

The Community Foundation for Monterey County (CFMC) embraces a countywide vision of **Healthy, Safe and Vibrant communities**. The data shows that there are great disadvantages and disparities for many residents in the county around basic human needs, such as housing, education, economic stability and mental health. CFMC launched its Thrive Initiative in 2025 to reduce specific barriers.

GRANT AWARDS:

- Thrive grants support programmatic costs, including wages and facilities. Grants are expected to range between \$25,000 - \$50,000.
- Complete grant applications are requested **by 11:59 PM or earlier, August 28, 2026**. Additional grants will be considered as funding becomes available.
- Thrive grants will have a 24-month grant period. Due to donors' interests, grants will be considered by invitation.
- Organizations receiving a Thrive grant will be asked to share pre- and post-data to assist in communicating the impact of the organizations' work and community outcomes.

HOUSING STABILITY

It comes as no surprise that housing affordability and sustainability are key obstacles to a thriving Monterey County. Since 2014, median home prices increased by 95%, while median income for a family of four in Monterey County has increased 50%. (2023-2031 Housing Element, County of Monterey)

"During my time seeking to rent an apartment, I paid close to \$1,500 in application fees... not knowing I had no chance of qualifying because of my low credit score." – local resident

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Only 21.4% of 7th grade students meet or exceed math competencies and only 38.9% meet or exceed English/Language Arts competencies. (DataShare Monterey County: Math, English)

"The primary focus should be on grades 4th to 6th because intervening in middle school is already too late." – school district administrator

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Only 57.6% of Monterey County households have the income level needed to afford the basic costs of living. (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) threshold) (DataShare Monterey County)

"I graduated from college. I applied for various jobs but didn't get hired because my resume does not show any background experience." – young adult

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

More than half (51.2%) of Monterey County adults have had two or more years in their lives when they felt depressed or sad on most days. (Community Health Needs Assessment)

"Everything is expensive: rent, bills, food and gas. I'm working from sunrise to sunset and from job to job to survive. It's frustrating, and it hurts because I want to be home more often to see and play with my kids. Sometimes the only time I see them is when I take them to childcare at 6:00 am." – farm worker

FUNDING INTERESTS AND PRIORITIES

Based on data of local needs and community aspirations, we invite proposals addressing one of the following areas. (More information is available at cfmco.org/thrive/ and cfmco.org/datacenter.)

- ✓ **Housing Stability:** Expand financial education to assist people improve their savings and credit scores, support housing navigation and financial literacy programs including budgeting and banking.
- ✓ **Educational Attainment:** Strengthen English and Math proficiencies, especially for 4th-6th grade students, support parents' engagement including family literacy and college preparation/requirements. Increasing the number of local, bilingual, credentialed K-12 teachers will also be considered.
- ✓ **Workforce Development:** Expand career pathways and access to better paying jobs through entrepreneurship programs, paid internships and other opportunities to build interpersonal, technical and professional skills.
- ✓ **Mental Health Support:** Increase access to community-based wellness programs for people of all ages, peer support networks and expand tools, especially young people, essential workers, families of color and the LGBTQ+ community.

SELECTING GRANTS

CFMC seeks to support grant proposals that:

- Have data collection and management processes in place to be able to communicate progress and accomplishments;
- Articulate vision and effective methods; and
- Demonstrate community support, capable leadership and knowledge of, and engagement with the community.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- Thrive grants are currently considered on an invitation basis.
- Application-based grants are open to 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations and occasionally other public agencies serving Monterey County residents.

Exclusions:

- Activities that are non-secular or promote a religious doctrine;
- Academic or medical research;
- Funding to schools and public agencies that would supplant tax-supported, mandated services;
- Annual fundraising campaigns or events;
- Creation of, or addition to, endowment funds;
- Payment of debt or legal settlements;
- Political or partisan purposes;
- Expenses incurred prior to the grant award date.
- Unincorporated organizations that do not have their own 501(c)3 tax-exemption or similar

CFMC does not support organizations that discriminate in their employment practices, volunteer opportunities, or delivery of programs and services on the basis of race, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, marital status, sexual orientation, or any other characteristics protected by law.

Community Foundation for Monterey County (CFMC) does not prohibit the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) with its application-based grant requests. If grantseekers use AI tools to prepare their grant proposals, CFMC encourages the following:

- The grantseeker to proofread the proposal/report before submission;
- The incorporation of the organization's voice; and
- Including local data and information to personalize and support their statements.

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Questions? Contact Daniela Cervantes, danielac@cfmco.org, 831.375.9712 or 754.5880 x133