Grant Process Tool Kit

AUSHERMAN
FAMILY FOUNDATION

At a Glance:

Part I: So, You're Interested in Applying for an Ausherman Family Foundation (AFF) Grant?

- Our Mission and Values
- Ensuring Eligibility – Grants and Funding Guidelines
- Approval Process and Payment Schedule
- Navigating the Grant Portal – Foundant

Part II: Congratulations, You Got the Grant!

- Grantee Responsibilities – Key Expectations and Partnership Communication
- How and When to Reach Out – Sharing Updates and Engagement Opportunities
- Reporting Requirements – Dashboard Process, Impact Measurement, and Reporting Expectations
- Guidelines for Public Communications – Social Media Best Practices, Press Releases, and Proper Logo Usage

Part III: Resources and Support

- Nonprofit Resources – Build Your Nonprofit's Capacity with Trusted Learning and Funding Tools
- We Didn't Get the Grant – What's Next
- Peer Networking and Cohort Learning
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Our Mission

- The Ausherman Family Foundation strengthens Frederick County by advancing collaborations, catalyzing bold ventures, and creating inclusive and vibrant spaces and places. We are community-informed, and address needs to create lasting impact.
- Funding Priorities - Key Issue Areas or Populations the Foundation is Most Committed to:
  - Children, Youth and Families
  - Health and Human Services
  - Arts and Culture
  - Public/Society Benefit

Our Values

- Guiding Principles: Core values that shape funding decisions and partnerships:
  - **Dependability and Excellence** – we act with reliability, integrity, and the highest standards of quality.
  - **Community Informed** - our work is guided by data and community input.
  - **Equity, Access, and Belonging** - diversity and inclusion guide how we build community.
  - **Frederick Focused** - We use our resources to build community capacity and lasting impact in Frederick County.
- Impact Focus: How the Foundation defines and measures positive change:
  - The Foundation's decisions and initiatives are guided by data, research, and measurable outcomes, while community feedback shapes priorities and strategies. Success is tracked using clear metrics, with a focus on both immediate results and lasting impact for the community.

Ensuring Eligibility: Grants and Funding Guidelines

- Types of Grants Available:
  - **General Grant:** support operating costs, capital needs, or projects that advance your mission. Open on a rolling basis.
  - **Capacity-Building Grant:** support organizational growth, systems, and infrastructure. Open on a rolling basis.
  - **IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity Aligned) Grant:** Annual grants supporting the growth, sustainability, and impact of Black-led nonprofits.
  - **Multi-Year Grant:** Invitation-only funding for strong organizations launching or scaling programs toward long-term sustainability.
- Eligibility: Applicants must be 501(c)(3) organizations (or fiscally sponsored) located in or serving Frederick County. Organizations located outside of Frederick County must demonstrate consistent service delivery, strong partnerships, and a visible presence in the county.
- Funding Guidelines:
  - Minimum grant request: $2,500.
  - Organizations may apply once every 12 months per grant type.
  - Strong board engagement and governance policies, with100% board giving, should be clearly demonstrated.
  - Matching funds are strongly encouraged to demonstrate broader community support and financial sustainability.

Approval Process and Payment Schedule

- **Application Review Timeline:** After a Letter of Interest (LOI) and application are submitted, funding decisions are usually made within **45–60 days.** Timelines may vary depending on the grant amount or if additional information is needed, as each submission is carefully reviewed for alignment with funding priorities.

- **Evaluation and Approval:** Grant requests are first reviewed by Foundation staff for alignment with areas of interest. Eligible requests are then reviewed by the Grants Committee, and the Board of Trustees meets bi-monthly to approve awards.

- **Grant Agreement**: If a grant is approved, AFF staff will send the official Grant Covenant to the grantee via DocuSign. The grantee has 14 days to review and sign it. Funds will not be released until the signed agreement is returned. The covenant explains the grant terms, conditions, grant period, reporting deadlines, and award expectations, so it should be reviewed carefully before signing.
- **Payment Structure:** After approval, the grantee will receive an award letter. Payments are usually issued within one month of approval. For multi-year grants, funds may be paid in installments over 3–5 years, as outlined in the Grant Covenant.

Navigating the Grant Portal - Foundant

FOUNDANT
technologies

All AFF grant applications are submitted through Foundant, our online grants management system.

Through Foundant, applicants can:

- Create and manage an organizational profile.
- Invite team members to collaborate.
- View open funding opportunities and start a Letter of Inquiry (LOI) or application.
- Save drafts, upload required documents, and submit applications securely.

Grantee Responsibilities: Key Expectations and Partnership Communication

- **Partnership Mindset:** Grants are collaborative investments – work with the Foundation as a partner to achieve your goals.
- **Transparency and Communication:** Keep us informed on progress, challenges, and milestones to strengthen the partnership.
- **Fiscal and Program Accountability:** Use funds as intended, maintain accurate records, and submit timely reports.

How and When to Reach Out:
Sharing Updates and Engagement Opportunities

- **Timely Updates:** Inform AFF of major changes in leadership, mission, or organizational structure.
- **Financial Information:** Promptly share updates to banking details, funding needs, or fiscal agent arrangements.
- **Program Engagement:** Share upcoming events or opportunities for AFF involvement and support.

