



CROWN FAMILY PHILANTHROPIES

Grant Application Guide

The following information is for organizations interested in applying for a grant from Crown Family Philanthropies (CFP). These four steps will help you determine if your organization is eligible for a CFP grant, whether it fits with our program priorities, and if so, the process for applying for a grant. If you have any questions regarding the application process, prospective grantees are welcome to contact us directly. Please familiarize yourself with this guide and our website before making an inquiry.

STEP 1

REVIEW YOUR ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To be considered for a grant, your organization must:

- Have 501(c)(3) status or have a fiscal agent with 501(c)(3) status
- Have an annual budget of \$200K or more
- Be primarily independent from government support.
- Provide service to residents of Greater Chicago and Cook County (Exceptions are made by invitation only.)

The following organizations are ineligible for CFP grants:

- Organizations who requested or received CFP funding in the previous 12 months
- Organizations with recurring deficits
- Organizations with fundraising expenses that exceed 25% of total program expenses.
- Re-granting or “pass through” organizations

If you are unsure of your eligibility, please contact the appropriate program staff.

STEP 2

READ OUR PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

We accept proposals for funding in our Arts and Culture, Civic Affairs, Education, Human Services, Health (domestic only) and Jewish Charitable (domestic only) programs. Read our descriptions of each program area and examples of grantees that we have funded to learn more about our work in these areas.

If, after reading these sections, you believe that your organization’s work is a good fit with our priorities, you can submit a letter of intent.

Please note: Organizations in Israel are by invitation only.

Program Areas

Our program areas include the Arts, Civic Affairs, Education, Environmental, Health, Human Services and Jewish causes. Dividing our philanthropic investments into the program areas listed below, all applicants must meet the basic as well as program-specific guidelines to be considered for funding.

Please note environment, international health and Israeli organizations are to apply by invitation only.

ARTS & CULTURE

artsandculture@crown-chicago.com

We invest in sector capacity, creative learning and arts instruction to allow Chicagoans to gain access to and develop an appreciation for the arts.

- Sector Building
- Dance
- Literary Arts
- Music
- Theatre
- Visual Arts
- Multidisciplinary
- Cultural Organizations

CIVIC AFFAIRS

civicaffairs@crown-chicago.com

We invest in Chicago-based organizations and programs which promote a well informed and engaged community.

- Civic Leadership
- Civic Discourse

EDUCATION

education@crown-chicago.com

We invest in promising schools, effective educators and leaders and holistic supports for families to prepare all Chicago students to succeed in college or other post-secondary opportunities.

- Promising Schools
- Educator & Leadership Programs
- Holistic Supports

ENVIRONMENT

We support efforts to value, preserve, and restore natural ecosystems, including air, land and water, which are essential to the well-being of humanity and life on earth.

- Energy Efficiency
- Great Lakes Preservation
- Midwest Coal Reduction
- Water in Israel
- Green Schools

HEALTH

health@crown-chicago.com

We fund programs that increase access to quality comprehensive health care and support services as well as improve the health of the poor in developing countries.

- Access to Quality Healthcare
- Prevention
- Comprehensive Support Services
- International Health

HUMAN SERVICES

humanservices@crown-chicago.com

We support efforts that strive to enhance quality of life for individuals and families living in low-income communities.

- Safe Communities
- Stability
- Community Development

JEWISH CHARITABLE

jewish@crown-chicago.com

We support programs that help build a more robust and vibrant Jewish community.

- Enriching the Jewish Experience in the U.S.
- Jewish Education in the U.S.
- Interfaith Families in the U.S.
- Holocaust & Anti-Semitism in the U.S. & Israel
- Social Services in the U.S. & Israel
- Medical Care in Israel
- Environment in Israel
- Science & Higher Education in Israel
- Religious Pluralism in Israel

STEP 3

SUBMIT YOUR LETTER OF INTENT (LOI)

We consider requests for a range of support including:

- General operating support
- Programs or projects

We do NOT fund:

- Research or advocacy projects (Exceptions are made for advocacy projects on environmental issues.)
- Film, video, exhibitions or conferences
- Projects by individuals or salaries
- Projects that rely on CFP for majority funding
- Associations or coalitions

All organizations must apply by emailing a letter of intent (LOI) no longer than two pages. The LOI should describe the nature of your organization's work, proposed project/program description and amount requested. It should also include the following attachments:

- Most recent year's actuals
- Current year's organizational budget
- Proposed project/program budget, if applicable
- Federal EIN
- Most recent year's actuals

We will NOT consider incomplete LOI submissions.

