



Grantmaking FAQ's

Below is a list of common questions that come from grantseekers. If you wish to discuss specific details about a program or a funding opportunity, please contact one of our program officers:

Social Change Fund: Charlotte Flowers, 612-236-1807, charlotte@wfmn.org

girlsBEST: Sheila Carrington, 612-236-1817, sheilac@wfmn.org.

1. Are there other funding opportunities besides the Social Change Fund and girlsBEST?

All of our competitive grantmaking occurs through these two funds during designated grant rounds. Both funds are multi-year programs in which we fund the same grantees for up to three years. Funding through Donor Advised Funds and Giving Circles is by invitation only.

Our next deadline for girlsBEST is May 3, 2010, with the RFP available on our website on March 5th. There are currently no open grant rounds scheduled in the Social Change Fund due to multi-year funding.

If there is not a current opening for funding, please contact one of our program officers. If your project meets the criteria of one of our grant programs, we will keep your information on file and contact you when funding opportunity is available. If your project does not fit our grantmaking criteria, we will let you know.

2. Can you mail me a copy of your grantmaking guidelines?

Our grantmaking guidelines are available electronically on our website when we have an open grantround. The Foundation does not provide copies of our guidelines through the mail. We also do not accept letters of intent or applications for funding outside of our specific grant rounds.

3. Can we submit our application in the mail or by email? Do we have to submit our application using the online form?

Please submit applications to the Foundation only in the form that is required by the RFP. To be considered for either the Social Change Fund or girlsBEST Fund, applicants must submit their grant proposals using the online form. As a statewide community foundation, we encourage applicants from all communities to apply for funding. The web, internet, and email offer us a way to stay connected in communities where we aren't physically located.

Because we use web communications so frequently, grantees must have internet capacity. If you need assistance using the online form, we are glad to help and provide technical assistance.

Some of our smaller grant programs may have different submission guidelines. Please refer to the application for these requirements.

4. If we don't receive a planning grant, can we still apply for the multiyear grant?

The multi-year grant rounds are open to both planning grant recipients and other organizations that meet the criteria of the fund to which they are applying.

5. How does the Foundation make its funding decisions for its competitive grants?

The Social Change Fund and girlsBEST Fund each have their own committee that is charged with the task of making funding recommendations to the board of trustees. Committee members include staff, board members, and community volunteers that participate in reading proposals, conducting site visits, and evaluating applications. The process incorporates the perspectives of many different decision makers.

6. Our organization has multiple programs that serve women and girls. Can we apply for both the Social Change Fund and girlsBEST?

Because the Women's Foundation of Minnesota currently needs to turn away 80% of the requests we receive, we will not fund the same organizations in both of our grant funds concurrently. If you have been a past recipient of a grant in one fund but are no longer a current grantee, you may apply for funding in the other fund.

7. My program serves both men and women. Am I eligible for funding?

In order to be funded by the Women's Foundation, an organization or project must use a gender lens and be focused on outcomes that will build equality for women and girls. If you are working with women and men, the focus of your work must understand and address the unique challenges women and girls face pursuing equality and the ways in which systems, institutions and policies must change to align with women's equality.

8. I am a woman small business owner looking for financial resources for my business. Can I get a grant from the Women's Foundation?

The Women's Foundation does not make grants to individuals or for-profit businesses. WomenVenture (<http://womenventure.org>), a grantee of ours, does offer micro-loans for small business owners as well as training on how to finance a business. Their phone number is 651-646-3808.

9. Does the Women's Foundation provide scholarships?

No, individuals are ineligible to receive funding from the Women's Foundation. We also do not fund scholarships funds at other organizations.

10. Does the Women's Foundation of Minnesota fund international programs?

No. The Foundation only funds organizations and programs by and for women and girls in the state of Minnesota.

11. Do you fund 501(c) 4 organizations?

Yes. As a community foundation, we can fund the non-partisan activities of 501 (c) 4 organizations.

12. What if our organization does not have its non-profit status (is unincorporated, informal, etc.)?

An organization must obtain fiscal sponsorship from another organization with a 501(c) 3 status. The fiscal sponsor will receive the grant funds and administer them for the grantee organization. Organizations with a fiscal sponsor should submit the tax-exempt letter and financial statement/Form 990 of their fiscal sponsor with their application.

13. Does the Women's Foundation fund government programs?

We do not fund agencies of the state or federal government, unless they are part of a community collaborative that includes eligible organizations. Local and tribal government agencies, K-12 schools, and state colleges and universities are eligible.

Application Trouble-Shooting (During Grant Rounds Only)

14. I forgot to add my attachments before submitting my application and/or I don't have one of the required documents in electronic form.

Supporting documents may be faxed or emailed to the Program Officer. 612-337-0404 or charlotte@wfmn.org

15. I am trying to get back into an application I already started, but can't get to the login page.

Answer the eligibility quiz as if you were starting a new application. When you get to the first application page, hit the save and finish later button and that will take you to the login page so that you can access your list of open applications.

16. We don't track the information that you are asking for in the Diversity Survey, what should we do?

Inclusion is a core value of the Women's Foundation. We use this information to evaluate how an organization includes diverse perspectives as well as how the people being served are represented in the staff and leadership of the organization. We strongly encourage organizations to track this information as a way to insure inclusion and diversity within their organizations. If you do not have this information, you should provide either an estimate that represents the makeup of your organization or, if you do not feel you can accurately estimate, leave it blank on the form.

17. In the Diversity Survey, how do you define participants (or staff, or board)?

- Participants are people that likely will be served by the program you are planning.
- Staff should include all paid staff in your organization plus volunteers and consultants working on the project for which you are applying.
- Board should include information on the governing body of your organization. If you are part of a larger organization, the board information should include the overall governing board. If you do not have a formal board structure, you should include information on your advisory committee or other governing body.