

Washington Women's Foundation Grants Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Washington Women's Foundation's (the Foundation) Grants Policy is to assure that grants administration is consistent with the Foundation's mission, prudent stewardship and accountability through openness, responsiveness, fairness and trust. Supporting procedures are administered and updated by staff.

POOLED FUND GRANTS

The Pooled Fund Grants constitute the core grant making activity of the Foundation. \$1,000 of a member's annual contribution is combined with other member contributions to create the Pooled Fund.

Grant Areas and Criteria

Five grants will be made from the Pooled Fund annually, one each in the following areas: Arts & Culture, Education, Environment, Health, and Human Services. The Grant Committee leadership has discretion as to which area an organization's proposal falls under. The Foundation funds projects and programs that address at least one of the following criteria: responses to urgent and critical need; bold new ventures; and new approaches to ongoing problems.

Grant Pool Size

The Board of Directors will set the pool size for grants in the first quarter of each year. The pool size is generally set at the amount of funds contributed by members for the pool in the prior calendar year; however, the Board of Directors may choose to set the pool higher or lower.

Promotion and Transparency of Grants Process

The Foundation will publish its grants criteria, eligibility requirements and policies on the website to assure clear understanding by potential grantees and the general public and will conduct other outreach as necessary to assure the community is aware of its programs.

Eligibility Criteria

To receive a pooled fund grant, an organization must currently qualify under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3) as a tax-exempt public charity (with the exception that an organization not so qualified may apply through a fiscal sponsor) and provide services in the State of Washington. The Foundation does not fund endowments, pass-through scholarships or out-of-state projects. The Foundation also will not fund any organization that serves an exclusively sectarian purpose or that engages in unlawful discrimination on the basis of age, race, national origin, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexual orientation, political affiliation or religious belief, or for any other discriminatory reason.

An organization that has previously received a grant award from the Foundation's pooled fund is eligible for consideration again if it has been a minimum of five (5) years since the initial grant award.

To be eligible, a grantee must be a 501(c)(3) chartered organization and have a presence in Washington State. Only organizations invited may submit a full proposal. The Foundation does not fund endowment requests.

Grantee Selection Process

The selection process will be managed by the Grants Committee, which is comprised of active members, each of whom is asked to disclose all affiliations with applicant not-for-profit organizations to avoid conflicts of interest. The Grant Committee follows the processes and schedule set forth in the Grant Committee Pooled Fund Notebook for the program year. The process begins with the acceptance and review of Letters of Interest. The Grant Committee manages the process to invite 25 organizations to submit full proposals. The Grant Committee narrows these to a group of 15 organizations, three in each of the five areas, which will then receive site visits. Subsequently, a group of ten organizations is presented to the active membership for a vote, either electronically or by paper ballot, to select the five final grantees. The votes are tallied electronically by at least two staff members. The results are confirmed by a member of the Board of Directors.

Grantee Amounts and Terms

If the pooled fund size is \$500,000, each grantee will receive \$100,000. If there is less than \$500,000 in the pooled fund, voting members will be asked to rank-order their selections to determine which organizations will receive less than \$100,000. Grant awards may be disbursed over one to three years, in annual increments, at the mutual agreement of the grantee and the Foundation.

Merit Awards

The five organizations not receiving the Pooled Grant awards will be recognized by the Foundation with a Merit Award and \$2,000, to underscore the high regard with which the Grant Committee accorded their work.

Grantee Monitoring and Disbursements

All Grantees will be required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding detailing the terms of the grant before initial disbursement. Grantees must file an annual progress report before subsequent disbursements. The impact and success of grants will be monitored and reported upon by the Impact Assessment Committee under processes established by that committee.

PARTNER GRANTS

Background

The Foundation offers three additional grant making opportunities in the areas of International, Diversity and Emerging Issues. These "Partner Grants" rely on the issue area expertise of a grant making partner and offer members an accelerated curriculum of grant making and an opportunity to take a more intensive look at a focused area or community. The specific focus area of any Partner Grant Committee is determined by the Foundation's staff.

Each Partner Grant Committee awards one grant of up to \$15,000 to a Washington state-based not-for-profit organization. To receive a Partner Grant award, an organization must meet the eligibility criteria for the Pooled Grant Fund. At least one Partner Grant Committee will be convened by the Foundation's staff each calendar year.

Requirements for Member Participation on Partner Grant Committees

To serve on a Partner Grant Committee, a member must: 1) have prior experience on the Foundation's Pooled Fund Grant Committee or attend a mandatory orientation; 2) make a minimum financial contribution of \$500 by directing a portion of her Individual Grant to the partner grant pooled fund or making another personal contribution to the pool, and; 3) commit to attend most required meetings of the committee. Each Partner Grant Committee will have two co-leaders, one of whom must be a member of the Foundation's Board of Directors and the other, an active member of the Foundation with prior grant committee experience or knowledge of the focus area of the Committee.

Grantee Selection Process

Each Committee will operate over 10 – 12 weeks, with five to six meetings plus site visits, as appropriate. Each Committee will include a minimum of eight members, including the co-leaders, who will conduct research, issue analysis, proposal review, and site visits. Each Partner Grant Committee will select up to five not-for-profit organizations to invite to submit a short proposal for funding and make its final funding decision from among these organizations by majority vote of the Committee. The decision of the Committee will be ratified by the Foundation's Board of Directors.

International Partner Grants: Purpose and Criteria

Honoring our members' strong interest in global philanthropy, these grants support local organizations doing important work around the globe. This program will also take advantage of Seattle's growing prominence as a center of global giving and allow a vehicle for the Foundation to participate in this work.

Diversity Partner Grants: Purpose and Criteria

The Foundation believes that the quality of grant making is enhanced when grants reflect the diversity of our entire community and are inclusive and reflective of the needs of our entire community. Through Diversity Partner Grants, we make our commitment to diversity and inclusiveness actionable.

Emerging Issues Grants: Purpose and Criteria

The Foundation believes in the importance of being nimble as a grant maker so that we can respond to the interests of our members as well as emerging critical community needs. Through Emerging Issues Partner Grants, we support our members in pursuing focused grant making in areas of changing need and interest.

SPECIAL RESPONSE GRANTS

Grant Purpose and Criteria

As a leading grant maker in the Pacific Northwest, the Washington Women's Foundation is asked to join other major community funders to collaborate on local philanthropic initiatives, often in response to a pressing community need or natural disaster. The Board of Directors has the discretion to establish from the general operating funds of the Foundation a fund from which the Board of Directors or President of the Foundation may make one or more grants in response to such needs or disasters.

Policy and Procedures Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically by the Governance Committee and any revisions submitted to the Board of Directors for their approval.