

General Operating Support 2019 Guidelines



ABOUT THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR GREATER ATLANTA

Since 1951, the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta has been connecting the passions of philanthropists with the purposes of nonprofits doing that work. With nearly 70 years serving the 23-county Atlanta region and a robust team of experts, the Community Foundation leads and inspires philanthropy to increase the vitality of our region and the well-being of all residents, empowering our donors to focus on the joy of giving. The Community Foundation is a top-20 community foundation, among 750 nationally, with approximately \$1.1 billion in current assets and is Georgia's second largest foundation. The Foundation received more than \$158 million from donors in 2018 and distributed more than \$112 million to support nonprofits throughout the region and beyond. For more information, visit: cfgreateratlanta.org or connect via [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

At the Community Foundation, we believe in the power and potential of individuals and organizations to change communities, whether those communities are physical neighborhoods, a group of individuals with a common interest or a cohort of organizations focused on similar issues. We play a variety of roles, but our key goal is to be the connecting point for the various partners, nonprofit organizations and community leaders working together toward the common vision of stronger greater Atlanta region.

IMPACT AREAS

The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta fulfills the passions of our donors by investing in our region through grantmaking, partnerships and advocacy. To create meaningful, lasting change, our efforts align via measurable objectives through focused "Impact Areas."

These five impact areas are our promise to the 23-county region - that in partnership with our donors, nonprofits and collaborators, we vow to make Atlanta a better place for all residents to live and thrive.



Arts



Community Development



Education



Nonprofit Effectiveness



Well-being

Arts >> Build a dynamic arts ecology to ensure all residents in our region will have access to high-quality cultural experiences and diverse artistic programs

Community Development >> Advocate for equitable economic growth, strong civic health and safe, sustainable communities

Education >> Improve outcomes and expand opportunities for all learners across the education spectrum

Nonprofit Effectiveness >> Invest in the region's nonprofits with management and financial resources to equip these organizations to effectively manage operations and high-performing programs

Well-being >> Ensure a healthy, safe and engaged region, where all residents have access to quality health care and nutritious food

All of these Impact Areas are complex and multi-dimensional and require cross sector, regional collaboration. The Foundation has an extensive base of knowledge and relationships across the region, spanning diverse communities, populations and issues, making us uniquely poised to serve as a hub for impact.

Guidelines

ABOUT GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT

General Operating Support (GOS) provides unrestricted funding to help support an organization as it pursues its mission. This type of grant is flexible and gives the recipient the ability to use funding where most appropriate. GOS grants are directly aligned with the Foundation's goal of strengthening the 23-county region's nonprofits and awarded based on a number of factors explained more fully in these guidelines. After a rigorous review process, and under the guidance of our Board of Directors, grants are made on the basis of community need and strength of the application. In 2019, support for GOS grants comes from the Common Good Fund, the Metropolitan Atlanta Arts Fund and the Atlanta AIDS Fund.

Characteristics of successful applicants include: a clear vision of the organization's role in making a difference in the community and demonstrated effectiveness through investment in measuring and planning for success. We closely examine applicants' strategic plans and encourage organizations to review the [Best Practices](#) section of our website to learn more about what we prioritize within strategic planning.

These grants are very competitive. Grants will range from \$10,000 to \$75,000 per 12-month period and may be awarded for 12 or 24 months. *Organizations can request no more than 10% of the organization's last completed fiscal year's expenses.* In mid- and end-of-grant reports, each grantee will be asked to reflect on the organization's achievements within the grant period, including how activities have advanced the [Community Foundation's Impact Area metrics](#).

Beginning in 2019, the Community Foundation is committed to inspiring philanthropy in support of programs and policies that increase equity of opportunity for all in our region. Access to a quality education, a living wage job, a safe neighborhood, cultural opportunities and mental health services are limited to many in our region, especially low-income and racially and ethnically diverse families and individuals. We are prioritizing nonprofits addressing equity of opportunity and our unrestricted resources will support organizations implementing creative and impactful strategies that eliminate the barriers that have kept too many communities and residents from reaching their full potential.

FUNDING PROVIDED BY

GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT

While some donors set up their own donor-advised funds with us, other donors choose to support critical issues in the community by donating unrestricted dollars for general operating support grants. These donors help us to meet the needs of our community today and for years to come.

METROPOLITAN ATLANTA ARTS FUND

The Metropolitan Atlanta Arts Fund (Arts Fund) was created to support independent small and medium-sized arts organizations located throughout the metro Atlanta region and provides resources to strengthen arts organizations with annual operating budgets under \$2 million. The Arts Fund responds to organizations that demonstrate artistic vibrancy and serious self-assessment, recognize the importance of evolving institutional planning and strong financial management for artistic and operational objectives, and illustrate a long-term commitment to the region.

