - 5 are scored on a 1 - 5 scale. The Proposal and Evaluation Plan: Measuring Results section scores are weighted. Find more information about CFNIL's review process on page 4.

FOCUS AREAS

CFNIL accepts proposals in seven Focus Areas. CFNIL's strategic focus is Career Pathways and Complementary Education, which are funded at a greater level. Remaining funds are allocated to Arts & Humanities, Health, Human Services, Sustainable Communities, and Youth & Families.

ARTS & HUMANITIES

- Increase the availability of and access to artistic and cultural experiences, especially those that represent our community's diverse culture.
- Celebrate the region's history and preserve historical integrity.

CAREER PATHWAYS

- Define the region's workforce needs in terms of skills and competencies.
- Increase student access to and engagement with career information and their related academic pathways.
- Foster collaboration among regional educators, employers, and workforce/economic development entities.

COMPLEMENTARY EDUCATION

- Provide more learning hours, reinforce classroom instruction, and advance student development through school-approved programs.
- Increase the capacity, coordination, outreach, and transportation infrastructure of school and school-approved programs.
- Support before- and after-school, summer school, and enrichment programs.

HEALTH

- Improve the quality of and access to health services.
- Support community wellness.
- Conduct research to promote the health and well-being of our community.

HUMAN SERVICES

- Serve the basic needs of individuals and families.
- Provide services to persons with developmental disabilities, especially activities that promote inclusion.
- Promote the equitable treatment of others.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

- Promote neighborhood and economic development.
- Support efforts to ensure public safety and access to quality, affordable, and permanent housing.
- Preserve our natural environment, especially activities that increase the region's understanding and appreciation of the environment.

YOUTH & FAMILIES

- Provide pathways to self-sufficiency.
- Strengthen families.
- Support intellectual, emotional, physical and social development.

TYPES OF PROPOSALS

Application questions will vary depending on the type of proposal submitted:

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	EXAMPLE
EVENT	The duration of the charitable activity is less than a week.	Weekend-long concert or one-day block party.
PROJECT	The duration of the charitable activity has a beginning and ending date, and lasts between one week and three years.	A summer-long camp or a two-year archiving initiative.
PROGRAM	The duration of the charitable activity is ongoing.	A year-round health facility. All proposals related to educational activities that occur annually, like after- or summer-school programs.
CAPITAL/ COMMODITY	You are purchasing equipment, a commodity, or making a minor capital improvement that will allow you to serve or further your ability to serve your clients. If the purchase is part of a larger charitable activity, such as purchasing books for a reading program, choose Event/Project/Program as appropriate. NOT eligible for multi-year grants.	Van to transport clients; food for pantry; school backpacks for at-risk youth; ADA compliant bathroom remodel.

MULTI-YEAR GRANTS

An organization may apply for a multi-year grant if seeking funding for charitable activities within Career Pathways, Complementary Education, or Health Focus Areas.

EVALUATION PLAN: MEASURING RESULTS

CFNIL reviewers need the clearest possible description of anticipated results and indicators of success to meaningfully evaluate your application. To see examples of Measuring Results, visit cfnil.org/grant-resources.

The key elements of the Evaluation Plan: Measuring Results section of the application include the Program Rationale and up to three Result Statements. CFNIL uses the term "Result Statement" to include the Result, Indicators of Success, Targets, Methods for Measurement, and Benchmarks for each specified Result:

- **Program Rationale:** Explanation of how the proposed activities will lead to the Results listed in the proposal.
- **Result:** The change or improvement the activity is intended to produce. How will participants benefit?
- **Indicators of Success:** The data collected to show evidence of a change as a result of the proposed activity. This may include outputs and outcomes. Outputs may be used in an instance when measuring outcomes during the funding period (12 months) would be impractical.
- **Targets:** Does not refer to your target population. It is a number or percentage of the Indicators of Success that defines your desired achievement. It will look much like the Indicators above but will include target numbers.
- **Methods for Measurement:** How you will collect the data that shows evidence of change.
- **Benchmarks:** A point of reference against which your results will be compared.

ELIGIBILITY & WHAT WE FUND

To be eligible to apply for funding from the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois, an applicant must be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, a religious organization, a unit of government, or a public university/college.

The proposals must describe charitable activities that primarily, but not exclusively, benefit the residents of Boone, Ogle, Stephenson, or Winnebago Counties. The more you request, the greater scrutiny your proposal will receive. CFNIL uses a tiered application format based on the request amount. Applicants requesting over \$50,000 will submit a full application with audited financials. Applicants requesting \$5,001 to \$50,000 will submit a streamlined application with just the most recent 990. Applicants requesting less than \$5,000 will have the shortest application and no organizational financials are required. CFNIL reserves the right to request additional financial information during the grant cycle if needed.

CFNIL does not fund charitable activities that promote a religion or require participation in a religious activity as a condition for receiving services. Grants may be made to faith-based organizations for non-religious purposes.

CFNIL will fund:

- Expenses that are directly related to the design and implementation of a proposal. Revenue and expenses related to the proposal must be itemized using the integrated budget form in the application.
- The purchase and installation of capital assets (i.e., assets that have a useful life greater than one year and which will be depreciated on the applicant's books).
- Wages for staff or contractors to the extent that the request is appropriate to the proposal's scope and implementation.
- Indirect costs that do not exceed 15% of the amount being requested in the proposal. Indirect costs are defined as expenses that cannot be easily attributed to the funded charitable activity but are essential to the operation of the grantee. Examples include utilities, insurance, general administrative support, and the portion of a building that is used to support the general operations of the organization.

