

GREATER MILWAUKEE FOUNDATION

# GRANT GUIDELINES



The Greater Milwaukee Foundation's discretionary competitive grant programs are designed to have a lasting impact in helping create a thriving region for all residents in the greater Milwaukee area.

## ABOUT THE GREATER MILWAUKEE FOUNDATION

For nearly 100 years, the Greater Milwaukee Foundation has helped individuals and families committed to philanthropy leave a legacy, and build a stronger and more vibrant community – now and for future generations. Thanks to the generous, ongoing investments our donors make, we as a community foundation are able to strongly influence and impact our region through our discretionary grantmaking.

## ABOUT OUR GRANT PROGRAMS

The Foundation accepts grant applications from eligible 501(c)3 nonprofits and in limited situations, government agencies. Organizations must be in good standing with the IRS and should be located in or providing programs and services to residents of the Foundation's four-county service area:

- Milwaukee County
- Ozaukee County
- Washington County
- Waukesha County

The Foundation offers grants to support programs and projects which meet grant criteria and funding priorities. We also offer capital grants, grants to support medical research and other special funding opportunities. Please refer to our website for information on these special funding opportunities and their deadlines.

Generally, the Foundation awards grants to an organization for up to one year, although they may be longer, given program priorities. An organization may only have one open grant per grant period.

The Foundation is committed to promoting racial equity and inclusion in its own practices as well as the grantees receiving support through its competitive discretionary grant programs. The Foundation requires nonprofits to demonstrate board diversity by maintaining a governing board that is comprised of at least 10 percent people of color.\*

*\*as defined by the U.S. Census*

The Foundation was created by and for the people of the greater Milwaukee area as a place where people from all backgrounds and interests come together to take action in the region and beyond – today and for generations to come. Through the generosity of our donors who earmarked resources to our Board’s discretion, we are focusing the majority of discretionary grantmaking resources on four major issues facing our community: education, neighborhoods, economic opportunity and racial equity and inclusion. Grant dollars alone are not enough. The Foundation also will play a role of convener and work to unite diverse stakeholders and partners around these issues. This includes commissioning research and analysis of issues and disseminating the findings of that work. Our work in these areas also requires us to collaborate with nonprofits, other funders and the government. Through this work the Foundation will seek to inform policy and leverage grantmaking and other resources to promote outcomes important to our community.

## IMPACT AREAS



### STRENGTHENING EDUCATION

**Improving educational outcomes for every child in every school, from cradle to career**

- Expand quality early childhood education
- Ensure academic success and high school graduation
- Support postsecondary education access and career readiness
- Expand children’s access to health, social and emotional supports



### STRENGTHENING NEIGHBORHOODS

**Increasing the livability, affordability and safety of neighborhoods**

- Strengthen physical, economic and social vitality of neighborhoods
- Enhance the quality of life and build social connections
- Build neighborhood capacity through resident engagement and leadership
- Build capacity across the community development system for coordinated work and greater impact



### INCREASING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

**Reducing poverty, improving economic vitality of the region and strengthening families**

- Ensuring families have access to basic needs
- Supporting targeted employment strategies for individuals with barriers to employment
- Increasing financial literacy and capability particularly for low-wage working families
- Improving access to benefits



### PROMOTING RACIAL EQUITY AND INCLUSION

**Enhancing relationships among diverse populations and creating opportunities for all people to more fully participate in civic life**

- Reduce social and economic disparities based on race
- Encourage civic participation by all
- Support efforts to build an inclusive community

## GENERAL PROGRAM AREAS

Through our generous donors, the Foundation has created a permanent endowment for our region. This endowment provides resources to positively impact southeastern Wisconsin. From support for our wonderful arts and cultural assets to the preservation of the region's natural resources, the Foundation and our donors support a wide range of organizations and programs that contribute to a thriving community and enhance the quality of life for those living and working in the region.

Each year we award more than \$8 million in grants through donor resources left to the Board's discretion. The majority of our discretionary funds are invested in proven or promising organizations and work that aligns with the Foundation's strategies articulated in the Strategic Framework for Community Leadership. These funds support programs and projects across the following categories:



### ARTS AND CULTURE

- Cultivate and support an appreciation of diverse cultures and art forms
- Deepen community-based arts education for children and adults
- Foster an appreciation of the rich heritage and diversity of our region
- Provide access to cultural experiences and programs that support academic achievement



### COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Support efforts to provide safe, affordable housing throughout the region
- Promote entrepreneurship and small business development to build a thriving regional economy
- Encourage sustainable development in communities which enhance the quality of life
- Support efforts to insure safe communities for all residents



### ENVIRONMENT

- Protect significant environmental assets and ensure they are available for public use and enjoyment
- Ensure environmental assets are accessible to all residents
- Strengthen local food systems, particularly those which create opportunities for communities to work and grow together



### HEALTH

- Support residents' access to quality health care
- Address pressing health needs and pervasive chronic illness
- Promote dignity and cultural relevance in health services to vulnerable populations



### HUMAN SERVICES

- Support programs that strengthen families throughout the region
- Provide culturally appropriate services for children and families in crisis
- Support collaborative approaches in the delivery of services to reduce stress on families

## CAPITAL AND OTHER GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

The Greater Milwaukee Foundation has a number of supporting organizations and other funds, supporting different programmatic areas ranging from medical research to visual arts, which run their own individual grant processes throughout the year. Please visit the Foundation's website for descriptions and grant deadlines.

## APPLICATION TIMELINE

The Foundation offers quarterly competitive grant cycles as well as several special grant applications throughout the year. General deadlines for the quarterly grant cycles can be found below. Specific deadlines can be found by visiting the Grants Calendar page on our website at [www.greatermilwaukeefoundation.org/grant-calendar](http://www.greatermilwaukeefoundation.org/grant-calendar).

Quarter	LOI Application Availability	LOI Deadline	Grant Application Deadline	Board Meeting Approval
1st quarter	October	December	January	March
2nd quarter	February	March	March	June
3rd quarter	April	May	June	September
4th quarter	July	August	September	December

## BASIC STEPS TO APPLY

Grants are awarded through a competitive application process to projects that advance the goals of the impact areas or regional vitality.

- 1 Complete a profile for your organization on Philanthropy Online (POL)
- 2 Review our competitive grantmaking priorities and guidelines
- 3 Submit a letter of inquiry (LOI) on POL
- 4 If invited to submit a full proposal online, complete a grant evaluation plan
- 5 Staff will review proposal and meet with the applicant
- 6 Community Investment Committee will review the proposal and make a recommendation to the full Board, which has the final approval
- 7 Confirmation is sent to approved organizations

Organizations must have a current POL profile. For information on how to create or update a profile, please call the program and grants associate at 414-272-5805.

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

Community Investment staff use the following criteria to review all proposals received:

- Demonstrated need for the project or program
- Fiscal health and stability of the organization
- Capacity of the organization to undertake the project
- Quality and effectiveness of the project
- Level of coordination and cooperation with other organizations
- Potential for leveraged funding, especially from national sources
- Project sustainability and opportunity for replication
- Racial/ethnic diversity of the organization's governing board of at least 10 percent
- Furthers Foundation's goals in the impact area or addresses regional vitality

## WHAT THE FOUNDATION DOES NOT FUND

The Foundation will not fund through its discretionary grants:

- Individuals
- Individual schools
- Ongoing operating expenses
- Debt reduction or agency endowments
- Sectarian organizations for religious purposes
- For-profit organizations
- Partisan political activities