ATLANTA AIDS FUND

The Atlanta AIDS Fund (AIDS Fund) supports metropolitan Atlanta's HIV/AIDS advocacy, prevention, education and service efforts. The AIDS Fund is a collaborative funding partnership between the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta, United Way of Greater Atlanta, The Allen Thornell HIV Care and Service Fund and Jeffrey Fashion Cares. Since 1991, the AIDS Fund has awarded more than \$15 million in grants. *HIV/AIDS service organizations may request grants ranging from \$10,000 to \$75,000 for a 12- or 24-month period. More details can be found on page six.*

Guidelines

2019 SCHEDULE

Ongoing	Organizational Profile and Common Grant Application are available to nonprofits
Monday, May 20	Online orientation session
By Wednesday, June 19	Nonprofits complete or update their Organizational Profile and Common Grant Application
By Wednesday, July 10	Invitation sent to selected applicants to submit a Grant Application Supplement
Wednesday, July 24 (12pm)	Grant Application Supplement due with required attachments
By Friday, July 31	Site visit invitation sent to selected applicants
August 21- September 3	Site visits are conducted
By Wednesday, October 30	Applicants notified of funding decision

APPLICATION PROCESS

- 1] Organizations must complete/update their [Organizational Profile](#) and [Common Grant Application](#) using the [Nonprofit Online Portal](#). Organizations interested in being considered for a General Operating Support grant must select "Yes" to the question at the end of the Common Grant Application.
- 2] Foundation staff reviews Organizational Profiles and Common Grant Applications to determine which organizations should advance in the process
- 3] Invited organizations submit Grant Application Supplement and required attachments through the Nonprofit Online Portal. Required attachments include:
 - Organizational chart showing titles, employee names and vacant positions
 - Brief biographies of senior leadership
 - [Board Information Form](#)
 - Current fiscal year operating budget as approved by the board of directors with year-to-date actual information
 - Most current Balance Sheet
 - Two most recent audited or reviewed financial statements as dictated by budget size
 - Internal year-end balance sheet and year-end budget with actuals
 - Operating budget for your next fiscal year
 - [Cash flow worksheet](#)
 - Current strategic or business plan
 - Current fundraising plan
- 4] Foundation staff reviews all Grant Application Supplements and selects organizations for site visits
- 5] Foundation staff conduct site visits
- 6] Funding recommendations are made to the Foundation's Board of Directors and grants are awarded
- 7] Organizations receiving grants will be required to report in 12- or 24-month intervals

Nonprofit organizations that meet the following requirements are eligible to apply for GOS:

- ◆ Must be located and providing services within the Foundation's 23-county service area; all GOS grant funds must be spent within the 23-county service area;
- ◆ Must be classified by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service under Section 501(c)(3) of the I.R.S. code as a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization, donations to which are deductible as charitable contributions under Section 170 (c)(2) and the I.R.S. determination must be current;
- ◆ Must be registered with the Georgia Secretary of State as a nonprofit (click here to verify: <https://ecorp.sos.ga.gov/BusinessSearch>);
- ◆ Must have a minimum two-year operating history after the date of receipt of its 501(c)(3) classification;
- ◆ Must have annual operating expenses greater than \$100,000 as reflected in the most recently filed I.R.S. Form 990 (click here for more information on Form 990: <https://www.irs.gov/Charities-&-Non-Profits/Form-990-Resources-and-Tools>);
- ◆ Must have at least one full-time paid employee for the 12 months prior to submitting an application (please note that contractors or consultants do not count toward this requirement). We define full-time employees as those working at least 35 hours per week paid minimum wage or more and classified as a W-2 employee;
- ◆ Must have a current written strategic or business plan for the whole organization that covers at least 24 months and includes the organization's entire current fiscal year. Review our [website](#) for more details on how Foundation staff evaluates strategic plans. Without a plan and schedule for replacing plans expiring in upcoming months, the Foundation will be limited in ability to fully evaluate the organization and it may impact the grant decision;
- ◆ Must have audited or reviewed financial statements that follow Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) or Government Auditing Standards (GAS) for the past two completed fiscal years as required by budget size. Organizations with annual expenses over \$250,000 must have audited financial statements; organizations with annual expenses between \$100,000 and \$249,999 must have reviewed financial statements;
- ◆ Must have filed the end-of-grant report for any previous General Operating Support grant;
- ◆ Must have a Board of Directors where 100% of members made personal cash donations or made financially measureable in-kind contributions during the last completed fiscal year (*note there is no required cash donation amount*);
- ◆ Must have a Board of Directors representing the diversity and demographics of the community served, including individuals with varied skill sets, and the committee structure necessary to succeed;
- ◆ **National organizations with local chapters/affiliates or programs:** local chapters/affiliates or programs must demonstrate local control over their finances and operations, and have a local governing board. Written documentation delineating local control over the local chapter/affiliate must be available upon request. *Foundation staff urges national organizations with local chapters/affiliates that are considering applying to contact us to discuss eligibility on an individual basis.*

See pages 5 and 6 for additional eligibility criteria for arts and HIV/AIDS organizations.