Please email your LOI to the appropriate program area listed on the previous page.

STEP 4

AWAIT INVITATION TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

After we review your LOI, if we believe your organization is a good match for CFP we will send you an invitation asking you to submit a grant proposal along with instructions on how to do so. We will notify you of our decision about your LOI within four-six weeks of the LOI deadline.

After we receive your proposal, our program staff may contact you to ask clarifying questions and/or to schedule a site visit. We typically notify applicants within four-six weeks.

We use a number of criteria to assess prospective grantee organizations, including but not limited to:

- Clarity of mission
- Programmatic focus and effectiveness
- Caliber of staff
- Financial health
- Board leadership and involvement
- Service population
- Geographic focus

We give particular consideration to organizations that promise verifiable long-range benefits that include an evaluation plan, and have the potential to attract support from a broad base of philanthropic sources. We also prefer to fund organizations that reach large numbers of individuals at a low cost per individual. Exceptions are made for programs with inherently high costs per person served such as services for people with profound special needs.

If you have any questions regarding the application process, you are welcome to contact us directly.

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Frequently Asked Questions

ADMINISTRATIVE/GEOGRAPHY

If an organization applied for 501(c)(3) status but has yet to receive it, can the organization apply for a grant while waiting?

No.

Does Crown Family Philanthropies (CFP) have a specific geographic focus?

CFP generally funds organizations within the Greater Chicago area (primarily Cook County). CFP also funds Jewish causes locally, programs that have national impact and programs in Israel. Note that applications from Israel are accepted by invitation only.

What is meant by “CFP will not accept unsolicited proposals from Israel?”

Proposals from any organization outside of the United States should not be submitted and will be declined unless they were invited by CFP.

APPLICATION

How long and detailed is a standard LOI?

The LOI should be no more than two pages and describe the nature of the organization’s work, the size of its budget, the proposed project (and associated budget) and the amount requested. The LOI should include a contact email and program area for which you are applying.

How much money should an organization request?

Organizations should first consider how much money the program requires and then consider what portion is appropriate for CFP to fund. Please note that CFP staff will ask you about other confirmed and pending sources of support during the review process.

What happens after an organization submits an LOI?

Once we determine that the LOI submission is complete (i.e. includes all of the required information and materials), we will review the request. If the organization’s work coincides with CFP goals, we may request additional information and/or a full proposal.

How do organizations know if their application was received?

CFP sends electronic receipts for all emailed LOIs.

TYPES OF SUPPORT

Does CFP fund multi-year grants?

Yes, multi-year support is available. Please consult with program staff to determine if your request is eligible for multi-year support.

Will CFP fund general operating expenses if that is the organization’s greatest need?

Yes, this determination is based on the overall value and effectiveness of the organization.

What types of programs or projects does CFP NOT fund?

- Research or advocacy projects (Exceptions are made for advocacy projects on environmental issues)
- Film, video, exhibitions or conferences
- Projects by individuals or salaries
- Projects that rely on CFP for majority funding
- Associations or coalitions
- Programs primarily dependent on government support (Exceptions are made for charter schools and some health and human services programs)

What happens if an application arrives past the deadline?

It will be considered for the next cycle.

What are expectations for reporting?

Grantees are required to submit final progress reports as referenced in your award letter.

What kind of evaluations does CFP conduct?

Evaluations may include a visit from CFP staff or consultants, discussions with grantees, interviews with grantee constituents, reviews of programmatic and financial records maintained by grantees and/or similar investigative activities.

Whom may I contact about my proposal?

Become familiar with the program areas, guidelines, and process through this website before making an inquiry. Please consult with program staff for specific questions. An LOI is the first point of contact.

If not approved, how soon can an organization reapply?

CFP accepts one request within a 12-month period from a single organization.

Can an organization apply for renewed funding?

Yes. The process repeats for renewed funding.