



**The Community Foundation
OF FREDERICK COUNTY**

GRANT SEEKERS GUIDEBOOK

FY2026

Grant Seeker Guidebook 2025-2026

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SECTION 1: About Our Grants

Thanks to Frederick County's generous donors, The Community Foundation of Frederick County supports a wide variety of community interests through a robust grants program. Together, we are building a stronger, healthier, more vibrant community not only for today but for the future as well.

We offer several grant cycles, each with unique applications, funding priorities, and deadlines. This guidebook will provide an overview of these opportunities for FY26, but we encourage you to check our website (www.FrederickCountyGives.org) for the most updated information on our open grant applications. The Community Impact Department staff, who manages our grants programs, are also available for further questions at 301-695-7660 or Community.Impact@FrederickCountyGives.org.

Please note: the term "Applicant" as used throughout this guidebook refers to the organization that is applying for grant funding.

Online applications:

The Community Foundation utilizes the Grant Lifecycle Manager by Foundant Technologies as our online grants management system. Grants will only be accepted through this grants management system. Each applicant must create a user profile to store their information and for correspondence with the Community Foundation. To access an existing user profile or to create a new profile, please login here: <https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=frederickcounty>

Please note that the Community Foundation will provide grant notifications through our Foundant system. These notifications will come from the email address of administrator@grantinterface.com on behalf of the Community Foundation. Please ensure that this email address is added to your safe senders list (or equivalent).

Nondiscrimination policy:

The Community Foundation does not discriminate in awarding grants and mandates that its grantees do not discriminate based upon the following policy statement: No person in the United States shall, on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity (as defined in paragraph 249(c)(4) of title 18, United States Code), sexual orientation, marital or parental status, political affiliation, military service, physical or mental ability, or any other improper criterion be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity funded in whole or in part with funds made available by the Community Foundation, and any other program or activity funded in whole or in part with funds appropriated for grants, cooperative agreements, and other assistance administered by the Community Foundation.

SECTION 2: Grant Consideration Process

Applicants submit grant applications through Foundant, our online system, within the specified application period listed below. Check the website (FrederickCountyGives.org) for any date changes. The Community Foundation Grants Committee, comprised of trustees and other community volunteers, review the applications and make funding recommendations that are approved by our board of trustees.

All applicants will be notified about funding decisions via email generated through Foundant. Applicants can also check the status of their application by logging in here:

<https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=frederickcounty>

Application Timelines

Some grants have a set submission deadline. Others “roll along” until all funding is allocated, with these grants referred to as rolling grants.

	Applications Accepted	Applications Reviewed	Applicants Notified
Strategic	8/15/25 to 9/15/25	September to October	Late October
Impact	9/15/25 to 10/15/25	October to November	Late November
Rolling	1/1/26 to 5/1/26	On a rolling basis	Within one month of submission
Sgt. David J. Smith	All year	On a rolling basis	Within one month of submission
Women’s Giving Circle	2/1/26 to 3/1/26	March	Late April

***Tentative - check website for updates**

Reporting and Other Deadlines for Successful Applicants

	Grant Period	Grant Agreement	Interim Report*	Final Report
Strategic	12/1/25 to 3/31/27	November	7/31/26	4/30/27
Impact	1/1/26 to 12/31/26	December	7/31/26	1/31/27
Rolling	1/1/26 to 12/31/26	Varies	N/A	1/31/27
Sgt. David J. Smith	Varies	Varies	N/A	Varies
Women's Giving Circle	7/1/26 to 6/30/27	May	1/31/27	8/15/27

* Site visits may be conducted in lieu of written interim reports, at the discretion of the Community Foundation.

Visit our website – www.FrederickCountyGives.org - to sign up for our newsletter and other Community Foundation news and information.



SECTION 3: Eligibility Requirements

All applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements and provide the described financial information to be considered for a grant.

The applicant must be:

- An existing nonprofit, 501c3 organization,
- An existing government/quasi-governmental agency applying for an extraordinary project that is not funded by tax revenue,
- A faith-based organization requesting funding for non-sectarian activities, or
- A civic group that is not a 501c3 organization requesting funding for a community cause.