Reporting Requirements:

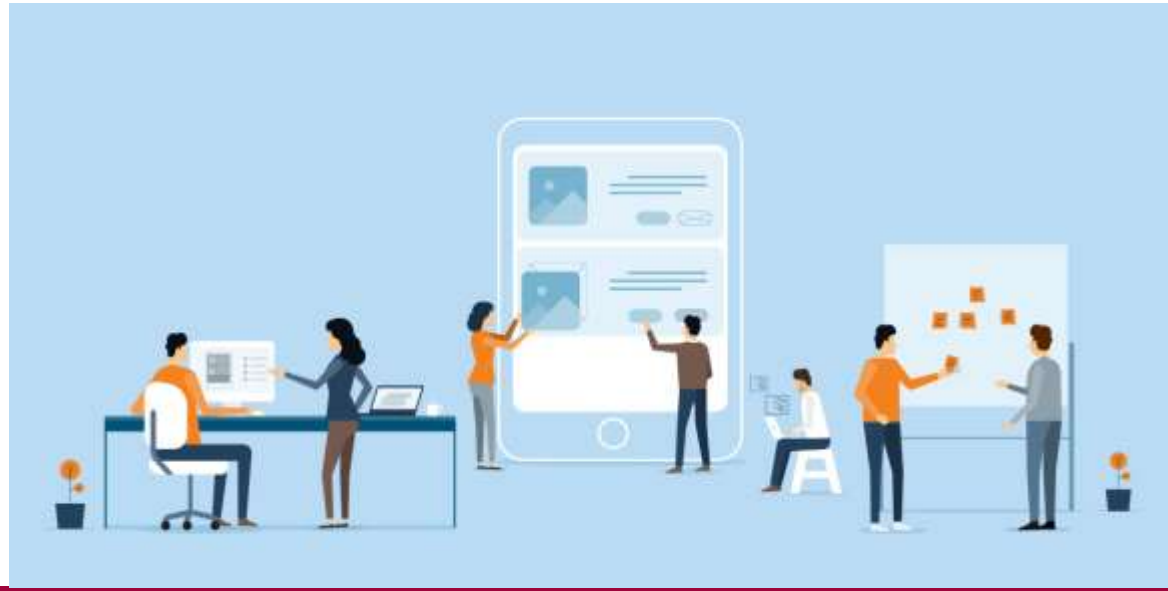
- **Dashboard Process:** Organizations receiving multi-year grants share progress and financial updates through their reporting dashboard, providing a centralized view of activities and outcomes. Grantees may also share insights with Foundation staff and committee advisors during check-ins to support open communication and collaborative problem-solving.

- **Impact Measurement:** Grantees are encouraged to track program outputs and outcomes, including measurable results and success stories, to demonstrate community impact and progress toward goals.

- **Reporting Expectations:** Interim and/or final reports must be submitted according to the timeline in the grant covenant. Reporting supports eligibility for future funding and provides an opportunity to reflect on lessons learned, identify insights, and share next steps to strengthen program outcomes.

Guidelines for Public Communications

- **Social Media Best Practices:** Acknowledge our Foundation support thoughtfully online and tag official accounts and maintain brand consistency.
- **Press Releases:** Notify the Foundation before public announcements to ensure accurate and approved references.
- **Proper Logo Usage:** Use the official AFF name and logo correctly in all print and digital materials. Available online.



Nonprofit Resources:

Build your Nonprofit's Capacity with Trusted Learning and Funding Tools

LinkedIn Learning

- Self-paced courses on nonprofit management, fundraising, leadership, board governance, and grant writing.

Grantseekers Library

- Guides, research tools, grant databases, and workshops to support effective grant writing and funding strategies.

Nonprofit Essentials workshops offered by AFF

- Quarterly, hands-on workshops for board members, staff, and volunteers focused on governance, operations, and program effectiveness.

Partner Trainings and Webinars

- Updates and resources from partners like Maryland Nonprofits on capacity building, board development, and program evaluation.

We Didn’t Get the Grant:

What’s Next

Reapplying and Staff Consultation

Organizations may reapply if future proposals align with the Foundation’s priorities. Applicants are encouraged to connect with Foundation staff before submitting a new request to assess fit and strengthen future applications.

Other Frederick Funders

Explore the “Meet the Funders” resource to learn about local funders, their priorities, and complementary funding opportunities across the region.

Participate in Our Peer Networking Events

Participate in peer networking events

- Participate in peer networking opportunities to build relationships, share best practices, and explore collaboration with other nonprofits, including groups like the Frederick Chamber of Commerce Nonprofit Alliance.
- Connect with peers to exchange strategies, identify potential partners, and strengthen programs. Over time, collaborations may be formalized through partnerships, MOUs, or shared service agreements.

Frequently Asked Questions

- **Who should I contact with questions about my application or LOI?**
  - Email the Foundation's general inquiries address at info@ausherman.org.
  - Staff can arrange a phone or virtual meeting if needed.
- **What types of projects or programs are typically funded?**
  - Programs serving Children, Youth & Families, Health & Human Services, Arts & Culture, and Public/Society Benefit in Frederick County.
  - The Foundation does not fund animal welfare, athletics/recreation, environment, public safety/disaster relief, schools, individuals, or international projects.
- **What should I include in my organization or program budget?**
  - Include clear, realistic revenue and expense line items for personnel, supplies, and other project or operating costs.
  - Ensure the budget aligns with the type of grant requested and reflects services for Frederick County residents.
- **Can I submit multiple grant applications?**
  - One General Grant, IDEA Grant, or Capacity-Building grant per 12-month period is allowed.
  - For Multi-Year grants, eligibility and submission rules vary.
- **Are there opportunities for feedback if my grant request isn't funded?**
  - You may contact any member of the AFF Grants team to request guidance or clarification:
    - Joshua Pedersen – Director of Grantmaking
    - Laurynn Burks – Administrative Grants Assistant
    - Sarah Redding – Grants Compliance Associate
  - Foundation staff also host monthly virtual information sessions, which are open to all new or returning grantees.

For additional information, please visit our website: AushermanFamilyFoundation.org

Contact Us

For more information,
please contact the Ausherman Family Foundation grants team at info@ausherman.org

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