

evanston!communityfoundation

2008 Request For Proposal – Responsive Grants Program Applications due February 25, 2008

Overview

Evanston Community Foundation

The Evanston Community Foundation is a philanthropic organization dedicated to enriching Evanston and the lives of its people, now and in the future. The Foundation builds and manages its own and other community endowments, addresses Evanston's changing needs through grantmaking, and provides leadership on important community issues. Through grants and leadership, the Foundation invests in assets that strengthen the community for all.

Our Responsive Grants Philosophy

The Evanston Community Foundation annually awards around \$160,000 in grants that encourage and support new initiatives and capacity building programs in response to proposals submitted each February. In this cycle we look for ventures that show promise of strengthening the community beyond the scope and time-line of the proposed project, and we encourage collaborative proposals. Successful proposals build and develop community resources and partnerships.

Request for Proposal

The Foundation announces its twenty-second year of funding for not-for-profit organizations and groups serving the Evanston community. Grants are paid in two installments, in July and in December. Proposals this year should request no more than \$15,000. The average 2007 grant proposal requested \$8,840, and the average award was for \$7,255.

The typical Foundation grant awards partial or full funding for a single year. Past grants have provided initial seed monies for new programs, "capstone" dollars for large projects that will unfold and grow over more than one year, or funding for infrastructure to support an organization's growth and development for the longer term. Some projects may be designed as a one-time occurrence; more typically, however, the proposed project is envisioned as the initial phase of new activity. The strongest proposals are those that show evidence of plans to replace the foundation's grant with other funds, creating a sustainable program. Requests for unrestricted general operating funds are not considered.

Funding partners

The Evanston Community Foundation is pleased to announce that Northwestern University's Dance Marathon will be our funding partner for the 11th year. The Foundation also expands funding by inviting donor-advisors and family foundations to consider grants to our top-ranked proposals.

New this year

The Foundation has launched the strategic grantmaking and leadership initiative described below. We invite proposals that can move the community forward consistent with the objectives of this plan:

Children 0 to 3

Every Child Ready for Kindergarten, Every Youth Ready for Work is our new strategic initiative that aims, ultimately, at graduating young adults well prepared for the next stage of their lives. The immediate focus of these Communityworks grants

(awarded in a separate process) is on children from birth to age three, the parents who nurture them, and the agencies that serve young families—all towards the goal of achieving universal kindergarten readiness in Evanston. Studies show the importance of the early weeks and months of life in brain development and the significance of early learning as a predictor of future successes. We welcome proposals in this current cycle for projects that support this outcome.

Overall, the Foundation seeks to strengthen Evanston as a community in which all residents enjoy choices about their work and education or training, housing they can afford, and quality early childhood education and childcare for their families. We also encourage proposals that support these broad goals of Communityworks.

Other areas of Special focus

Some of our grant funds are directed towards specific purposes or fields of interest. ECF encourages proposals consistent with these purposes:

Capacity-Building in Arts Organizations

Capacity-building within small and mid-sized arts organizations with budgets of at least \$25,000. Our 2005-06 Working Together survey revealed that arts organizations need such investment to achieve greater impact upon their constituencies.

Green Communities Environmental Health

Address global climate change through local initiatives that reduce Evanston's ecological "footprint." Proposals consistent with more general environmental purposes are also invited.

Fostering the Abilities Of Boys: All Our Sons

Support the positive development of boys into responsible young men

Women & Girls

Address needs of women and girls in all stages of life and across a broad spectrum of endeavors, from literacy to parenting skills, to experiences of elders

Lorraine H. Morton Fund For Youth

Focuses on employment and educational opportunities for youth, consistent with Mayor Morton's career of service in Evanston

Nature of proposals

All proposals should address community concerns or needs that are critical and/or urgent. The Foundation requests proposals addressing any aspect of the community including, but not limited to, the following program areas:

- ◆ *Basic human needs*
- ◆ *Community development*
- ◆ *Education/youth*
- ◆ *Environment*
- ◆ *Arts and Culture*
- ◆ *Family support/Counseling*
- ◆ *Health*
- ◆ *Early Learning*
- ◆ *Boys*
- ◆ *Women and Girls*
- ◆ *Affordable Housing*