In addition, 501c3 organizations must be **in good standing** with:

- Maryland Secretary of State's charitable division - <https://onestop.md.gov/>
- Department of Assessments and Taxation's Maryland personal property tax division - <https://egov.maryland.gov/BusinessExpress/EntitySearch/Search>
- IRS, as assessed via GuideStar's Charity Check - <https://www.guidestar.org/>

Grant applications must attach a budget that details all revenue sources, including pending and all planned expenditure categories for the program or project. The budget should show how funds requested from the Community Foundation will be used. An organizational budget may be an acceptable substitute for a program or project budget if the grant will be used to support a broad spectrum of services for the applicant.

In addition, grant applications must include financial information for the applicant as a whole.

- Applicants with annual charitable contributions less than \$300,000 are required to complete a prescribed financial form as part of the grant application. Faith-based organizations and organizations who are chapters of a "parent" organization must also complete this financial form if they do not have their own audit or independent financial review. Quasi-government agencies applying must also complete the prescribed financial form. The form is available within the application.
- Applicants with charitable contributions over \$300,000 but less than \$750,000 must upload a financial review performed by an independent certified public accountant within the last year.
- Applicants with charitable contributions over \$750,000 must upload their most current audit performed by an independent certified public accountant.

SECTION 4: FY26 Strategic Grant Overview

Application Period:	August 15, 2025 to September 15, 2025
Notification:	Applicants will be notified via email by the end of October
Grant Amount:	Will be announced in August 2025 Minimum request: \$1,000 Maximum request: n/a Multiple applications are permitted.
Grant Period:	Grants must be used during the period of December 1, 2025, through March 31, 2027.
Reporting Requirements:	Interim Report deadline is July 31, 2026. Interim reports ask for information regarding the funded project's progress and use of grant funds. Site visits may be conducted in lieu of written reports.
Final Report Deadline:	April 30, 2027. Final reports ask for information regarding the funded project's impact and use of grant funds.
Description:	This grant cycle awards funding related to the Community Foundation's strategic initiatives which are based upon the 2019 human needs assessment and the update that was conducted in spring 2022. More information about the Community Foundation's Human Needs Assessment and 2022 update can be found at www.FrederickCountyGives.org .

To apply for funding under these Strategic Initiatives, applicants must identify project or service outcomes for programs, organizations, or systems that address:

- Supporting families with children
 - Continue or increase opportunities for all families with children to thrive in Frederick County
 - Continue or increase stability and opportunities for growth in families with children whose household earnings are below the ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) threshold
- Preparing for a growing aging population
 - Continue or increase ability for seniors to age in place in the most optimal and appropriate environment
 - Continue or increase access to information and resources on aging for current seniors, rising seniors, and their caregivers

- Responding to Substance Use Disorder (SUD)
 - Continue or increase access to timely and qualified treatment and recovery options for individuals experiencing SUD
 - Continue or increase provision of SUD-related education and prevention programs
 - Continue or increase capacity for collecting and analyzing data related to people impacted by SUD and the programs that serve them

Preference is given to applications that support access to affordable housing, address mental health needs and/or alleviate disparities in service delivery in the areas listed above.

Grants Committee members will evaluate applications based on fit with strategic priorities as well as the following:

- How compelling is the evidence of need for the project or intervention described in the application?
- Can the program activities described address the need or issue identified?
- Do the indicators and evaluation tools described measure if the program is filling the need or solving the issue identified?
- If the program is successful, will it have a meaningful impact on the need or problem identified?
- Does the program support access to affordable housing, address mental health needs and/or alleviate disparities in service delivery?

SECTION 5: FY26 Impact Grant Overview

Application Period:	September 15, 2025 to October 15, 2025
Notification:	Applicants will be notified via email by the end of November
Total Grant Amount Available:	<p>Varies by fund Minimum request: \$500 Maximum request: Varies by fund</p> <p>Multiple applications are permitted. Please submit one application per fund to which your organization is applying.</p>
Grant Period:	Grants must be used during the period of January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026
Reporting Requirements:	Interim report deadline is July 31, 2026. Interim reports ask for information regarding the funded project's progress and use of grant funds.
Final Report Deadline:	January 31, 2027. Final reports ask for information regarding the funded project's impact and use of grant funds.
Description:	<p>The Community Foundation's Impact Grant program provides grants for any purpose, including a wide range of field of interest and special purpose funds, and support for individuals served by nonprofits or government agencies.</p> <p>The list of available funds and their purposes will be provided via our website and in the application. Grants must provide direct benefits to Frederick County, Maryland, residents unless otherwise noted in the fund description.</p>

Grants Committee members will evaluate applications based on fit with fund priorities as well as the following:

- How well does the project carry out the specific fund's purpose?
- How compelling is the evidence of the need for the project or investment in the application?
- How well do the activities described in the project description address the needs or problem identified?
- How meaningful will the impact of the project be on the problem identified?

