

2025 FOUNDATION GRANTS PROGRAM

Funding Guidelines

Through its Foundation grants program, the Community Foundation of the South Okanagan Similkameen (“the Foundation”) supports a wide range of projects, programs and activities that benefit residents in communities throughout the South Okanagan Similkameen region.

Grants will be made to registered non-profit and charitable organizations in good standing, and whose projects, programs or activities align closely with the charitable purposes of the Foundation and support our vision for a healthy, caring, inclusive and thriving South Okanagan Similkameen region. The applicant’s project, program or activity must also demonstrate alignment with these funding guidelines.

Each year, the Foundation determines the size and range of grants based on priorities and funds available. The final decision on all granting rests with the Foundation’s Community Impact Committee, on the advice of an independent Grants Committee.

Timeline

Grants from the Foundation's Community and Field of Interest funds are awarded annually through the Foundation grants program. Applications for this year’s grants cycle will be accepted from **October 7 through November 15, 2024**. Decisions will be communicated in January 2025.

Prior to submitting their application, organizations must submit a letter of interest through our grant application portal. The acceptance period for Letters of Interest will run from **September 16 through October 18**. We’ll use these letters to help us understand the potential demands on this year’s program and allow us to advise organizations of the anticipated level of competition for grants prior to writing their application. Based on our experience with past grant cycles, we expect significant competition for the limited grant dollars available.

Priorities

The Foundation’s funding is typically disbursed across a wide range of fields of interest. We are committed to being responsive to changing community needs with our grantmaking.

Applications are encouraged which **address demonstrated need(s)** in the community, **build effective community connections and partnerships**, **improve organizational effectiveness** and are **sustainable** beyond our grant funding.

The Foundation has identified **food security** as the Impact Focus of its current strategic plan. As such, applications addressing this focus will be carefully considered.

The Foundation is also mindful of the impacts of **climate change** and action towards **reconciliation with Indigenous peoples**. We welcome applications that address either of these issues.

Eligible Requests

We encourage organizations to apply for funding to support what is needed most. This may include, but

is not limited to:

- Operations (including multi-year requests)
- Program/project delivery
- Pilot projects/programs
- Purchase or upgrading of equipment or technology
- Renovations or repairs
- Research costs

Ineligible requests

Grants will not be awarded to:

- Establish or add to endowment funds
- Establish or add to operating reserves
- Establish or add to a capital campaign
- Sponsor a general fundraising event
- Projects that have a primary purpose of promoting political or religious activities or beliefs

Review Criteria

The following are some of the Grants Committee's considerations when evaluating applications:

- **Community Need:** has the application demonstrated that the project, program or activity is needed, or is filling a gap in the community?
- **Impact:** Does the application outline how the project, program or activity will positively and measurably impact the issue being addressed?
- **Community Involvement and Partnerships:** Does the applicant have partnerships with other community organizations/groups to implement the project, program or activity? Is there community leadership with solid volunteer support?
- **Mission Alignment:** Will this project, program or activity help the organization deliver its mission?
- **Future Planning:** Has the applicant planned how the project, program or activity will be funded in the future?
- **Budget:** Is it clear and reasonable?

More information

Questions about these funding guidelines should be directed to the Foundation's Grants Team at grants@cfso.net.