



## **Application Instructions**

### **Step 1: Determine Eligibility.**

To be eligible for a grant, your organization must (1) Be tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and not a private foundation; (2) Have a current financial audit conducted by an independent certified public accountant; (3) Have total revenues of at least \$100,000 for the preceding year; (4) In policy and practice not discriminate based on age, race, creed, gender, gender identity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, and ethnicity.

### **Step 2: Determine Program Fit.**

Please review our grant guidelines to determine whether there is a potential match between your organization's work and our Foundation's interests. As you prepare your materials, we encourage you to contact us to discuss your program ideas. We have found that most successful applicants are in close communication with Foundation staff.

Our geographic area includes Wayne, Oakland, and Macomb Counties and the watersheds impacting these areas and Bayfield, Ontario. We will consider requests for the development or significant expansion of programs that meet our desired outcomes or general operating support for organizations whose core work fits our mission. Matching funds or other conditions may be required. We generally do not provide support directly to individuals or units of government, nor for loans, grants to support religious activities, capital projects, research (unless solicited by The Foundation), fundraising events, or conferences. The amount requested should be based on the size and scope of the organizational and program budget and the anticipated impact of the program. We generally do not fund 100 percent of a program's cost. We will consider multi-year grants where appropriate.

### **Step 3: Submit a Letter of Inquiry through our Website.**

A Letter of Inquiry (LOI) may be submitted at any time. Grants generally are approved at our board meetings in March, June, September, and December. LOIs must be submitted through our website; e-mail and paper inquiries will not be accepted. Please note that our requirement for an online application is not intended to minimize communication but is simply one way for us to exercise environmental stewardship by reducing the amount of paper we generate. Please feel free to call us if you have questions about how to complete the online application form, if you need assistance with Internet

access, or if you would like to discuss your program ideas before you submit your application. You should be notified within two to four weeks whether we are able to invite a Proposal. Foundation staff may contact you for additional information or a site visit at any point in the review process. Detailed instructions on the LOI and Proposal are included in the Grant Application Instructions on our website.

#### **Step 4: The Proposal.**

A Proposal may be invited based upon your LOI. The information you will be asked to include in the Proposal is specified in Section II of our Grant Application Instructions, which can be found on our website. A grant request typically should take three to five months to process from the time that the Letter of Inquiry is submitted, though certain requests may take longer. Again, Foundation staff may contact you for additional information or a site visit at any point in the review process.

#### **Step 5: Post Grant Requirements.**

If a grant is awarded, you will be asked to sign a Grant Agreement Letter. Progress reports will generally be due every six months. See our Reporting Requirements for specific instructions.

#### **Reporting Requirements**

The purposes of our Reporting Requirements are:

- (1) Grant Monitoring — to assure that funds are being spent as planned;
- (2) Measurement — to help assess the impact of the grant;
- (3) Organizational Learning — careful collection and use of data should help ongoing program development and refinement.

While most programs likely will not require a formal, outside evaluation, we do expect a thoughtful process and written report. Program evaluation provides ongoing, systematic information that strengthens projects during their life cycle and provides outcome data to assess the extent of change. Evaluations should include both Process and Outcome components, meaning that they will document the development and operation of the program (Process) as well as measure the program's impact (Outcomes). For information about metrics for specific program areas, please refer to our Grant Guidelines.

New grants must submit a Progress Report after six months and a Final Report two months after the conclusion of the grant. Renewal Grants and Multi-Year Grants instead submit annual Progress Reports, due 10 weeks before the Board reviews the next grant installment, and a Final Report two months after the conclusion of the final Grant Term. *Final Reports should be cumulative, covering the entire Grant Term.* We will send you an email reminder approximately four weeks before your Report is due. The email will include a web-based link to submit your Report. We will only accept Reports submitted through that link. We also encourage regular, ongoing communication.

The Progress and Final Reports should answer the following questions

- What **activities** have taken place/services have been provided and which of the **results or outcomes** identified in your proposal as flowing from those activities have occurred (recognizing that it may take a full year or longer before some of these are observable)? Please be sure to

specify the number of people served, the units of service provided and/or any other relevant quantifiable data. Please cumulate your data for us where possible.

- What challenges or disappointments did you encounter?
- What changes, if any, have you made or do you anticipate making and why?
- What specific steps have you taken towards securing additional and ongoing funding for the project or organization, and what steps do you plan to take over the next year?
- List program expenditures and revenue to date, following the original budget submitted with your proposal, showing variances if any (remember, you must request prior approval from the Foundation for material changes to your program or budget). General operating support grantees should instead submit the organization's internal (unaudited) financial report for their fiscal year-to-date.
- Attach a copy of your most recent audited financial statement if we do not already have it. Also include links or references to publicity and other materials regarding the program that would be helpful in improving our understanding of the program.