



TRANSFORMING OUR COMMUNITY 2020 GRANT GUIDELINES

Through Erie’s remarkable civic organizations and generous donors, past and present, The Erie Community Foundation makes an incredible impact on our community. Our mission is to improve the quality of life for all in our region by evaluating and addressing community issues, building permanent charitable endowments and promoting philanthropic and community leadership. For details of the Foundation’s mission-aligned vision and priority grantmaking, please visit www.ErieCommunityFoundation.org. **The Foundation invites nonprofits to apply for 2020 grants in these categories:**

HELPING TODAY GRANTS

The Foundation’s *Helping Today* grants improve the quality of life for all in our region by ensuring a vital nonprofit sector. Thanks to unprecedented donor support, the Foundation doubled its budget for this program. *Helping Today* grants are \$30,000 or less, limited to one year in duration and support the following:

- **Program Expansion/Enhancement:** Improve capacity through specific programs/projects delivering measured outcomes benefiting the community.
- **Planning, Public Policy Advocacy:** Advance a nonprofit’s mission through increased collaboration and organized attentiveness to civic priorities.
- **Communications/Marketing:** Expand outreach, develop a brand and directly connect with donors and volunteers as an organizational strategy.
- **Technology:** Upgrade technology that increases the nonprofit’s capacity to serve the community and meet its mission. Examples include: replacing hardware, software and network resources.
- **Capital, Facilities or System’s Needs:** Improve, repair or maintain a nonprofit’s facilities. Examples include: construction projects, equipment or systems for improved access or safety.
- **Vehicle Purchase:** Assist with purchasing a mission-critical vehicle.

HELPING TODAY DEADLINES	
Application Deadline	Notification Date
January 21	March 20
April 28	July 6
August 10	October 9
October 19	December 17

URGENT GRANTS

Periodically, sudden or unexpected situations arise that impede daily mission-critical delivery of services. When such events occur and cannot wait until the next grant cycle, please contact the Community Impact Team at 814-454-0843.

SHAPING TOMORROW GRANTS

The Foundation’s *Shaping Tomorrow* grants support strong anchor institutions/champions willing to lend their brand reputations to a sustainable project. By leveraging the Foundation’s investments by several multiples, vital community issues can be addressed at scale. In short, *Shaping Tomorrow* grants support projects with the potential to change the trajectory of Erie County. These large grants focus on reversing negative trends as identified by Erie Vital Signs.

As part of our 5-year strategic framework, the Foundation will award up to \$15 million in Transformational Grants and \$10 million in Mission-Related Investments (loans) to projects addressing community priorities. Note: This grant program differs from previous years and focuses on anchor institutions and grants at a million dollars and above, replacing the former grant opportunities in the \$200,000 range.

Through the *Shaping Tomorrow* grant process, applicants should expect significant dialogue, interaction with Foundation Trustees, and the development of a specific, multi-year proposal that is in line with community goals. With no specific deadlines, projects will be considered after conversations with our Community Impact Team and upon submission of a required white paper.

COMMUNITY FUND DRIVES GRANTS

Nonprofits may apply for support of capital campaigns through a Community Fund Drives grant request. Before applying, campaigns in excess of \$500,000 must be endorsed by The Community Fund Drives Committee, facilitated by The Nonprofit Partnership (814-240-2490). For campaigns less than \$500,000, please contact The Erie Community Foundation (814-454-0843).

YOUTH PHILANTHROPY PROGRAM

To further expand understanding of perspectives on community issues, while empowering the next generation of leaders and decision makers, the Foundation recently established a committee of Erie youth to identify and address priority issues impacting young people in our community. Up to \$10,000 is available in grant funding for youth-serving nonprofits. For more information, please contact Rachel Cacchione, Program Officer, at 814-454-0843.

GRANTMAKING ELIGIBILITY

The Erie Community Foundation awards grants to nonprofits defined as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code. Eligible nonprofits must be located within Erie County or demonstrate service to a sizable population within Erie County. Generally, eligible nonprofits may receive funding once per grant cycle in a 12-month period.

FISCAL SPONSORSHIP

If an applicant does not have its own 501(c)3 tax exempt status from the IRS, it may apply for a grant using a 501(c)3 organization as its fiscal sponsor, provided the grant furthers the sponsor's own tax exempt purpose. The fiscal sponsor submits the grant and all evaluation reports to the Foundation, is legally responsible to ensure grant funds are used properly, maintains financial records pertaining to the grant, and retains complete discretion and control as to the use of funds. A fiscal sponsor agreement must be sent to the Foundation for review before any grant application is submitted.

GENERAL GRANTMAKING INFORMATION

In general, grants are **not** made to: individuals, scholarship funds, fundraising events, deficit reduction, annual operating costs, endowment campaigns, sectarian religious activities and reimbursements for expenses already incurred.

The Erie Community Foundation also manages grantmaking for donor designated, agency and scholarship endowments. These grants are made in accordance with the wishes of the original donor(s), consistent with Internal Revenue Service guidance.

GRANTMAKING PROCESS CHECKLIST

- Review the Foundation's 2020 Grant Guidelines to confirm eligibility.
- Schedule a pre-application meeting with Community Impact team member.
- Log onto the Foundation's website, www.ErieCommunityFoundation.org.
- Use the Grant Application access code received at the pre-application meeting to complete and submit the appropriate grant application. (A read-only PDF *Helping Today* application is accessible on the website without a code.)
- Meet the deadline.
- Await final funding decisions by the Foundation's Board of Trustees (quarterly for *Helping Today* grants).
- If awarded funding, review, sign and return a grant agreement to the Foundation.
- Await grant check that will be released on the grant agreement date.
- Provide regular evaluations. Failure to submit reports jeopardizes future funding.

APPLICATION FORM DISCLOSURE

PDFs of grant applications are posted online; however, all applications must be submitted through the Foundation's online portal. A pre-application meeting with a Community Impact Team member is required before an online submittal. The online grant application form must be completed by the deadline date. *Helping Today* applications are reviewed by Foundation staff with the guidance of a volunteer grant advisory committee and final decisions by The Erie Community Foundation's Board of Trustees.

OTHER RESOURCES:

- Visit www.ErieGives.org to learn how to register for the 10th Annual Erie Gives on August 10 and 11, 2020.
- Visit www.yournpp.org to learn about the resources of the Nonprofit Partnership, which provides education, training and tools to strengthen nonprofits.

QUESTIONS?

Contact a member of the Community Impact Team at The Erie Community Foundation at 814-454-0843.

For more information, visit www.ErieCommunityFoundation.org/Grants