

## Frequently Asked Questions from Nonprofit Organizations January 2025

Below is a list of frequently asked questions we receive from nonprofit organizations about our grantmaking.

### **What resources does CFMC offer nonprofits that have programmatic impact in Monterey County?**

- **Funding:** We offer several grant opportunities aligned with our strategic plan to invest in healthy, safe and vibrant communities across Monterey County. The grant opportunities with restrictions, by field or geography, have been determined by the donor.
- **Center for Nonprofit Excellence:** We work with nonprofits of all types and sizes to be stronger, more resilient and equitable. We assist staff, boards and volunteers make meaningful connections to resources and one another.
- **Nonprofit Funds:** Take advantage of our investment expertise and ability to accept complex and planned gifts. Invest with us by opening a fund for your nonprofit organization's long-term sustainability.

### **Can a nonprofit apply for a donor-advised fund grant?**

Donor-advised funds do not accept grant applications. Donors work with CFMC to direct grants based on the donor's interests.

### **How can I connect directly with CFMC donors?**

CFMC follows its protocols related to the stewardship of our donor-advised fund advisors, and we do not solicit donors. If donors are interested in particular organizations or community issues, they request CFMC assistance, and our team conducts research related to giving opportunities, which may include contacting nonprofits.

CFMC manages 200 donor-advised funds that support hundreds of nonprofits each year through grants. We do not share donors' contact information unless they request us to do so. Ask your board or other key donors if they know the donor, as donations may come from individuals that have a relationship with someone in your organization. If you send thank you notes to us, we will forward them to the donor advisors. We do not have the capacity to forward your newsletters, reports, invitations and other mailings to the donor advisors.

We encourage nonprofits to review the CFMC's Donor Advised Funds list (listed on <https://cfmco.org/about-us/family-of-funds/>) and to contact any donors you may know. The presentation slides and Questions and Answers portion of our March 2024 presentation on Demystifying Donor Advised and Other Funds are available on our [website](#).

### **How do I share information about my organization with CFMC?**

We encourage all nonprofits that serve Monterey County to create or update their profile on [Candid](#). This is a free and helpful resource that provides comprehensive information that donors seek. Visit Candid and follow the instructions to 'claim your organization's report'.

Unfortunately, we receive many more requests to meet with nonprofit organizations than we can accommodate. To stay informed, we encourage nonprofits to sign up for our e-Newsletter to learn of grant opportunities and updates, and to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [X](#). [YouTube](#).

## **What other philanthropic resources are available for local nonprofits?**

The [Seaside branch](#) of Monterey County Free Libraries makes [Foundation Directory Online](#) available. Here are some local resources that assist with capacity building and best practices.

Association of Fundraising Professionals

<https://community.afpglobal.org/montereybay/home>

Nonprofit Alliance of Monterey County

<https://nonprofitalliancemontereycounty.org/>

Candid (Guidestar)

<https://candid.org/>

## **General Questions Regarding Grants**

### **How does grantmaking work at CFMC?**

Our discretionary and application-based grantmaking directly aligns with the goals of our strategic plan, including:

1. Community Impact: Invest in Monterey County's greatest needs through nonprofit partners with tangible and demonstrable impact and that focus on opportunity/achievement gaps to increase equity.
2. Philanthropic Leadership: Inspire and facilitate philanthropy for equitable outcomes for greater community impact and a more just and equitable Monterey County.
3. Community Leadership: Recognize and act upon opportunities for facilitation of solutions to community issues.

Grant requests are considered from 501c(3) nonprofit organizations whose work is aligned with our mission and funding priorities, and benefits Monterey County residents. Please review each grant opportunity's guidelines and eligibility requirements before drafting your grant proposal. Due to very specific grant criteria determined by the donor, some of our grant opportunities are by invitation only.

Donor-directed grants from advised funds, as well as Monterey County Gives!, make up the largest amounts of our overall grantmaking, representing more than 76% of Foundation grantmaking in 2023.

### **How does my organization apply for funding?**

All of our application-based grant opportunities that accept proposals are listed on our [website](#). After creating an account in our online grants manager, your organization can research available grants and apply for funding. For additional guidance regarding creating a new user account, [please see this tutorial](#).

### **Can a public agency or nonprofit that is not classified by the IRS as a 501(c)3 public charity apply for a grant?**

Public agencies (e.g., a public school or city/county library) are eligible to apply for some application-based grants. Please note that we typically receive more grant requests than we are able to support. For this reason, rarely are application-based grants awarded to public agencies, schools and faith-based organizations.

Non-incorporated community benefit groups may apply through a fiscal sponsor that will assume responsibility for managing the grant.

### **How do you define fiscal sponsor?**

A fiscal sponsor is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization or a public agency that receives and manages a grant on behalf of an unincorporated group without 501(c)3 tax exemption. The fiscal sponsor manages the

grant funds and provides financial reports; the sponsored group completes the description of the request and final evaluation report. The fiscal sponsor is accountable to the CFMC for the financial outcomes of the grant. If you have questions about applying with fiscal sponsor or your fiscal sponsor changed, please send us an [email](#).

### **Will you confirm that you have received my application?**

Most of our grant applications are due by 5:00 p.m. the day of the stated due date. After 5:00 p.m., the online system will no longer accept applications. Expect to receive an email message after submitting a grant application or follow up report. Email messages sent through our online grants manager will come from [administrator@grantinterface.com](mailto:administrator@grantinterface.com); add this email to your safe contact lists so it is not filtered as junk mail. The CFMC strongly encourages early application. Please do not wait until the due date to apply.

### **How are grant decisions made?**

Each grant opportunity has its own process. Community Foundation's Board of Directors makes the final grant decisions. Smaller grant opportunities (of \$20,000 or less) are staff-led. Larger grant opportunities involve a volunteer committee that reads and recommends funding. Volunteer committee members are listed on our [website](#) and in annual reports.

### **How do I check the status of my grant request?**

The grant guidelines provide an estimate of when you can expect to receive a decision. You can always login to our [online grants manager](#) to check the status of your request.

### **My grant proposal was not funded. May I apply again? Should I apply again?**

Each grant proposal is considered on its own merits. We encourage you to request feedback from our staff to assist you in strengthening a future proposal to apply in the future.

CFMC's application-based grant opportunities are limited, representing less than 20% of CFMC's total grant funding each year. Organizations with limited staffing may decide to invest their time with individual donors and other efforts, such as Monterey County Gives!.

### **What's an example of an equitable grant?**

We seek to support efforts that provide services and improve outcomes for people with the least access, whether due to transportation, language barriers or lack of accessible and affordable options. For example, all things being equal, we would be more likely to award a grant for services offered in a community with a limited number of resources, or to a population with limited opportunities.