COVID Community Needs Grant

Delaware Community Foundation

Overview
The Community Needs Grants are intended to enable nonprofits to better serve Delawareans by providing resources to help them shift to new or modified operating models, or restart or pivot programs in response to COVID-19. The grants will support organizations that are sustainable with strong leadership, management and fiscal accountability, and solid programmatic outcomes that benefit Delawareans.

The application requires organizations to demonstrate sustainability, including addressing mission impact, financial strength, strong board and staff leadership, succession planning, brand reputation, adaptability and strategic planning. Grants will not be awarded to organizations determined to have poor sustainability.

Applications must adhere to the guidelines. Applications will be scored in three categories:

Financial Sustainability
- Stewardship
- Revenue Streams
- Funding History
- Planning

Organizational Sustainability
- Mission Impact/Brand Reputation
- Leadership
- Adaptability

Grant Request/Use of Funds

Grant Alignment - Scale to give points for Alignment

Alignment with Guidelines*
Is the request related to COVID-19?
Does the intended use of funds target the organization’s ability to adapt to the new operating environment?
Will the organization’s request make a difference in its ability to serve Delaware?

5: The request aims to fund specific actions needed to respond to COVID-19 and/or adapt to operate in the new environment. It focuses on community needs rising from or exacerbated by the pandemic. The application clearly articulates the need and how this request will help the
organization benefit the community. The application is clear about how the request will benefit communities most affected by the pandemic.

3: The request is clearly related to COVID-19 and will enhance the organization’s ability to benefit Delaware in the new environment.

0: The request is not related to COVID-19. The application does not clearly define the need and/or how the request will benefit the community.

**Scoring Options:** 0 - 5 or N/A

A scale to give points for alignment and will make the application ineligible if the request is not aligned.

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**Grant Request/Use of Funds**

**Sustainability**

How will you use this investment to help sustain your organization and your ability to serve your constituencies? How will it help you generate more engagement or funding, prepare to reopen, modify your programs, etc.?

5: Application clearly defines how the requested funds will support current activities and *catalyze* the organization’s ability to increase its sustainability for the long-term benefit of Delaware. Application includes specific action steps and measurable goals.

3: Application defines how the requested funds will strengthen the organization’s sustainability and capacity to benefit Delaware. Application includes strategies and appropriate goals.

0: Requested funds are to address short-term needs, standard operations and/or programming models that are no longer relevant or sustainable. Request would not help the organization leverage other opportunities to increase its own sustainability.

**Scoring Options:** 0 - 5 or N/A

**Target Population**

What are the key populations (demographic and geographic) that would be served by this grant?

5: Application clearly defines the target populations to be served by the requested funds. The target population includes people/geographic communities most affected by the pandemic.

3: Application defines the populations to be served by requested funds or by the organization as a whole, and that population includes people/geographic communities most affected by the pandemic.
pandemic.

0: Target population is vaguely or not defined, and/or the population is minimally affected by the pandemic.

**Scoring Options:** 0 - 5 or N/A

**Project Budget**
Does the proposed project budget make sense? Does the organization have a process to ensure the funds are spent according to the application?

5: Request for funding is appropriate. The budget clearly defines how funds will be used at a reasonable level of detail. Cost estimates are reasonable. The budget is a reasonable investment to achieve the target outcomes. Clear plan to track and account for spending.

3: Request for funding has merit, but lacks sufficient detail. The budget lacks detail and/or may include minor errors. Cost estimates are generally reasonable. The budget aligns with the proposed outcomes.

0: The request for funding does not have merit. The project budget is missing, messy, vague, and/or illogical. It is unclear how the proposed budget items relate to the project outcomes.

**Scoring Options:** 0 - 5 or N/A

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**Grant Request/Use of Funds: Planning & Outcomes**

**Planning**
What is the plan for implementing the work to be funded by the requested grant? Please include timeline.

5: Application clearly details a logical and realistic implementation plan, including a specific timeline, budget, who will manage it and measurable outcomes. The plan includes adequate resources, and the organization is likely to succeed in execution.

3: Application outlines a plan for implementation, including a timeline, budget, who will manage it and outcomes. Some questions exist about the organization’s ability to execute on the plan.

