

Nonprofit Grant Program

FAQ Sheet

October 21, 2024

1. What common mistakes do applicants make?

A common mistake is NOT submitting a complete application by the deadline. A complete application submission includes providing all required supplemental documentation and a proposed budget. It is critical applicants thoroughly review the nonprofit grant program guidelines, including the eligibility requirements and the application scoring criteria section. Not providing an answer to a specific question included in the application is a non-response. An applicant's application should reflect how their organization meets the eligibility criteria for the nonprofit grant and meets the minimal standards for the grant.

Additional tips include:

- Assume that the reviewers are not familiar with your organization; scores are based on application content only.
- Ensure that costs in requested budget are reasonable, well- explained, and within industry standards (if applicable).
- Be sure that responses to questions:
 - ✓ Directly answer the question
 - ✓ Are concise, specific, and thorough
 - ✓ Are specific to the City of Fairfax
- Be sure that all required documents have been uploaded or explain why you cannot provide them.

2. Are the names of previous grantees publicly available? If not, do you have any non-identifiable examples of projects that previously used grant funds?

This is the first year of the City of Fairfax's Nonprofit Grant Program.

Previously the city's Human Services Department facilitated two nonprofit grant processes during COVID using CARES Act and ARPA funding. Although competitive, the parameters of those grant programs were dictated by federal funding requirements. Nonprofits receiving funding from the CARES Act and ARPA grant programs included Britepaths, FACETS, Fairfax Presbyterian Church, Food for Others, Lamb Center, Main Street Child Development Center, and A Place to Stand.

3. If there an opportunity for feedback if our application is unsuccessful?

An organization not awarded funding during the Nonprofit Grant Program process can request de-brief feedback from city staff. The request should be submitted in writing within 2 weeks of the award announcement by the city.

4. How do you measure success for the projects you support?

During a grant application process, the city seeks a clearly defined program or service description that includes measurable goals. When organizational data is provided to demonstrate the program or service impacts, there should be an alignment between the defined goals and reported outcomes. Organizations awarded city funding for a specific project normally receive project parameters and anticipated deliverables for the project; an organization's success will be measured by completing the project within those parameters.

The Nonprofit Grant Program defines four areas of need for which an eligible organization may submit an application. Applicants are required to submit requests for programs and/or services that fall within these categories and programs and/or services currently established within the city. Because the city has defined the areas of need broadly, it is up to the applicant to provide performance metrics

5. Are there any networking/collaboration opportunities for grantees?

The city will not offer networking opportunities as part of the Nonprofit Grant Program.

6. Can two organizations work together to submit a grant proposal?

The Nonprofit Grant Program would allow two organizations to submit a joint application, but both organizations must meet the eligibility and financial requirements for the program. If submitting a joint application, each organization's roles within the program or service for which grant funding is being sought should be clearly defined in the proposal.

7. Can grant funds be requested to support start up costs for new program and/or initiate a needs assessment of what is needed in the city?

The Nonprofit Grant Program provides two types of funding opportunities: mini grants and nonprofit grant program. To be eligible for either opportunity, organization applying for this grant program must demonstrate ***an existing service presence within the City of Fairfax at time of application***. Funding from this grant program is not available for organizations who are ***not*** currently serving City of Fairfax residents but seek to establish a new presence within the city.

For eligible nonprofits, grant funds can be utilized to "***develop, expand or enhance***" the organization's existing city services or programs. For mini grant recipients, grant funds may be utilized for "***capacity building or for small-scale innovation ideas or projects.***" Any services or programs funding with the nonprofit grant must be used exclusively to serve city residents.

8. Can the funds be utilized to pilot a service concept to determine if it should be pursued?

A nonprofit organization could potentially utilize Nonprofit Grant Program funding to initiate a pilot program, just as long as the pilot meets all the requirements of this grant program.