



2025-26 Community Grants Guidelines

The Community Grants Program aims to strengthen our Lewis, Mason, and Thurston County communities through broad, diverse, and flexible funding. This program supports a wide range of nonprofit organizations contributing to the region's overall social, health, and environmental well-being across a broad range of focus areas.

[Click here to visit the Community Grants Page, which includes the login button for the virtual application and other important announcements.](#)

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

In reviewing grant proposals, the Community Foundation prioritizes the following:

- **Impact:** We support organizations contributing to individual and community well-being across various focus areas, including arts and culture, community and civic engagement, environment, animal welfare, health and wellness, basic needs, and economic opportunity.
- **Geography:** We fund organizations that primarily work in our service area or fill unmet needs within our service area
- **Accountability:** We seek to fund services designed appropriately for the communities they serve and prioritize organizations that meaningfully engage the voices, perspectives, and expertise of their program participants.
- **Community Partnerships:** We prioritize organizations that carry out their work in coordination with local community partners.
- **Equity:** We support nonprofits serving all populations and seek to prioritize populations and communities with unequal access to resources and opportunities.

GRANT AWARD DETAILS

- Community Grants will be awarded with the intention of providing two years of funding, contingent on (1) the availability of funds, and (2) the completion of grant reporting requirements as set by the Foundation.

Awarded organizations must complete grant reporting requirements set by the Community Foundation to be eligible for their second year of funding. Details will be announced for grant reporting requirements in the Spring of 2026.

NOTE: Due to this two-year cycle, there will not be a community grant funding cycle in Summer 2026.

- Total awards through the 2025 cycle will be approximately \$400,000.
We anticipate awarding the following amounts:
 - Lewis County: up to \$75,000
 - Mason County: up to \$75,000
 - Thurston County: up to \$260,000



- Awards typically range from \$1,500 to \$7,500.
- Most grants will be unrestricted. "Unrestricted grants" invest in a grantee's mission rather than specific projects or programs. Nonprofits may use funds as they see fit to reach their goals, including salaries, overhead, technology, marketing, and more. To qualify for unrestricted grants, an organization must be based in Lewis, Mason, and Thurston counties and meet all other eligibility requirements.

APPLICATIONS DUE: AUGUST 29, 2025

Applications are due on Friday, August 29, at 11:59 pm. Applications received after the due date will not be accepted.

NOTE: Staff will be available to answer questions and offer technical assistance until 5:00 pm on Friday, August 29.

FULL TIMELINE

August	August 4	August 29	August - September	November
1:1 Assistance Sessions	Application Opens	Application Closes	Due Diligence & Committee Review	Award Notifications and Grant checks distributed

ONLINE GRANTS PLATFORM

- [Click here to view the Community Grants Application Questions PDF.](#)
- [Click here to access the online grants platform.](#)

GRANT REVIEW PROCESS AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

1. Community Foundation staff review applications for eligibility and perform due diligence.
2. Grants Committees are made up of community volunteers who review and score eligible applications, meet to discuss if needed, and make recommendations to the Board of Directors.
3. The Community Foundation of South Puget Sound [Board of Directors](#) votes to approve Community Grants recommendations.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Organizations with up to date 501(c)(3) public charity status or groups fiscally sponsored by an eligible 501(c)(3) organization are eligible to apply for this grant.

In addition to 501(c)(3) status or fiscal sponsorship:

- Organizations must demonstrate basic organizational capacity, including reasonable financial health and governance practices, including a minimum of 3 board members.
- Organizations must acknowledge that 100% of Community Grant funds will be used in Lewis, Mason, and/or Thurston County.

Ineligible Organizations



- Organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disabilities, age, status as a veteran, national origin, or any other protected classes.
- Partisan political activities.
- Religious organizations, when funds would be used in whole or in part to further the organization's religious purposes.
- National and statewide organizations that cannot demonstrate a strong community-based local presence in Lewis, Mason, or Thurston counties.
- Requests for funds that will be passed through to other organizations.
- Service clubs and service club foundations.
- Schools, school districts, PTOs, preschools, individual school or school district clubs, camps, and sports teams.

Notes And Exceptions

- Organizations with regional or statewide geography that can demonstrate a strong, local, community-based presence and meet otherwise unmet needs in our geography may apply.
- Religious or faith-based organizations whose applications demonstrate programs that meet a critical need in the community, do not require religious participation, and align with the Community Foundation's nondiscrimination policy may apply.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Community Foundation of South Puget Sound does not support organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, disabilities, age, status as a veteran, national origin, or any other protected class.

CONTACT US

Our friendly and knowledgeable staff is happy to assist with general questions regarding Community Grants during regular business hours by phone at 360.705.3340.

We also offer a few different ways to connect for assistance directly with our Program Officer:

- **Email & Phone Support:** Please contact Tami Mason Lathrop by email at tami@thecommunityfoundation.com or call her directly at 564.999.4835.
- **Grant Application Support:** For personalized assistance navigating our online grants platform (GLM) and/or your Community Grants application, we will offer both virtual and in-person drop-in sessions where you can receive 1:1 support from our Program Officer, Tami Mason Lathrop.
 - **In-person drop-in sessions:**
 - Thursday, August 7, 2025, from 2 – 4 pm
 - Thursday, August 21, 2025, from 2 – 4 pm
 - Located at the Community Foundation of South Puget Sound's office: [212 Union Ave SE, Suite 102, Olympia, WA 98501](#) (street parking only)



○ **Virtual drop-in sessions:**

- Tuesday, August 12, 2025, from 2 – 4 pm
- Tuesday, August 26, 2025, from 2 – 4 pm
- Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84309144159?pwd=URXxrzkTuDdoRaPRVtFUwatZKXb1Hi.1>

- Meeting ID: 843 0914 4159
- Passcode: community