SECTION 6: FY26 Rolling Grant Overview

Application Period:	January 1, 2026 to May 1, 2026
Notification:	Applicants will be notified via email within 30 days of application
Total Grant Amount Available:	<p>Varies by fund Minimum request: \$500 Maximum request: Varies by fund</p> <p>Multiple applications are permitted. Please submit one application per fund to which your organization is applying.</p>
Grant Period:	Grants must be used during the period of January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2026
Final Report Deadline:	January 31, 2027. Final reports ask for information regarding the funded project's impact and use of grant funds.
Description:	<p>The Community Foundation's Rolling Grant program provides grants for any purpose, including a wide range of field of interest and special purpose funds, and support for individuals served by nonprofits or government agencies.</p> <p>The list of available funds and their purposes will be provided via our website and in the application. Grants must provide direct benefits to Frederick County, Maryland, residents unless otherwise noted in the fund description.</p>

Grants Committee members will evaluate applications based on fit with fund priorities as well as the following:

- How well does the project carry out the specific fund's purpose?
- How compelling is the evidence of the need for the project or investment in the application?
- How well do the activities described in the project description address the needs or problem identified?
- How meaningful will the impact of the project be on the problem identified?



SECTION 7: FY26 Sgt. David J. Smith Veterans Relief Fund Grant Overview

Application Period:	Accepted and reviewed throughout the year as they are received for as long as funding is available.
Notification:	Applicants will be notified via email within 30 days of application
Grant Amount:	Minimum grant: \$500 Maximum grant: \$2,000 One application per veteran household is permitted within a 12-month period.
Description:	This relief application is to provide support for veterans and their families who are faced with unforeseen financial distress. Grants will be provided to nonprofit organizations applying on behalf of the household. Beneficiaries of this support must be residents of Frederick County, Maryland, with an honorable military discharge. A veteran may receive support under this grant once every twelve months.

Support can be provided for, but is not limited to:

- Housing assistance including rent and mortgage payments and deposits and fees associated with obtaining housing
- Utility payments
- Medical copayments, transportation to healthcare and/or behavioral health services, medical support, or complimentary therapies
- Job training expenses
- Services to enhance and sustain the family unit

At no point will funds be paid directly to the veteran or other family members. The veteran will be required to submit a bill, invoice, or other proof of expense to the Community Foundation for payment purposes, as well as a copy of the DD Form 214. The DD214 can be redacted to exclude non-relevant personal data.

Grants Committee members will evaluate applications based on fit with fund priorities as well as the eligibility of the veteran household.



SECTION 8: 2026 Women's Giving Circle (WGC) Grant Overview

Application Period:	February 1, 2026 to February 28, 2026
Notification:	Applicants will be notified via email by the end of April
Grant Amount:	Will be announced in February 2026 Minimum request: \$5,000 Maximum request: \$50,000 Multiple applications are permitted. Organizations may submit up to four proposals for funding with a total of no more than \$50,000.
Grant Period:	Grants must be used during the period of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027.
Reporting Requirements:	Interim Report deadline is January 31, 2027. Interim reports ask for information regarding the funded project's progress and use of grant funds.
Final Report Deadline:	August 15, 2027. Final reports ask for information regarding the funded project's impact and use of grant funds.
Description:	The Women's Giving Circle of Frederick County grants support programs that empower women ages 18 and over in challenging situations to improve the quality of their lives. Organizations that offer programs and/or services that provide women with essential resources, services, and opportunities Frederick County, Maryland, are eligible to apply.

In 2026, we are pleased to accept applications only in the 4 categories below. Note: this list is in alphabetical order and has examples for each category. Examples are not an exhaustive list.

- **Education**

- Literacy and English proficiency courses
- Tutoring programs
- Budgeting and financial literacy training and credit score management/repair
- Educational first-time homebuyer programs and low-income homebuyer support services

- **Health**

- Access to health services such as physical, dental, vision, and mental health
- Aging and aging-in-place services

- Assistive devices
- Trauma-informed care
- Substance use prevention and recovery support
- **Housing**
 - Emergency and transitional housing support, including rental assistance, shelters, and recovery programs
 - Homelessness prevention and support services
 - Home repairs
 - Utilities assistance
- **Transportation**
 - Car repair
 - Gas, rideshare, and public transit voucher

Women's Giving Circle Grants Committee members will evaluate applications based on fit with fund priorities as well as eligibility of veteran for support.

