



## The Cape Cod Foundation

### 2025 Flexible Funding Grants **Updated 7/30/2025.** Information & Application Guidelines

**Due to high interest, the deadline has been extended to October 2025. This and small additional updates to the original guidelines are noted in red. Please review carefully.**

*A special opportunity to access funding to respond to urgent needs or to create program continuity and stability as a response to the anticipated end of pandemic-era funding sources, or to funding changes at the state or federal level. Limited to prior SERF grantees and to organizations working in the areas of Visual Arts, Domestic/Wild Animals, or Environmental Conservation.*

*Grants typically range from \$10,000 - \$25,000.*

#### **Applications Accepted April 21 – October 31, 2025**

**Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Grants will be awarded until funds are expended, and no later than October 31, 2025.**

#### **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 \$105 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 on our community.

One way we accomplish this mission is by developing permanent and flexible endowment funds. We use these funds to create grant programs (sometimes called "discretionary grants") to respond to the existing and emerging needs of the community. Each year's grant offerings are based on these needs, and the availability of funds, which can vary in any given year.

The Cape Cod Foundation's grant programs are highly competitive. Our organizational strategy includes awarding fewer, larger grants to increase community impact and to maximize efficiency.

All applicants should note that it is never our intent to use discretionary funds as a continuous source of annual revenue for any one program or organization. Flexible Funding is offered as a special opportunity, and grantees should not rely on receiving another grant in subsequent years.

#### **2025 Flexible Funding.**

Our goal as a community foundation is to remain responsive to the community we serve. As we pass the five year mark since the pandemic began affecting our communities, we are hearing from our nonprofit partners with a variety of needs and concerns:

- The end or anticipated end of pandemic-era private and public funding
- Increased demand for services, at or exceeding pandemic levels
- Need for financial and strategic planning to build organizational resilience.
- Serious decisions about the need to modify, sunset or reconsider certain programming.
- Uncertainty or questions about current federal funding and its impact on availability of state funding



The Cape Cod Foundation is responding to these changes by creating the Flexible Funding Grants - getting needed support out the door at a time when it is needed the most.

Flexible Funding is for general operating support – organizations can assign funds where they need it most.

Flexible Funding Grants are limited in scope and aim to support organizations in building flexible and strong responses to funding changes. The application will include questions such as:

**What changes in pandemic-era or current state of federal funding are affecting your organization?** (What exactly is concerning you or directly affecting you now?)

**How does this affect your organization?** (What programs or services are affected? What, if any, aspects of the community you serve will be affected?)

**How are you responding now and/or building towards the future?** (How are you planning for or thinking about your financial and/or service-delivery model based on these needs and conditions?)

Grants are expected to range between \$10,000 and \$25,000, with no guarantee that the full amount requested can be awarded. Given the reality that a community foundation does not have the capacity to replace federal or state dollars, we seek to fund organizations that:

- are planning for changes in their funding structure to increase longer-term operational stability.
- identify the need for funding that helps with the successful transition to a post-pandemic funding climate.
- are creating unique or new partnerships or deepening current partnerships or economies of scale to accommodate new funding realities.
- seek to respond to staff needs and/or workforce changes because of funding changes.
- are building organizational resilience, new strategies, revised communication, board development or financial planning to be able to respond to current or anticipated changes.
- have solutions identified but need support bridging until those solutions are implemented.
- need financial support to continue to serve a community disproportionately affected by the end of pandemic-era funding or changes in funding at the state/federal level, AND who have a plan to continue service delivery beyond the length of this grant. Funding is less likely to be provided for programs or service delivery alone. The intent of this grant is to support organizational planning or resilience, and/or to support sustainable responses to change.

#### **Criteria:**

- 1) Those who have previously received a grant funded through the STRATEGIC EMERGENCY RESPONSE FUND of The Cape Cod Foundation (SERF). These 76 organizations will receive an email in April 2025 letting them know of their eligibility to apply. (Organizations can also check previous grant letters from The Cape Cod Foundation, which show the fund source for each grant.). SERF grantees are eligible no matter what impact area they serve.
- 2) Organizations who serve Barnstable County, which have been in operation for at least three years, have received at least one grant from The Cape Cod Foundation in the past five years **AND** whose impact is in one of these areas:
  - a. Visual Arts (including painting, sculpture, film, drawing, performing arts, etc. Visual Arts does not typically include music or literature/writing)
  - b. Care or Protection of Domestic or Wild Animals
  - c. Environmental Preservation and Restoration
- 3) All other organizations, regardless of impact area, as long as they have a) been in operation for three years, b) have received at least one prior grant from The Cape Cod Foundation and c) can identify a need related to either the end of pandemic era funding, or to budget uncertainty or policy changes at the state or federal level.

Due to the availability of specific funds, priority is given to organization in the first two categories. For more information on how to determine if your organization fits into one of these categories, check the [FAQ](#).



**In addition, all applicants must fit into one of the following categories:**

- 501(c)(3) public charities as of date of submitting application.
- Organizations serving a charitable purpose have a fiscal sponsor that is a 501(c)(3) public charity.
- Faith-based organizations. We will consider proposals from criteria-meeting faith-based organizations 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.
- Does not discriminate in the hiring of staff or the provision of services on the basis of race, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, national origin, or disability.

