



The Cape Cod Foundation 1 Year Targeted Nonprofit Capacity Building Grant Program Information & Application Guidelines

Introduction

The Cape Cod Foundation was established in 1989 to improve community life on Cape Cod through philanthropy and grantmaking. One way we accomplish this mission is by developing permanent and flexible endowment funds to help nonprofit organizations respond to the existing and emerging needs of the community.

Since inception, the Foundation has distributed more than \$80 million in grants and scholarships throughout the community. Our grantmaking process promotes the advancement and sustainability of our community's resources and supports the organizations that make a true impact in our community.

In 2021, we reimagined our discretionary grantmaking to better reflect community needs and to complement new programs and funds.

Overview

The Cape Cod Foundation's Nonprofit Capacity Building Grants are highly competitive. As part of our refined strategy, we will award fewer, larger grants to increase community impact moving forward. It is not our intent to use discretionary funds as a continuous source of annual revenue for any one program or organization.

The Foundation has an obligation to be good stewards of its resources, so we work hard to ensure that we make fair and appropriate decisions. This requires detailed grant proposals and comprehensive expert review. We have made every effort to design an application process that is as transparent and efficient as possible.

Multi-Pronged Nonprofit Capacity Building Grant Program Overview

Even the strongest nonprofit organizations on Cape Cod face challenges that make it difficult to strengthen and expand their ability to fulfill their missions. With the current COVID-19 crisis, helping nonprofit organizations survive and thrive has never been more needed-- especially as the demand for their services has grown. The Cape Cod Foundation aims to support nonprofit organizations by working in partnership with them to enhance their internal infrastructures through a multi-pronged Nonprofit Capacity Building Grant Program. The Cape Cod Foundation defines nonprofit capacity building as: *intentional efforts to increase organizational ability to effectively fulfill its mission and build long-term sustainability, through strengthening an organizations' core systems, skills, resources, knowledge, operation, and management practices.* The Foundation's Nonprofit Capacity Building Grant Program



will help grants become more effective, far-reaching, and efficient in the fulfillment of their missions through the following types of impact:

- Organizational Impact: Organizations will experience a measurable increase in knowledge, resilience, skills, and systems to expand and sustain the impact of their mission-based work
- Collective Impact: Organizations will experience a measurable increase in the depth, trust, and quantity of strategic relationships between themselves and other Cape Cod nonprofits to strengthen their individual and collective ability to collaboratively address issues impacting residents of Cape Cod

There are two different sub-programs to support strong Cape Cod nonprofits that are at a point of critical change or growth.

- A 1-year *Targeted Nonprofit Capacity Building Grant Program* that launches with this Request for Proposals (RFP) in March 2021.
- A multi-year *Comprehensive Nonprofit Capacity Building Grant Program*, which will include a robust peer-learning program and consultant supported, in-depth organizational assessment. This program will launch in Fall 2021.

Targeted Nonprofit Capacity Building Grant Program Overview

Targeted Nonprofit Capacity Building Grants will support:

- Equipment, software, trainings, consulting, and/or staff expenses that are essential to the implementation of a grantee's capacity building project(s). Applicants may work with any consultant of their choosing.
- Executive Director or designated representative participation in peer learning network meetings with a cohort of other grantees via attendance at (1) 1.5-hour grantee award launch meeting and quarterly 2-hour peer learning network meetings. Peer learning networks aim to increase relationships, collaboration, and knowledge sharing among organizations.
- Executive Director or designated representative participation in activities to support The Cape Cod Foundation to evaluate the impact of the program. This will include but is not limited to: pre/post surveys, an annual report, and/or virtual or phone check-in(s).

Our grantmaking is broad and supports all areas of our community: health, human services, the environment, education, the arts, community development, and more. We are particularly interested in nonprofit initiatives that respond to our [programmatic priorities](#).

Priority will be given to projects and programs that involve collaboration and cross-sector partnerships. Targeted Nonprofit Capacity Building Grants are typically \$15,000 to \$25,00 and will support and strengthen programs/projects that make a lasting impact. If your request is for less than \$15,000, please [schedule a conversation](#) with Caitlin Abber, Capacity Building and Strategic Partnership Officer to discuss your eligibility for funding.



Note: The Cape Cod Foundation acknowledges that an applicant's project(s) may not be fully funded by the Targeted Nonprofit Capacity Building Grant Program alone. Organizations will have the opportunity to provide further information in the budget section of the application about how they will ensure their project(s) will be fully funded, if they require additional funding from outside sources to be successfully implemented during the 1-year Targeted Nonprofit Capacity Building Grant period.

