

The Cape Cod Foundation

2024 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.

Since inception, the Foundation has distributed more than \$100 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.

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.

Overview

The Cape Cod Foundation's Nonprofit Capacity Building Grants are highly competitive. Our strategy includes awarding 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 transparent and efficient.

Targeted 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 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 the Targeted 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 grantees 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

Targeted Nonprofit Capacity Building Grants are typically \$15,000 to \$25,000 and will support:

- Equipment, software, training, consulting, and/or staff expenses that are essential to the implementation of a grantee's capacity building project(s). Applicants may collaborate with any consultant of their choosing. Executive Director and/or designated representative(s) participation in peer learning network meetings with a cohort of other grantees via attendance at the following meetings below. The peer learning network aims to increase relationships, collaboration, and knowledge sharing among organizations.
 - (1) 1.5-hour grantee award launch meeting
 - (1) 1 hour mixer between 2024 Targeted Capacity Building Grantees and Targeted Capacity Building Grant Program alumni
 - (5) 2-hour peer learning network meetings hosted on a rotational basis at grantee sites when possible
 - (4) optional 30-minute tours of grantee sites, immediately before or after the peer learning meeting
 - The total estimated time commitment per Executive Director and/or designated representative(s) to participate in peer learning meetings, including optional grantee site tours is 14.5 hours and excluding optional grantee sites tours is 12.5 hours. Applicants are welcome to build in staff participation time as a line-item expense for your project budget.
- Executive Director and/or designated representative(s) 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).

There is no limit on operational expenses that you can include in your request. This includes equipment, staff expenses, overhead, administration, facilities, etc.

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](#). These programmatic priorities feed into the organizational strategy outlined in our recently published report: [Connecting Cape Cod](#). We encourage you to read through these materials to learn if your initiative is a fit for funding.

The Targeted Capacity Building Grant Program will support and strengthen programs and projects that make a lasting impact. Priority will be given to projects and programs that involve collaboration and cross-sector partnerships.

Requests focused primarily on service delivery, implementing new programmatic initiatives, or general operating support are a better fit for our [Open Door Grants](#).

Note: The Cape Cod Foundation acknowledges that an applicant's project(s) may not be fully funded by our grant alone. Organizations should include information about how they will ensure their project is fully funded. In the case of partial funding, the Foundation will work with you to right-size anticipated outcomes or impact.

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

The Targeted Nonprofit 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 with a preference for those that involve collaboration with other nonprofits and/or cross sector partnerships
- 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, such as shared staffing models
- 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

- **Grant Guidelines and Application Released:** Wednesday, May 1, 2024
- **Virtual Information Session:** Tuesday, May 14, 2024 [register](#)
- **Option Coffee Chats:** Wednesdays 9:00am-10:00am on May 15th, 22nd, and 29th 2024 [drop in](#)
- **LOI Due:** Thursday, June 6, 2024
- **Announcement of Organizations Invited to Apply for Full RFP:** Thursday, June 27, 2024
- **Full Request for Proposal (RFP) Due:** Thursday, July 25, 2024
- **Grant Award Notification:** Thursday, August 22, 2024
- **Launch Meeting with Grantees:** Friday, September 13, 2024 9:30am-11:30am
- **Bi-Monthly Peer Learning Meetings:** October 2024 –August 2025
- **Grantee and Alumni Mixer:** TBD
- **Grant Conclusion:** August 2025

Application Process

- **Step 1:** Carefully review the grant guidelines, application, and information session. Review our [programmatic priorities](#) to ensure your proposal is a fit for funding. Participate in or watch a recorded Targeted Capacity Building Grant Program information session if you have not previously in the past 2 years.
- **Step 2 (optional):** If you have technical or eligibility questions, or if you would like to introduce yourself to the Foundation for the first time, attend an optional virtual Coffee Chat using [this link](#). Coffee Chats will be offered via Zoom in a group setting 3 times during the application period on Wednesdays from 9am-10am on May 15th, 22nd, and 29th. There is no need to register ahead of time, or join for the entire hour-long Coffee Chat time period; applicants are encouraged to simply drop-in as needed. Coffee Chats are an opportunity to connect with the Foundation's Capacity Building and Strategic Partnerships Officer as well as other applicants who have joined the group Coffee Chat. If you prefer to ask your questions and/or introduce yourself for the first time to Foundation staff via email, you may reach out to cbuckley@capecodfoundation.org
- **Step 3:** Submit your application through the Foundation's online grant management system.
 - If you have not previously used this system, please watch this [tutorial video](#) in advance. If you have previously used our grant management system, you do not need to create a new profile or organization.
 - Save your application as you go. You do not need to write your entire grant application at once.
 - Applicants are required to use the Philanthropy Massachusetts Common Proposal Budget Template found [here](#). If you are unfamiliar with this budget template, please view this short [video](#) for tips from the Foundation.
- **Step 4:** Keep an eye on your email. You may be contacted with follow-up questions from Foundation staff. Emails will also be delivered through the Foundation's online grant management system via the email address adminstrator@grantinterface.com. Add this email address to your contact list to prevent messages from being delivered to your spam folder.

Important note: the adminstrator@grantinterface.com account is not monitored; all return messages or inquiries should be sent to the Targeted Capacity Building and Strategic Partnerships Officer, Caitlin Buckley, at cbuckley@capecodfoundation.org.

Grant Evaluation Process

The Cape Cod Foundation's staff initially screens applications for eligibility and completeness. Grant Committees, comprised of Foundation staff and 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:

- Connection to the Foundation's programmatic priorities
- 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
- Involvement of collaboration and cross-sector partnerships

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:

The Foundation has provided 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.

Once you submit your application, you will NOT be able to make any additional changes.

Unfinished applications may be deleted after three months.

Contact:

Caitlin Buckley, Capacity Building and Strategic Partnerships Officer

Email: cbuckley@capecodfoundation.org

We value applicant and grantee feedback throughout the application process and Targeted Capacity Building Grant Program.