

MAINE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

COMMUNITY BUILDING GRANT PROGRAM CRITERIA

The Community Building Grant Program will only support proposed projects that clearly meet all three of the following core criteria:

- **Use existing community resources:** The proposed project uses the skills, services, materials, and/or time that people and organizations in the community can and will provide.
- **Ability to strengthening community life:** The proposed project makes the community stronger by helping it address current or future challenges.
- **Sustainability:** The proposed project will continue to effect the community after MaineCF funding has been exhausted. This is because the project is designed to have long term impact and/or because there are realistic plans to acquire future funding.

Projects must also meet **one** of the following criteria:

- **Develop community relationships:** The proposed project uses new partnerships or collaboration between the applicant and other community organizations. These new partners help plan and develop the project.
- **Involve community members:** The proposed project engages community members who will benefit from the project. These community members are included in the planning, implementation and/or evaluation of the project.
- **Advance community leadership:** The proposed project fosters the development of community leaders. It includes training or opportunities for community members to acquire, improve or practice leadership skills.

Types of Support

The Community Building Grant Program awards two types of grants: grants for new and expanding projects; and grants to improve organizational effectiveness, also known as capacity building.

- Grants for New Project Development or Project Expansion: Organizations may request support to develop and implement new projects. These are most easily identified as planned activities with a defined goal or objective and a clear start and end date. Organizations may also apply for support for the expansion of an existing project, if that project has proven success at meeting its original objectives. The Community Building Grant Program will support capital expenses when they are a necessary part of a specific project. This includes one-time purchases of durable goods, such as materials, furniture, and equipment that are integral to a project.
- Capacity Building Grants: Organizations may request support for activities that are focused on strengthening their operations or strategic focus, or improving program effectiveness in specific areas. Examples include long-range planning, use of technology to improve program delivery or operations, or board development. Applicants must explain how the proposed activities are expected to improve the organization's impact. Capacity building grants can be used to support staff time required to accomplish proposed activities.
- Overhead or Indirect Costs: It is often challenging for nonprofit organizations to cover overhead expenses. The community foundation allows grant applicants to include a small allowance for overhead costs in the project budget. Indirect costs may not exceed 20% of the total project budget.

Ineligible applications

The Community Building Grant Program does not fund the following programs or projects because they primarily provide very indirect or delayed benefit to the community:

- **Camperships:** funds that cover the cost of attending camp (The community foundation defines a camp as a site providing recreation and activities for youth during summer and other school vacations).
- **Annual appeals:** Direct mailing request for donations and gifts
- **Endowment campaigns:** Direct mail or event specifically targeting donations to establish an endowment
- **Operating support:** Includes
 - Activities that are part of the daily operations or mission of the organization
 - Expenses that are common daily costs of operation listed in budget such as rent, utilities, office supplies, or salaries of senior staff
 - Objectives or goals that are the same as the mission of the organization.
- **Ongoing support:** Includes projects
 - With no start or end date
 - Already implemented
 - Previously funded by MaineCF in the same format and with the same scope

The deadline for submitting an application to the Community Building Grant Program is February 15, 2014. For more information, please contact Chris Wolff, cwolff@mainecf.org, or 207/761-2440, ext. 2210.