- How well does the proposed program align with the Women's Giving Circle mission?
- How well will this program support women becoming more self-sufficient?
- How compelling is the evidence of need for the project or intervention described in the application?
- Can the program activities described address the need or issue identified?
- Do the indicators and evaluation tools described measure if the program is filling the need or solving the issue identified?
- If the program is successful, will it have a meaningful impact on the need or problem identified?

***Tentative - please check website for updates**



SECTION 9: Frequently Asked Questions

How do I apply?

Applicants submit grant applications through Foundant, our online grants management system. Only online applications for grants will be accepted. To access an existing user profile or to create a new profile Foundant, please login here:

<https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=frederickcounty>

Is my organization or project eligible for funding from the Community Foundation?

The Community Foundation awards grants to nonprofits with 501c3 status, a government agency applying for an extraordinary project that is not funded by tax revenue, a faith-based organization requesting funding for non-sectarian activities and civic groups that are not a 501c3 requesting funding for a community cause.

Will the Community Foundation fund fiscally sponsored organizations?

Yes, as long as the fiscal sponsor is in good standing with all state and federal regulations.

Our organization is not located in Frederick County, but we serve Frederick County, Maryland, residents. Can we apply?

Yes. Your organization is welcome to apply; however, any grants provided by the Community Foundation must be used specifically to support the costs associated with serving Frederick County residents.

Can I apply for a grant from the Community Foundation if I have a personal need?

Individuals cannot apply for support through our community grant programs. However, if you are working with a nonprofit organization, church, government agency, or civic group, that organization can apply on your behalf through our Impact, Rolling, and/or Sgt. David J. Smith Veterans Relief Fund. Criteria and timelines vary.

Can I modify my application once I hit “submit”?

Yes. Up until the application deadline, applications can be modified. If you have already hit submit, Community Impact staff will need to revert the application back to you. Please contact us to make that request at 301-695-7660 or Community.Impact@FrederickCountyGives.org.

What happens after my organization receives a grant?

Your organization will receive an email from administrator@grantinterface.com notifying you of how much your organization was awarded and any next steps that need to be taken. Rolling Grant and Sgt. David J. Smith Veterans Relief Fund Grant notifications may come directly from Community Impact staff. Reporting obligations are outlined further in the overview sections of this guidebook.

Do you provide multi-year funding?

The Community Foundation does not provide multi-year at this time.

Are grant funds distributed as an upfront payment or through reimbursement?

Grants are generally disbursed in full during the first month of the grant period. Exceptions are as follows:

- If the applicant is a non-501c3 civic organization, grants will be disbursed on a reimbursement basis. Reimbursement requests by the applicant must include proof of expense and of having addressed the approved community cause. Reimbursement(s) can be requested at any point during the grant period.
- If the applicant is requesting payment to a third-party vendor, Community Impact staff will work with the applicant to determine the best plan of action for payment.

How should we recognize our organization's grant? And where can we get the correct logo?

Receiving grant funding is a great way to highlight the amazing work your organization is doing in the community. Many organizations create a news release or announcement and post it on their organization's website and social media platforms. Releases can also be sent to news outlets. The Community Foundation can provide a news release template and our logo – for assistance email marketing@FrederickCountyGives.org.

What if the approved project budget or services change during the grant period?

Funding is restricted to supporting the activities and expenses outlined in the approved grant application.

However, before the end of the grant period, organizations can request a variance to modify the budget or program services because of uncontrollable or unforeseen circumstances. Please contact Community Impact staff at least three months before the end of the grant period to make a variance request. Variances must be approved by the Community Foundation's Board of Trustees and are not guaranteed to be approved. If the program change is not approved, the Community Foundation may request that the grant be returned.

What if my organization does not use all of the funds granted to us?

Applicants awarded grants must return any unused monies within 60 days of the end of the grant period or the Community Foundation requires the return of the grant if the conditions of the grant are not met.

However, before the end of the grant period, organizations can request a variance to extend the spending period. Please contact Community Impact staff at least three months before the end of the grant period to make a variance request. Variances must be approved by the Community Foundation's Board of Trustees and are not guaranteed to be approved.