While the Foundation recognizes that a certain level of planning is necessary to carry out capacity building projects, priority for this grant will be given to proposals that are action oriented.

The Targeted Capacity Building Grant Program will support applicant project(s) such as, but not limited to:

- Implementation of goals within an already developed strategic plan
- Diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging initiatives
- Financial sustainability and strategic development, including diversification of revenue streams and reimagining fundraising activities (note: funds cannot be used specifically for implementing fundraisers)
- Streamlining processes through workflow improvements
- Staff expansion for organizational growth with a clear plan for sustainability of position after funding ends
- Strategic collaboration
- Advocacy initiatives
- External communication strategies
- Governance, policies, and procedures
- Equipment, software, technology, or facilities enhancements to better realize organizational mission
- Human resources, including efforts to promote staff retention and to promote staff/volunteer/board development needed to achieve capacity building project goals

Types of Organizations That May Apply

- 501(c)(3) public charities
- Organizations serving a charitable purpose that have a fiscal sponsor that is a 501(c)(3) public charity
- Faith-based organizations. We will consider proposals if: (1) services benefit all, regardless of religion; (2) services provided are not religious in nature; and (3) there is no proselytizing associated with the service.
- Civic organizations. Proposals must be project-based and of a charitable nature; the organization must have a fiscal sponsor that is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
- Public and private schools. We will only fund projects that exceed the school's budget; applicant must have a letter of support from the fiscal head of the school.



- Other government agencies with project-based proposals. Applicants must have a letter of support from the fiscal head of the agency.

Note: The Cape Cod Foundation will not serve as a fiscal sponsor for any Foundation grant requests.

Limitations

The Cape Cod Foundation will generally not consider proposals to fund the following:

- Debt reduction
- Projects that will be completed prior to grant award
- Capital campaigns
- Endowment building
- Monuments and memorials

Timeline

- **Letter of Intent (LOI) Released:** March 18, 2021
- **Virtual Info Session:** March 25, 2021: 9:30 am-11:00 am
- **LOI Due:** April 22, 2021
- **Announcement of Organizations Invited to Apply for Full RFP:** May 7, 2021
- **Full Request for Proposal (RFP) Due:** June 3, 2021
- **Grant Awards:** June 18, 2021
- **Launch Meeting with Grantees:** June 24, 2021
- **Quarterly Peer Learning Meetings:** August 2021-June 2022
- **Grant Conclusion:** June 2022

Grant Evaluation Process

All grant applicants are encouraged to review the grant guidelines and to contact the Foundation's Capacity Building and Strategic Partnerships Officer to discuss the project. The Cape Cod Foundation's staff initially screens applications for eligibility and completeness. Grant Committees, comprised of knowledgeable community members, then evaluate eligible applications and forward grant recommendations to The Cape Cod Foundation's Board of Directors for final approval. Targeted Nonprofit Capacity Building Grant applications will be evaluated based on the following:

- Clear objectives that relate to the applicant's organizational mission
- Evidence of the organization's ability or experience to implement the proposed work
- A thoughtful, practical work plan for achieving objectives and sustaining the impact
- Community need or opportunity for the proposed work
- Organizational health: capacity of the organization, staff, and volunteer leadership to complete the work
- Financial health: a diverse and balanced funding strategy and the ability to leverage other revenue
- Ability to leverage other resources



- A clear and well-scaled plan to measure the impact of the proposed work

Reporting

The Cape Cod Foundation would like to be informed of its grantees' accomplishments and good work, along with the challenges they are facing. If a grant is awarded, grantees can choose to submit a written narrative or video or schedule a one-on-one meeting to fulfill this reporting requirement. The final grant report is due no later than one year from the date the grant was received.

Application Tips:

Applicants are required to use the Philanthropy Massachusetts Common Proposal Budget Template found [here](#).

The Foundation has provided a generous character counts for each section of the grant application. We believe that restrictive character counts create an unnecessary challenge for applicants. However, please do not feel obligated to meet the character limit. We encourage you to keep your responses to each section as brief as possible.

Contact:

Caitlin Abber, Capacity Building and Strategic Partnerships Officer

[Schedule a conversation](#)

Email: cabber@capecodfoundation.org.

Phone: 508-790-3040

Since the Foundation has recently reimagined this grant process, we greatly value applicant and grantee feedback throughout the process.