0: Application does not include an implementation plan, or it includes an unrealistic or vague plan.

**Scoring Options:** 0 - 5 or N/A
**Outcomes**
What would successful implementation of this grant look like? How do you plan to measure the impact of this grant?

5: The application clearly communicates the need(s) to be addressed, the strategic goals and appropriate, measurable target outcomes.

3: The application defines target outcomes, but they are less strategic, not as clearly aligned with established needs and/or may not be measurable.

0: The application does not include goals or measurable outcomes.

**Scoring Options:** 0 - 5 or N/A

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**Financial Sustainability: Stewardship**
Reviewers will evaluate based on application and financial documents (excluding the project budget).

*Character Limit: 250*

**Stewardship**
Is the financial information provided current and complete? Does the organization have independently generated historical financial statements? Does the nonprofit present a historical track record of financial stewardship as exhibited by historically strong balance sheets?

**Scoring Options:** 0 - 5 or N/A

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**Financial Sustainability: Revenue and Funding Category**

**Revenue Streams**
Does the organization identify reliable, ideally diversified, revenue sources? If appropriate, has the organization applied for funding through CARES or other available programs?

**Scoring Options:** 0 - 5 or N/A

5: Documentation clearly articulates that the organization is supported by strong, reliable and/or diverse revenue sources. If appropriate, the organization has applied for CARES or other appropriate resources, or has provided a clear explanation of why they have not.

3: The organization appears highly dependent on one tenuous source of revenue and/or the
application lacks detail or is unclear. If appropriate, the organization has not applied for CARES or other resources and has not explained why.

0: The organization has a single, tenuous source of revenue, and/or few other revenue prospects other than Strategic Response Fund, and/or the application has no information on funding sources.

**Funding History**

Does the income statement indicate consistent funding? Does the narrative provide sufficient description/explanation of major changes?

5: Clear documentation of consistent funding over multiple years. Clear and acceptable explanations are provided for major changes.

3: Funding is generally consistent with some periods of weakness or inconsistency. Most significant variations are explained.

0: The organization has a history of inconsistent, uncertain funding or no history (less than 2 years).

**Scoring Options:** 0 - 5 or N/A

5: Complete, recent documentation provided. High quality audit/financial statements produced by third party that indicate strong, reliable and sustainable financial resources, indicated by adequate cash on hand (~12+ weeks), liquidity, access to capital, line of credit, and relatively low debt. Audit opinion indicates the statements fairly present the financial position of the agency.

3: Documentation provided is mostly complete and relatively recent. Organization may face some financial challenges, but resources are responsibly stewarded and appropriately documented. Organization has sufficient cash on hand (~4-11 weeks) and manageable debt. No audited financial statements but financials are up to date.

0: There are significant concerns of the financial strength of the organization. Incomplete, inadequate or outdated documentation, weak or inconsistent balance sheets. Less than 4 weeks of cash on hand, limited access to resources and/or considerable debt. Audit opinion indicates there are problems with the statements.
Financial Sustainability: Planning and Contingencies

Planning*
Does the organization have an appropriate plan for addressing revenue gaps related to the pandemic? Does organization clearly articulate the impact on service delivery from revenue gaps?

**Scoring Options:** 0 - 5 or N/A

5: The plan clearly explains key assumptions and logical mitigation strategies if revenue or expense assumptions are not achieved. If possible, the organization has pivoted its previous fundraising work to continue in a new format. Services to be impacted are clear and relate to the pandemic.

3: The plan addresses broad strategies but lacks some clarity or details and/or the proposed mitigation strategies seem unrealistic or inadequate. Services impacted are not clearly detailed.

0: The organization has no plan for addressing revenue gaps. Services impacted aren't related to the pandemic or are not addressed.

Planning*
What is the action plan if the revenue assumptions change for the worse or desired outcomes are not being met?

5: The organization has a clear plan for adjustments to operations and expenditures to ensure effectiveness and sustainability.

3: The organization has a broad outline of potential changes to operations and expenditures, but it is unclear if it will remain effective and sustainable.

0: No documentation or the organization is not considering other sources or the planned cuts to the operations and expenditures are not realistic or sustainable.

