



COMPETITIVE GRANT GUIDELINES

Grantmaking Principles

The Community Foundation of Central Illinois (CFCI) invests in the community by supporting programs that address community needs and have lasting value. Therefore, CFCI's grantmaking is:

- **Focused** by addressing established CFCI and donor designated priorities.
- **Strategic** by supporting programs with well-defined objectives and measurable outcomes that improve the quality or scope of charitable work in the community.
- **Collaborative** by leveraging resources and cultivating partnerships.

Areas of Focus CFCI Supports Through Competitive Grantmaking

<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ <i>Animal Welfare</i>➤ <i>Arts</i>➤ <i>Children & Youth</i>➤ <i>Community Improvement</i>➤ <i>Education</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">➤ <i>Health</i>➤ <i>Human Services</i>➤ <i>Workforce Development</i>➤ <i>Food Insecurity</i>
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Grantmaking Limitations

CFCI does not fund:

- Annual / Capital campaigns
- Individuals
- Endowments
- Sectarian religious purposes: Faith-based organizations and churches are eligible if program serves the community.
- Grants will be made to organizations with programs serving individuals within a 50-mile radius of the city of Peoria, IL, **excluding Knox and McLean County.**

Grant Eligibility

- Open to all organizations with tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code, those that operate under a fiscal agent that is a 501(c)3 organization, and to churches, schools, or units of government.
- Grant funding may support new or existing programs that positively benefit central Illinois.
- Program must be operated and organized in such a manner that no applicable laws are violated.
- Organization must be current on all grant evaluations. **If the organization is currently being funded with a CFCI grant, and the grant evaluation is not yet due, an interim letter summarizing the progress of the grant must be submitted along with the application.**

Application Requirements and Dates

- Applications for each grant opportunity are posted on the CFCI website at www.communityfoundationci.org under "Grant Seekers". Applications will open 60 days prior to the deadline.
- Incomplete and late applications will not be considered.
- Organizations may only submit one application per grant program per year.
- **All grants are due by 5:00 p.m. Central Time.**
- All applications must be signed / approved by the person writing the grant and by executive level personnel.
- CFCI reserves the right to make changes to application requirements up to 60 days prior to the deadline.

December 2025



Review Process

- **Proposals must be received / submitted by 5:00 p.m. Central Time on the application deadline.** If the deadline is on a holiday or weekend, applications will be accepted through the next business day.
- Each grant opportunity is subject to a review process that may last 30-60 days after the submission deadline. CFCI reserves the right to shorten or extend the process at any time.
- Naturally, not all projects can be funded. A denial should not be viewed as a negative reflection on the program, but rather a reflection on the amount of funding available. Applicants will be notified in writing on the status of each grant.

Reports to the Foundation

A grant evaluation must be completed and submitted within one month of grant program completion. Failure to **fully** complete this report and return it within one month of grant completion will prevent the grantee from grant consideration for at least two years.

SPRING FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES (1-YEAR)

COMMUNITY ARTS GRANTS:

Online Application - due 1st Wednesday in March

Apply for up to \$10,000

Available to organizations that offer art programs to enhance its mission. Art programs must fall into one of these five categories:

- Arts Education: Supported by: *Taylor & Corinne French Fine Arts Fund; George A. Fulton Charitable Fund; Anneliese Sinn Arts Fund; Fine Arts Society Creativity Fund*
- Performing Arts: Supported by: *Alvin & Donna Haerr Family Performing Arts Fund; Thomas & Lynn Landes Performing Arts Fund; Russell & Eleanor Peters Performing Arts Fund*
- Musical and Cultural Activities: Supported by: *Mildred L. Arends Musical & Cultural Activities Fund*
- Sculpture/Visual Fine Arts for Display: Supported by: *Eugene & Harriett Swager Public Art Fund; Anneliese Sinn Arts Fund*
- Art Therapy Initiatives: Supported by: *Anneliese Sinn Arts Fund*

THE ARTS MEAN BUSINESS FUND GRANT:

Online Application - due 1st Wednesday in March

See application for amount available to award

The Arts Mean Business Fund was established to support the generation of economic growth in the Peoria region through arts tourism, increased successful arts businesses, greater community participation in the arts, and financial support of the arts from local governments and economic development councils.

