



GRANT GUIDELINES NEIGHBORHOOD GRANTS PROGRAM

ABOUT NEIGHBORHOOD GRANTS PROGRAM

The Neighborhood Grants Program (NGP) is a grant program of the Community Foundation for Monterey County (CFMC). NGP considers applications from various community groups throughout Monterey County that actively bring residents together to identify community issues and implement solutions to address them. The NGP is committed to providing financial and technical support to resident- and community-led groups for projects in their neighborhood or community that help improve the quality of life for its residents.

WHO SHOULD APPLY

Any resident- or community-led group in Monterey County is eligible to apply. To apply, the group must include at least five, unrelated volunteers. Priority is given to groups in the county providing services to those with the greatest needs and the least opportunities. Priority geographic areas include Salinas Valley, South County, Salinas, North County, Seaside, Marina, and other rural, unincorporated areas. Those interested in applying for a grant are highly encouraged to speak with staff regarding their questions and proposal ideas.

*If you are currently working with a nonprofit fiscal sponsor, please contact us before applying. 831.375.9712 or 754.5880.

The following are examples of groups that have been funded in the past.

- Any resident- or community-led group working on a project or activity that will directly benefit their community (e.g., clean-ups or other community-building activities).
- Advocacy groups focusing on neighborhood improvements such as after-school programs, pedestrian safety, etc.
- Arts groups organizing free art (painting, poetry, music, theater, dance, etc.) lessons, experiences, etc. in under-resourced communities or in communities where art programs and services are limited or non-existent.
- Neighborhood or apartment associations, neighborhood groups that develop resident leadership to identify and resolve neighborhood issues.
- Support groups where none exist due to transportation or language barriers, or subject matter.
- Up to \$1,000 may be used for technical assistance, trainings, group development, etc.

Funded groups will be required to open a bank account under the group's name. For detailed guidance on completing this step, refer to the [Guide on how to open a checking account](#) document available on the NGP website. The CFMC is available to provide further assistance, if needed.

CRITERIA

Projects must be carried out in the neighborhood or community where the members live. The NGP seeks groups that can carry out a vision of healthy, safe, vibrant communities in their respective neighborhoods or communities. Neighborhood Grant selections will be based on the following criteria.

- **Need:** Does the project fulfill a community need that is not being met?
- **Leadership:** Does the group demonstrate leadership and train its members to take on leadership roles?
- **Involvement:** Does the group involve other people in the project? Are decisions made collectively and not by one person?
- **Impact:** Will the group's project achieve positive changes for the community?

If your group answered "Yes" to the questions above, then your group may consider applying for a Neighborhood grant.

GRANT AWARDS

This year, the Neighborhood Grants Program expects to award approximately seven grants. In 2025, the average grant size was \$4,266. Neighborhood grants are generally awarded to informal groups without 501(c)3 nonprofit status and range between \$3,000 and \$5,000. A total of \$35,000 is available to grant this year. Grant decisions will be determined based on potential impact on the group, community need and fit with our funding interests. Priority will be given to proposals with activities occurring over several months over one day/time events.

EXCLUSIONS- WHAT WE DO NOT FUND:

- Academic research
- Capital campaigns
- Debt reduction or legal settlements
- Expenses incurred prior to the grant award date
- The creation of, or addition to endowment funds
- Funding to schools and public agencies that would supplant tax-supported, mandated services
- Projects with a main purpose of fundraising
- Individuals, including scholarships
- Political campaigns
- Religious activities or services
- Salaries, stipends, honorariums, or other special pay

SUBMIT a GRANT APPLICATION

- Neighborhood grant applications are accepted throughout the year, until all funding has been awarded.
- Decisions will generally be made within three months of receipt. (Submit your grant application at least three months before you expect to use grant funds.)
- Applications that are incomplete will not be processed for consideration.
- Only one application per group will be considered each year.
- Groups must be current on past grant reporting requirements.
- **Only online applications accepted: www.cfmco.org/apply**

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.

If you are unable to submit an application online, please contact us for assistance, Daniela Cervantes, 831.375.9712 / 754.5880 x133, danielac@cfmco.org or grants@cfmco.org.