**Scoring Options:** 0 - 5 or N/A

Organizational Sustainability: Mission Impact/Brand Reputation

Mission Impact/Brand Reputation*
Who does the organization serve? Who else provides similar services, and how do you uniquely meet the needs of those you serve?
**Scoring Options:** 0 - 5 or N/A

5: Organization clearly defines its constituents and the landscape of others serving that population and includes documentation/data supporting the need for the service. Organization is providing services effectively and is the sole provider of key services and/or indicates meaningful collaboration with partners. Organization differentiates its services/value from other organizations. Organization primarily serves high-need populations/geographic communities.

3: Organization's definition of constituents is vague and/or organization is one of several providing duplicate or similar services. Need for services is clear. Constituents include high-need populations/geographic communities.

0: Organization is unclear about population served and/or organization is one of multiple organizations providing duplicate services. Need for service is unclear. Application indicates lack of understanding of landscape and/or inadequate collaborations. High-need populations/geographic communities are not part of the organization's constituency.

**Mission Impact/Brand Reputation**

How have you shifted your activities, strategies and/or goals in light of the pandemic?

5: Organization is adding value to the community (not necessarily direct service, e.g., historical sites) and has pivoted effectively or is in the process of pivoting to the new environment. This may include expanding capacity to serve a larger audience and/or new populations, adding or terminating services, shifting service models, making creative changes to programming, etc. Organization has formally revisited its goals and strategies. Organization may have shifted its focus to serve historically underrepresented populations. Application includes data on the population served and documents improvements as a result of the shift.

3: Organization is providing value to the community and is adapting to the new environment. Organization has pivoted, is pivoting or has solid plans on how to pivot activities, but has not reconsidered its goals or strategies. Organization strives to be responsive to the needs of the community. Application generally discusses the population served and/or improvements as a result of the shift, but does not provide data.

0: Organization has not modified activities to adapt to the new environment, or attempt to shift has failed. Organization is not providing service or adding value to the community. The mission of the organization is no longer relevant in the new environment.
Application does not provide information about the increased service to Delawareans as a result of modifications.

**Mission Impact/Brand Reputation**
Provide historic examples of your success in moving toward your program outcomes.

5: Organization clearly demonstrates consistently achieving or making progress toward defined, specific, measurable appropriate goals in its service area. Organization provides evidence of success over at least the past two years.

3: Organization shows evidence of making progress toward goals. Goals may be less clearly defined and/or progress may be moderate.

0: Organization does not show that it has established clear, appropriate goals and/or made progress toward achieving goals.

**Scoring Options:** 0 - 5 or N/A

**Organizational Sustainability: Adaptability**

**Adaptability**
How have you changed your organization’s structure, personnel, fundraising and other financial practices since the pandemic hit?

5: Organization has responded with strategic staff, programmatic, fundraising and/or budgetary changes as needed to maintain/enhance community impact while addressing its own short- and long-term sustainability. Organization is continuously reviewing and prepared to make additional changes if needed. Organization has established partnerships and pursued opportunities to decrease costs or leverage purchasing with other organizations.

3: Organization has made some changes, but does not seem to have leveraged all appropriate opportunities. Organization does not indicate ongoing attentiveness to the landscape for additional potential changes.

0: Organization has made few or no changes.

**Scoring Options:** 0 - 5 or N/A

**Adaptability**
Beyond this grant, how do you plan to close the funding gap your organization is experiencing as a result of the pandemic?

5: Organization has a clear and realistic plan for addressing its funding gap, including an appropriate combination of strategies addressing revenue and expenses. Organization has a
variety of realistic options beyond the Strategic Response Fund.

3: Organization has a plan for addressing its funding gap, but questions exist about whether it can be successful. Organization has identified at least a few options beyond the Strategic Response Fund.

0: Organization has no realistic plan for addressing its funding gap, and/or the plan may not include an appropriate mix of revenue and spending changes. Organization is not pursuing an appropriate range of solutions and/or is considering few options beyond the Strategic Response.

**Scoring Options:** 0 - 5 or N/A

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**Team Member Collective Notes**

**Individual Notes**
*Character Limit: 500*

**Team Member Collective Notes**

Please share any learnings from phone call with organizational leadership that have an impact (positive or negative) about the grant.

*Character Limit: 10000*