Dates to Note

Please note the following dates:

- ◆ *Submission deadline: 5:00pm – Monday, February 25, 2008*
- ◆ *Notification: Week of May 19, 2008*
- ◆ *Presentation breakfast: May 29, 2008*
- ◆ *The grant year is July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009*
- ◆ *Interim reports will be due by December 1, 2008*
- ◆ *Final reports due July 16, 2009*
- ◆ *Site visits will be scheduled with grantees*

Grant Application

To submit a proposal, please recreate the enclosed application form or download it from our website. Please note that a complete proposal consists of the following:

- ◆ *A completed cover sheet*
- ◆ *A narrative of no more than three pages*
- ◆ *Required attachments—these are in addition to the 3-page narrative and cover sheet*

Required Attachments

Please submit the following information with your grant application (some of the information may be combined on one sheet):

- ◆ *Mission statement and current goals/priorities of your organization*
- ◆ *Verification of your organization's federal 501(c)(3) status/IRS letter—not your state sales tax exemption letter*
- ◆ *Your organization's current annual budget, including your revenue sources and number of employees (school districts need not provide complete budgets)*
- ◆ *A project budget, including sources of other anticipated funds*
- ◆ *Roster of your board of directors, including addresses and phone numbers*
- ◆ *If the project is a collaboration, a letter from the proposed partner(s) confirming support and **outlining the nature of the collaboration, specific components and the responsibilities of each partner.***

Qualifications

Who may Apply

*Any group or organization providing services to Evanston residents may apply for a grant. However, there must be a sponsoring organization in the proposal that qualifies as a tax-exempt organization under Sec. 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
Note: Sec. 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code grants tax-exempt status to not-for-profit organizations.*

Evanston Connection

Any request must address issues and concerns in the Evanston Community. Organizations not based in Evanston should clarify the extent to which the proposed project will be available to or directly serve Evanston residents: the number of clients and/or percentage of the total number of people served.

Submission Process

Number and format of copies

Please follow these directions in submitting proposals:

- ◆ *Submit **12 copies** of the proposal.*
- ◆ *Each copy must include the completed 4-page Application plus the required attachments.*
- ◆ *Please staple all pages together in the upper left-hand corner.*
- ◆ ***Do not put copies into any kind of folder or binding.***

***Collateral
Materials***

Should you wish to include collateral materials that you believe will provide a helpful context for our review of your proposal, please provide just two copies. Unlike the proposal itself, these may be submitted in folders or institutionally distinctive bindings, if you wish.

***Submission
Address***

Mail or deliver your proposal to the following address:

*Evanston Community Foundation
1007 Church St., Suite 108
Evanston, Illinois 60201*

Deadline

*All proposals are due in the Foundation office by **5 pm on February 25, 2008.***

***Evaluation
Criteria***

A grants committee including board members, Dance Marathon leaders and community representatives will evaluate proposals according to the following criteria:

- ◆ *How well does the proposal fit with the Foundation's mission and philosophy?*
- ◆ *Does the proposal address a critical concern/problem/need or a significant opportunity in Evanston?*
- ◆ *Does the proposed program or investment in capacity provide the strongest value for Evanston relative to other funding opportunities?*
- ◆ *Are the objectives realistic and is the organization qualified to attain them?*
- ◆ *Is the project budget appropriate to the objectives and expected outcomes?*
- ◆ *Is there a solid plan to sustain the project over time?*
- ◆ *Is the evaluation plan sufficient to track progress and determine success?*

Grant Awards

Decisions will be announced the week of May 19, 2008.

Assistance

If you have questions regarding your proposal or format, you may contact Marybeth Schroeder, Senior Program Officer, Evanston Community Foundation, for assistance by telephone at (847) 492-0990 or by e-mail: grants@evanstonforever.org. The Grant Application Form and background materials are available on our web site: www.evanstonforever.org.