



MC Gives! Toolkit for Nonprofits

1. Boost Your Campaign with Challenge Gifts

Challenge Gifts are early donations from your key supporters and major donors. They can come from an individual, a family, a business, or a group like a Board of Directors. Funds raised for Challenge Gifts can inspire other donors to step up and give more during the main campaign.

- All donations to support your Challenge MUST be a minimum of \$500 per donor.
- Do not solicit Challenge gifts from your full donor list. This is meant to be a targeted ask from you key supporters and major donors. If you do have a Challenge Gift donor, direct them to complete the Challenge Gift Form online at: challenge.mcgives.com/
- While we strongly encourage donors to complete the Challenge Gift Form online, a printable form can be found here: cfmco.org/mcgives (under **Agency Resources**) and mailed to the CFMC
- For donors to be listed in the MC Gives! print edition of the Monterey County Weekly, Challenge Gift Forms must be submitted by **October 29th at 5:00 p.m.**
- Challenge Gifts will be accepted until the campaign ends on **December 31st**
- The online Challenge Gift Form will close on **November 12th** when the campaign starts, but donors can still make Challenge Gifts using the printable form
- Donors who make a Challenge Gift after October 29th will be listed on the MC Gives! Website, mcgives.com

Who makes a good Challenge Gift Donor?

- Reach out individually to major donors, key supporters or your board of directors – those that can give or have given \$500 or more
- Think of those you'd like to see recognized publicly
- Wait for the main campaign launch on **November 12** to solicit donations from your full donor list (or at events) at all giving levels. Challenge Gifts typically come from a specific subset of your whole donor base.

Challenge Gifts raise your organization's visibility on the MC Gives! Website and build momentum and enthusiasm as the campaign launches. In 2025, nonprofits raised over \$3.39 million in Challenge Gifts.

[How to Raise a Challenge Gift](#) training video for nonprofits

2. Tell a Great Story

- Make sure you make a great case for support for your organization or program. It should be well-written, concise and clearly tell a potential donor about the impact their gift will have.
- Donors will find you through the website and the MC Weekly, so make sure you have attention-getting images and a compelling story that donors will connect with.



3. Multiple Gift Types Makes It Easy for Donors

The Community Foundation for Monterey County (CFMC) manages the donations and tax acknowledgments. Understand and take advantage of all the ways in which CFMC can receive donations to make the process easy for your donors. Online gift processing is the preferred method, and last year we began processing different gift types online such as ACH, Apple Pay, Google Pay and PayPal. Printable forms will also be available at cfmco.org/mcgives.

- **Credit Card**

Please encourage your donors to donate by credit card online at montereycountygives.com starting **November 12th**

- **Checks**

Mailed checks **MUST** be made payable to "Community Foundation for Monterey County" (CFMC or CFMC/MCGives).

- **IRA Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD):** www.cfmco.org/ira

Donors aged 70 1/2 or older can donate directly to the MC Gives! Campaign by making a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) from their Individual Retirement Account (IRA). This is a great way for donors to make tax-advantageous contributions, especially those who do not itemize their tax deductions.

1. **IRA donors should first go to the MC Gives! Campaign website and enter their donation information. They will then receive instructions on the next steps.**

2. Donors should instruct their IRA administrator to make the distribution directly to the CFMC for the benefit of MC Gives!

**Please note that IRA contributions must clear a donor's custodial account by December 31st, 2026, to qualify for a 2026 Qualified Charitable Distribution. This may take a few weeks. Please communicate this to your donors.*

- **Wire/ACH/Stock**

Wire, ACH and Stock donors should first go the MC Gives! Campaign website and enter their donation information. They will then receive instructions on the next steps.

If further assistance is needed, please contact the Community Foundation for Monterey County at 831.375.9712 or mcgives@cfmco.org.

4. Reconnect with Donors from Prior Campaigns

- The main contact at your organization will be receiving a daily email with your donor list during the MC Gives! Campaign. **Save it for future reference.** Use the list to contact donors (note: *please do not use CFMC's address to reach out to individual donors, they will not receive your letters*).
- Maintain a good donor recognition system. Involve staff and board members in thanking your generous volunteers in a timely manner.
- Stay in touch throughout the year with updates and annual reports so they are expecting to hear from you during the next MC Gives!



5. Get Smart about Spreading the Word – MC Gives! and Your Fundraising

- You can find MC Gives! logos for your use on this page under Agency Resources: cfmco.org/mcgives
- Include the following on your social media platforms, annual appeals, website, email signature/footer, electronic and print communications.
 - montereycountygives.com (you can add your direct page)
 - #mcgives
 - @mcweekly @cfmco @attproam
 - “Like” on Facebook and follow on all social media platforms
 - facebook.com/MontereyCountyWeekly
 - facebook.com/cfmco
 - facebook.com/montereypeninsulafoundation
- Leverage #GivingTuesday on December 2nd, 2026. This is a campaign to create a “Global Day of Giving” at the start of the annual holiday season. Learn more at givingtuesday.org.

6. Leverage the Overall Match

A great benefit of MC Gives! is that the donations a nonprofit receives, up to \$75,000, are automatically leveraged by the Overall Match Fund. **In 2026, this led to an approximately 18.88% match through the MC Gives! Campaign.**

7. End of Campaign Awards

Nonprofits should keep these awards in mind when reaching out to donors.

\$2,500 Ingenuity Grant: This grant is awarded to a nonprofit that demonstrates ingenuity and creativity through their approach in resolving their sector’s challenges. This award is chosen by the Monterey County Weekly based on each participating organization's submitted proposal.

\$1,000 Largest Number of Donors Award: This award will be given to the nonprofit that has the most donors.

\$1,000 Most Donors Ages 18-35 Years Old: This award will be given to the nonprofit that receives the most donations from those who are 18-35 years old (born from 1990-2007). Every donation will request this information from the donor.

\$1,000 Florence Haspel Zeve Award: This award, in honor of Florence Haspel Zeve, will be given to the nonprofit that demonstrates leadership and ingenuity in areas impacting women, children, families, education and/or the arts. This award is chosen by the Monterey County Weekly based on each participating organization's submitted proposal.

8. Center for Nonprofit Excellence

For nonprofit training and development opportunities, please visit cfmco.org/cne.