



The Erie Community Foundation 2012 Grant Guidelines

We are pleased to announce our grant process for 2012.

Our goal is to increase our responsiveness to area nonprofits while maximizing the impact of our philanthropic investments. In 2012, we will manage two distinct competitive grantmaking processes: **Helping Today** will quickly respond to needs through a simplified online application process.

Shaping Tomorrow will focus on more complex issues and will begin with a Letter of Intent (LOI) process.

We will again use Erie Vital Signs, a community-wide key indicator project, as a screen for competitive grantmaking. All interested nonprofits are encouraged to visit ErieVitalSigns.org to review key topic areas and key indicators to see what works, then go to ErieCommunityFoundation.org to access guidelines and application information.



The Erie
Community
Foundation

Helping today... Shaping tomorrow.

HELPING TODAY GRANTS

Application Deadlines: January 16th, March 1st, May 1st, July 2nd, September 3rd, November 1st

The **Helping Today** grant application process will quickly respond to the needs and innovative ideas of our nonprofit community through our **Basic Needs** and **Great Ideas** funds. Nonprofits may access this resource through a simple online application process.

Basic Needs

The goal of **Basic Needs** funding is to respond to challenges that limit nonprofits' ability to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their service delivery. Examples of allowable requests include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- Time-limited program expansion or special event/activity
- Timely capital, facility, communications, or technology needs
- Program quality improvement or staff development

Great Ideas

The goal of **Great Ideas** grants is to transform ideas into reality. Examples of allowable requests include, but are not limited to, the following:

- An innovative project, program, or event
- Activities to encourage broad community engagement and/or collaborations

Agencies can apply for awards once a year from both the Basic Needs and Great Ideas funds.

Application Process for Helping Today Grants

Applications are due on January 16th, March 1st, May 1st, July 2nd, September 3rd, or November 1st through our online system. Announcements of funding decisions will be made as follows:

Application Deadline	Announcement Date
January 16th	March 1st
March 1st	May 1st
May 1st	July 1st
July 2nd	September 1st
September 3rd	November 1st
November 1st.....	January 1st

- Step 1:** If you're unfamiliar with the process, attend an Application Workshop—offered the second Friday of each month from 1-2 p.m., at The Foundation offices. Program staff will discuss eligibility and review the application process.
- Step 2:** Submit online application by 5 p.m. on selected monthly cycle
- Step 3:** Staff reviews application and follows up with applicant
- Step 4:** The Erie Community Foundation Grants Panel makes initial recommendations
- Step 5:** The Erie Community Foundation Board makes final decisions
- Step 6:** Notification; within eight weeks of submission

URGENT GRANTS: If your request is urgent in nature (meaning you need funds to continue to provide services to clients in an optimal fashion) and you cannot wait the eight-week period, please speak to Tiffanie Collazo, Program Associate, at (814) 454-0843 or tcollazo@eriecommunityfoundation.org to request an expedited review.

SHAPING TOMORROW GRANTS

Letters of Intent Due: February 1st and July 2nd

Shaping Tomorrow grants should address systemic and priority issues as identified by Erie Vital Signs. Grant awards typically range from \$20,000 to \$100,000.

Examples of eligible projects include, but are not limited to, the following project activities:



- **Cultural Vitality:** develop new audiences, spark innovative programming, drive economic activity, and increase arts-in-education programming
- **Community and Civic Engagement:** start community-wide volunteer hubs and provide incentives for parental involvement in schools, community-wide engagement tools, and voter education and participation
- **Economy:** provide leverage for other economic development funding, redevelop neighborhoods, enhance the financial capacity of low-income families, and increase access to and training for family-sustaining jobs
- **Regionalism:** provide research and tools that support and encourage local governmental entities to explore, incentivize, and implement efficiencies, and to promote collaboration and cooperation
- **Health:** implement systemic school and community-based wellness initiatives to increase access to care, address food/deserts disparities in low-income communities, and address systemic issues related to prevention of teen pregnancy, child abuse, and substance abuse
- **Environment:** conduct and implement intelligent land use plans, educate and engage citizens about our local environmental agenda, protect natural habitats and important regional assets, and address local controls over water and air quality
- **Pre K–12 Education:** enhance the out-of-school time offerings and system needs, increase access to high quality early childhood programs, support positive youth development, and enhance school-to-career pathways
- **Brain Gain:** engage diverse individuals and newcomers, expand leadership opportunities for college and young adults, develop a positive brand for Erie aimed at young adults, and improve vitality of Downtown Erie

Application Process

The Foundation will award these grants twice a year—in May and October. To be considered in time for the spring Board meeting, Letters of Inquiry must be received by February 1. To be considered for the fall meeting in October, Letters of Inquiry must be received by July 2nd. If invited to submit a full application, full applications are due on March 1st and August 1st.

Step 1: Letter of Inquiry

Prior to submitting a full proposal, applicants are encouraged to complete and submit an online Letter of Inquiry that includes information about the organization, the proposed project, its intended results on a Vital Signs area, and a general idea about project costs. The Foundation accepts Letters of Inquiry at anytime, and will direct you to the appropriate grant cycle accordingly. Letters of Inquiry must be received by February 1 to be considered for May awards and by July 2nd to be considered for October awards.

Step 2: Notification

The applicant will receive an electronic notification that the Letter of Inquiry has been received and a Grant ID number has been assigned.

Step 3: Program Staff Review and Invitation for Full Proposal

Program staff will review each Letter of Inquiry and contact the applicant for further discussion, a process that can take six to eight weeks to complete. At that point, program staff will notify the applicant if a full proposal is desired, which grant cycle they should apply to, and what additional information may be required.

Step 4: Full Application

The applicant will complete and submit the full online proposal by March 1st or August 1st.

Step 5: Awards

Written notification of decisions made on grants will be mailed by May 4th or October 5th.

We encourage you to contact and meet with the following Program Officers with questions about applying for a **Shaping Tomorrow** grant:

- David González, Program Officer for Health, Community/Civic Engagement, Environment, and Regionalism, at dgonzalez@eriecommunityfoundation.org or 814-454-0843.
- Amanda Brown Sisseem, Program Officer for Pre K–12 Education, Cultural Vitality, Economy, and Brain Gain, at asissem@eriecommunityfoundation.org or 814-454-0843.

Eligibility

The Foundation awards grants to nonprofit organizations that are defined as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. In order to be eligible for a grant, nonprofit organizations must be located within Erie County or demonstrate that a majority of the population served resides in Erie County.

The Foundation does not award grants for:

- Individuals
- Program ads
- Fundraising events
- Deficit reduction
- Sectarian religious activities
- Annual operating costs
- Government funding cuts
- Endowment campaigns
- Municipal capital related costs
- Internships
- Field trips
- Scholarships funds