Applicants with a fiscal sponsor are welcome to apply. Please note that The Cape Cod Foundation will not serve as a fiscal sponsor for any Foundation grant requests.

Regional or national organizations are welcome to apply but must show a clear need and impact on Cape Cod and be able to demonstrate the grants made for Barnstable County will be expended in Barnstable County.

Recipients of 2024 Anniversary or Capacity Building grants are welcome to apply.

**Limitations**

Funding from The Cape Cod Foundation cannot be used for debt reduction, past costs for work completely substantially prior to the time of the grant award, capital campaigns or reserves, fundraisers or event sponsorships, endowment or reserve building, monuments, and memorials.

Public schools, private K-12 and post-secondary schools and governmental organizations are not eligible for Flexible Funding. First-time applicants to The Cape Cod Foundation are not eligible. Organizations who have been in operation for less than three years are not eligible.

Organizations may receive only one Flexible Funding grant in 2025. However, receiving a Flexible Funding grant does not preclude an organization from applying for other discretionary grants from The Cape Cod Foundation if eligible.

**2025 Timeline**

Applications Available: **Monday, April 21 at 8:00 a.m.**

Applications Due: No **later than Friday, October 31, at 11:59 p.m.**

*Applications are accepted and awarded on a rolling basis until funds are expended, or no later than the deadline above.*

E-information Sessions: These were held in May and June, but **see our [website](#) for information about upcoming Zoom Open Office Hours.**

Decisions will be made at intervals through the application period. No applications will be accepted past October 31. Receiving an email indicating your eligibility to apply is not a guarantee of receiving funding. **Because grants are dependent on the availability of funding, we encourage organizations to submit their application as early in the process as they are ready.**

During the rolling application period, applicants will receive notification of grant decisions (Awarded, Declined, Deferred) within 4-8 weeks of submitting a complete application. Final decisions will be made no later than November 2025. No decision has been made about 2026 Grant Opportunities with the Foundation. As always, all grant offerings will be posted on our website and announced in the Nonprofit Newsletter.



### **Evaluation**

The Cape Cod Foundation screens applications for eligibility and completeness. Then, applications are evaluated by staff as well as community reviewers, when applicable. All grant recommendations are approved by The Cape Cod Foundation's Board of Directors for final approval. Grants will be evaluated based on the following:

- **Demonstrated impact of end of pandemic funding or current funding climate on the organization as well as a well-articulated description of how your organization's needs are in line with grant priorities.**
- Clear understanding of the applicant's mission, goals, and impact
- Community needs, with the understanding that the Foundation's goal is to serve a cross-section of organizations to maximize impact across multiple geographic areas on Cape Cod
- Organizational health: capacity of the organization, staff, and volunteer leadership
- Financial health: a diverse and balanced funding plan appropriate to the organization size/scope
- Connection to The Cape Cod Foundation's programmatic priorities. To view, see our [website](#).
- Organization's ability to leverage other resources if indicated.

### **Reporting**

It is our intent to minimize the work organizations must complete for Foundation grants. Grantees will be asked to complete a brief, written report as soon as August 2026 and no later than a year from funding date. The report will ask how and if the funding supported your organization's response to the reduction in pandemic funding, or any of the other conditions named in the Flexible Funding goals, above. An email reminder will be sent ahead of the due date.

All grantees can request an optional conversation with The Cape Cod Foundation at any time during or after their grant period and/or we may check in informally during the year.

From time to time, we may request additional optional feedback to learn more about needs and opportunities on Cape Cod, as well as the impact of the grant on your organization.

### **Application Process**

[Submit your application](#) through the Foundation's online grant management system. Remember that you can save and come back to your application as a draft, before hitting submit.

You can find specific instructions for establishing an account [HERE](#).

You can find general application tips [HERE](#).

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.

Detailed information on the application process and grant portal is available in the [FAQs](#).

### **Publicity**

As part of our responsibility to be transparent funders, we announce a summary of our grantees, including 2025 Flexible Funding grantees and their corresponding grant amounts on our website. Visit the website for examples from previous years.

Typically, we use the organization name provided in your grant application. If any changes to what is provided in the grant application occur post-award, or if you have questions about how we will use your organization name on our website, please contact the Foundation as soon as possible.



From time to time, the Foundation also highlights grantee profiles in our newsletter. The Foundation will contact a grantee in advance to request permission to do so and confirm content prior to any publicity of this nature.

**Getting in touch with us**

For information about this grant opportunity, visit the [“Receive” page of the website](#). From there, you can review FAQs, learn how to publicize your grant, see other grant opportunities, view past grantees, and sign up for optional e-information sessions.

Keep an eye on your email. Emails may be delivered through the Foundation's online grant management system via the email address [administrator@grantinterface.com](mailto:administrator@grantinterface.com). We recommend that you add this email to your contact list to prevent messages from being delivered to your spam folder.

For help logging into the portal, or accessing your account, review the FAQs and tutorial, and then contact [info@capecodfoundation.org](mailto:info@capecodfoundation.org), 508-790-3040.

All other inquiries, contact Jeanne Ruckert Lovy, Director of Impact, [jlovvy@capecodfoundation.org](mailto:jlovvy@capecodfoundation.org). Due to high interest in these Flexible Funding Grants, we have limited time to meet with individual applicants, but optional meetings with Jeannie can be scheduled [at this link](#).

Thank you in advance for your partnership.