The CFNIL Community Grants program will not fund proposals for general operations; endowment building; large-scale capital campaigns*; budget deficits; individuals; for-profit organizations; partisan political activities; or proposals that discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, national/ethnic origin, political beliefs, veteran's status, disability, or any other factor prohibited by applicable law.

**CFNIL may fund a capital project if the request comprises at least 25% of the total cost.*

GRANT REQUIREMENTS

Applicants:

- Must have been in active service to the public for at least one year as of December 1st of the year in which they are applying. For 501(c) 3 organizations, active service begins on the "Effective Date" found in an organization's IRS Determination letter.
- Must be current on all interim and final reports for grants from CFNIL's Community Grants Program. If the organization is currently being funded with a CFNIL grant and a final report is not yet due, the organization must submit an interim report. Visit cfnil.org/grant-resources
- Must submit a "Pre-Authorization Form" found in the "Working with a School District?" section at cfnil.org/grant-resources if working with/within a school district. The form asks for detailed information about the partnership between the applicant and the district, specifically the district's role in designing the charitable activity and allocating resources toward its completion.
- May submit up to three unique proposals. For the purposes of this limit, organizations and their corresponding foundations will be treated as one entity even if they have separate EIN numbers.

APPLICANT AGREEMENT

All applicants must agree to the following terms and conditions while submitting their proposal through the online portal.

By accepting this grant, your organization (hereafter “GRANTEE”) agrees to the following terms and conditions of the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois (hereafter “FOUNDATION”).

1. To use the funds only for the tax-exempt purpose* as described in the grant application and subsequent grant notification letter and not for any other purpose without the FOUNDATION’s prior written approval.
2. To not expend any grant funds for any political or lobbying activity or for any purpose other than one specified in section 170(c)(2)(b) of the Code.
3. To notify the FOUNDATION immediately of any change in (a) GRANTEE’S legal or tax status, (b) GRANTEE’S executive or key staff responsible for achieving the grant purposes, (c) GRANTEE’S ability to expend the grant for the intended purpose, and (d) any expenditure from this grant for any purpose other than those for which the grant was intended.
4. To maintain books and records adequate to demonstrate grant funds are dedicated to the purpose for which the grant is made, and to maintain records of expenditures adequate to identify the purposes for which, and manner in which, grant funds have been expended.
5. To give the FOUNDATION reasonable access to the grantee’s files and records for the purpose of making such financial audits, verifications, and investigations as it deems necessary concerning the grant, and to maintain such files and records for a period of at least four years after completion or termination of the project.
6. To return to the FOUNDATION any unexpended funds or any portion of the grant that is not used for the purposes specified herein.
7. To recognize the FOUNDATION in all publicity materials related to the funded project or program, as specified in the Grant Communication Guidelines, which will be included in the grant notification letter.
8. To allow the FOUNDATION to include information about this grant in the FOUNDATION’s periodic public reports, newsletter, news releases, social media postings, and on the FOUNDATION’s website. This includes the amount and purpose of the grant, any photographs you have provided that do not include “DO NOT USE” in their file name, your logo or trademark, and other information and materials about your organization and its activities.
9. To submit a written report summarizing the project promptly following the end of the period during which you are to use all grant funds and to submit any interim reports the FOUNDATION may require. Your reports should describe your progress in achieving the purposes of the grant and include a detailed accounting of the use and expenditure of grant funds.

The FOUNDATION reserves the right to discontinue, modify or withhold any payments under this grant award or to require a total or partial refund of any grant funds if, in the FOUNDATION’s sole discretion, such action is necessary: (a) because you have not fully complied with the terms and conditions of this grant; (b) to protect the purpose and objectives of the grant or any other charitable activities of the FOUNDATION; or (c) to comply with the requirements of any law or regulation applicable to you, the FOUNDATION, or this grant.

**As defined by the Internal Revenue Service*

PROPOSAL REVIEW

CFNIL is committed to a fair and objective proposal review process.

Volunteer community advisors review and recommend grant proposals for approval by the CFNIL Board of Trustees. CFNIL Trustees, volunteer advisors, and staff adhere to carefully considered conflict of interest and confidentiality policies throughout the review and approval process. Due to the volume of proposals considered, CFNIL cannot routinely meet with grant applicants as a part of the review process. CFNIL may meet with any applicant when a review committee has determined that a meeting or a site visit will facilitate the review process.

Grant award decisions are final. CFNIL Trustees, volunteer advisors, and staff are prohibited from discussing the details of committee deliberations with any grant applicant. To learn more visit cfnil.org/grant-resources and look for the “Proposal Review Guidelines” section.

HOW TO APPLY

Applications must be submitted through CFNIL’s Web Portal by 5 p.m. on August 15, 2023. To learn how to register and apply using the Web Portal, visit cfnil.org/grant-resources. Funds for awarded grants will be available by the end of November 2023; ensure funds are not needed until after December 1, 2023. Contact Program and Administrative Associate Lisa DeLang at edelang@cfnil.org or 779-210-8210 with questions.

OUR VISION

A healthy, sustainable Northern Illinois supported by partnerships fostered by CFNIL.



COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
OF NORTHERN ILLINOIS

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OUR MISSION

To inspire endowment and promote philanthropy for the current and future needs of the people of Northern Illinois.