WGC Competitive Grant Guidelines, Criteria, and Priorities

Guidelines

The Women’s Giving Circle of Jefferson County, IN (WGCJC) will make grants annually in four Fields of Interest that have the greatest potential to help the women and children of Jefferson County. The four Fields of Interest are:

1. Education
2. Economic Empowerment
3. Physical and Mental Health
4. Violence and Crime

(More information and examples of these Fields of Interest can be found on the ‘Fields of Interest Described’ area of the WGCJC web page.)

All communications from grant seekers are to be directed to the WGCJC Guiding Circle Chairperson or channeled through the appropriate Community Foundation contact person. To reduce miscommunication and to uphold the ethical standards of the WGCJC’s grant-making program, no representative, either staff or volunteer, from a grant-seeking organization is to contact members of the WGCJC grant committee or guiding circle regarding grant-related information. Volunteers and staff report all deviations from this policy at the grant review meeting.

It is expected that grant application budgets will be accurate for project proposals. In the event that not all funds received for grant are used per the grant budget, the following applies: if less than 10% of funds granted are unused for the project, they may be used for a related purpose without further approval by the WGCJC (however, a report on the use must be submitted back to the WGCJC Guiding Circle); if the amount unused for the project is 10% or more, the grantee organization must seek approval from WGCJC Guiding Circle for a related use.

Criteria

- Competitive grants will be made only to organizations whose programs benefit the residents of Jefferson County.
- Grants from the WGCJC must meet legal and tax requirements as to purpose and may be made only to non-profit organizations and government agencies, specifically 501(c)3 charities and 509(a) agencies. No grants will be made to individuals.
- Grant recipients are expected to be able to show that their financial affairs are being properly administered and may be required to submit audited balance sheets and operating statements.
- No grants will be made to support political parties or political campaigns.
- No grants will be made for promotion of a particular church, denomination, or religion, but can be made to religious organizations for general community programs.
- No grants will be made exclusively for endowment creation, campaigns, annual giving, general fund, or new or existing debt reduction of the recipient organization.
- Grantees agree to forward to the WGCJC a final program and financial report for the project. The timeliness and quality of the final reports will be factors in evaluation of the grantee for future funding. All requirements for past grants must be current in order to be eligible for another.
- If grant applications are turned down for a specific grant application request, they may not re-apply for the same, or similar, request in the next cycle.
- No grants will be made for dinner galas, event advertising, and other special fundraising events.

Priorities

Grants that do the following are HIGHER PRIORITY (in no particular order)

- One-time projects
• Highest percentage of population reached
• Serves Jefferson County as a whole
• Preventive rather than remedial
• Increases individual access to community resources
• Examines and addresses underlying causes of local problems and issues
• Attracts volunteer resources and support
• Strengthens the nonprofit sector
• Encourages collaboration among organizations
• Builds the capacity of the organization
• Offers services not already available to the community
• Capital needs beyond an applicant’s capabilities and means
• Seed money for pilot projects
• Will have greatest benefit per dollar granted

Grants that do the following are LOWER PRIORITY (in no particular order)
• New or routine maintenance construction projects (except renovations of existing facilities that enable the organization to provide a better quality of service to Jefferson County)
• Normal operating expenses (except start-up expenses)
• Computer hardware and software equipment
• Funding to organizations that have received a WGC grant in the previous year
• Grants for programs and/or equipment that were committed to prior to the grant application being submitted.
• Organizations having an existing tax-base of support
• Grants to support professional development training or staff programs to build capacity will be considered on a case by case basis. Travel and food expenses will generally not be considered.