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SPRING FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES (2-YEAR – APPLICATIONS OPEN IN 2027)

The Jean M. Ligon Animal Welfare and Ackerman Family Learn to Swim Fund grant applications are for programs/needs that will span at least a 2-year period. The award amount will be the same each year assuming that the interim report is completed at the end of the first year and all other requirements are fulfilled. For example, if the organization is funded for \$3,000, they will receive \$3,000 in year one and an additional \$3,000 in year two.

JEAN M. LIGON ANIMAL WELFARE GRANTS:

Online Application – due 1st Wednesday in March (not available in 2026) *Apply for up to \$5,000*

Available to organizations focusing on the care and adoption of homeless cats and dogs, for the neutering of both homeless and other such pets, and for the fostering of research and education revolving around adoption and neutering. Preference is given to such organizations within the Tri-County Area. This grant is made possible by the Jean M. Ligon Fund.

ACKERMAN FAMILY LEARN TO SWIM FUND GRANT:

Online Application - due 1st Wednesday in March (not available in 2026) *Apply for up to \$5,000*

Available to organizations in Peoria and Tazewell counties with the purpose to create and/or support programs and activities that help youth learn to swim and expand awareness about the importance of water safety. Financial need of participants is a consideration. Examples of such programs and activities may include, but are not limited to, underwriting fees for youth participants, hiring swimming instructors, the purchase of appropriate equipment, the rental of facilities for the purpose of swimming instruction, etc. Grants solely for operations or facility improvements are discouraged.

SUMMER / FALL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

EMERGING PHILANTHROPISTS FUND GRANT:

Online Application - due 2nd Wednesday in June *Apply for up to \$5,000*

Available to organizations offering programs that align with the Emerging Philanthropists Fund Grantmaking Principles. The Emerging Philanthropists Fund is an initiative designed by CFCI to invigorate emerging community leaders to join together as philanthropists.

Emerging Philanthropist Fund Grantmaking Principles:

- **Preference given to grassroots organizations with projects that are smaller in scope.**
- **Evidence-based** programs addressing a significant community need.
- **Programs that are unique** and identify unmet needs in the community.
- **Innovative** in nature.
- **Collaborative** by leveraging resources and cultivating partnerships.

**COMMUNITY NEEDS GRANTS:**

Online Application - due 1st Wednesday in September

Apply for up to \$15,000

Available to organizations offering programs that align with the Grantmaking Principles and Areas of Focus CFCI supports (*Children & Youth, Community Improvement, Education, Health, Human Services, and Workforce Development*). Community Needs Grants are made possible by field of interest and unrestricted funds.

*****PLEASE NOTE: This grant program no longer funds food-related projects. Food-related projects are funded through the Ending Hunger Together Grants program.*****

THE LOCAL JOBS FUND GRANT:

Online Application - due 1st Wednesday in September

See application for amount available to award

The Local Jobs Fund was established to support projects that have a direct linkage to breaking the cycle of poverty by equipping people with the skills to earn significantly more than minimum wage.

WOMEN'S FUND SUCCESS GRANTS:

Online Application - due 1st Wednesday in September

Apply for up to \$10,000

Since 1993, the Women's Fund of the Community Foundation of Central Illinois has been working to change the lives of women and children in central Illinois. The Women's Fund endowment strengthens families and communities by providing grants to organizations whose programs help empower women and girls.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

OPPORTUNITY GRANTS:

Online Application - Accepted any time

Apply for up to \$1,000

* Organizations may only apply once within a twelve-month period, even if funding is not granted

Opportunity grants of up to \$1,000 are available to support organizations in the CFCI service area when an unforeseen event significantly interrupts primary and essential services of the organization.

Example: A shelter has a bed bug infestation and cannot serve patrons until the situation is resolved.

Requests will be processed, and a response will be provided within 2-3 weeks of the request.