Eligibility

ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

- ◆ Must have annual operating expenses less than \$2 million as reflected in the expense line on the most recently filed I.R.S. Form 990;
- ◆ Must have a primary focus on presenting, producing or providing arts programming for the public;
- ◆ Must pay artists and performers associated with cultural programming; and
- ◆ Must have an artistic emphasis which falls into one or more of the following art forms: dance, design, folk arts, literature, media arts, music, opera, performance arts, theatre or visual arts.

NOTES ON ELIGIBILITY FOR ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

In most cases, organizations must have received at least one grant from the National Endowment for the Arts, South Arts, Georgia Council for the Arts or a local arts agency in the last two years to be competitive. It is unlikely that the following arts organizations or programs will receive a grant:

- ◆ Programs organizationally or financially connected to colleges, universities or religious organizations, even though the program may be operated separately;
- ◆ Community or civic centers, unless the organization's mission is solely arts-oriented or it can be demonstrated that the grant funding will directly support a major arts division with its own administration; and
- ◆ Arts service organizations that do not directly present, produce or provide arts programming.

ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR AIDS ORGANIZATIONS

The Atlanta AIDS Fund offers restricted operating support for organizations that have a clear HIV/AIDS (intervention, prevention, care and advocacy) component to their work, but not necessarily stated in their missions. Organizations working in affected communities and using input from people living with or impacted by HIV/AIDS to design and implement programs will be prioritized. **Neighborhood-based organizations, those supported by the faith community and smaller organizations are encouraged to apply.** Grants will range from \$10,000 to \$75,000 per 12-month period and may be awarded for 12 or 24 months; requests can represent no more than 25% of the HIV/AIDS program budget. Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- ◆ Organizations providing HIV/AIDS programming whose budgets range from \$40,000 to \$100,000 are eligible to apply and must have at least one part-time paid employee for the 12 months prior to submitting an application (please note that contractors or consultants do not count to-ward this requirement). We define part-time employees as those working at least 20 hours per week paid minimum wage or more and classified as a W-2 employee;
- ◆ HIV/AIDS program budget must be delineated within the organization's budget;
- ◆ Organizations with budgets greater than \$100,000 must have at least one dedicated salaried HIV/AIDS program staff (no contractors/consultants);
- ◆ Organizations with budgets less than \$100,000 may submit internal financial statements;
- ◆ HIV/AIDS programs must be detailed in the organization's strategic plan; and
- ◆ Programs/activities must be Evidence Based Interventions (EBIs), Diffusion of Effective Behavioral Interventions (DEBIs) or be innovative in nature and provide a research-based hypothesis on why they are effective.

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR AIDS ORGANIZATIONS

- ◆ Organizations targeting communities with the highest rates of HIV/AIDS are encouraged to apply. Atlanta area zip codes with the highest HIV/AIDS rates (30303, 30308, 30314, 30324, 30310, 30336, 30312, 30309, 30318) are a high priority;
- ◆ AIDS United's Southern HIV Impact Fund grantees in metro Atlanta are encouraged to apply;
- ◆ Applicants are encouraged to refer to the Fulton County AIDS Task Force for recommended best practices on addressing the HIV/AIDS epidemic (<http://www.fultoncountyga.gov/hivtaskforce>); and
- ◆ **Beginning in 2020**, all AIDS Fund applicants must have filed end-of grant reports for any prior AIDS Fund grants in order to be eligible for funding.

INELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS

The following organizations are not eligible to apply for funding:

- ◆ Private and publicly funded schools (K-12) and institutions of higher learning (this does not include nonprofit charter schools);
- ◆ Organizations that exclusively raise funds for publicly funded schools (K-12), institutions of higher learning and government agencies;
- ◆ Organizations that require participation in religious services and/or religious education as a condition of receiving services; and/or
- ◆ Organizations that have discriminatory policies and/or practices on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, economic status, disability, sex/gender, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information or political beliefs.

INELIGIBLE USES OF FOUNDATION FUNDS

Foundation funds may not be used to support the following:

- ◆ Religious services and/or religious education;
- ◆ Endowment funds;
- ◆ Capital campaign contributions (for building construction or renovation) or use of funds to cover capital campaign feasibility studies or campaign implementation expenses. This does not include regular maintenance and capital improvements.

How are organizations evaluated?

There are several stages of evaluation. At the first stage, in reviewing Organizational Profiles and Common Grant Applications, the Foundation will prioritize organizations that:

- ◆ Show clarity in mission and vision;
- ◆ Address opportunity gaps and inequity within the region;
- ◆ Submit Organizational Profiles and Common Grant Applications that reflect organization-wide planning and decision-making;
- ◆ Have a clear and articulated vision for implementation and success;
- ◆ Are located and providing services outside of Fulton, Cobb, DeKalb and Gwinnett counties (Note: all applicants must be located and providing services within the Foundation's [23-county service area](#));
- ◆ Demonstrate a high value for diversity in all forms;
- ◆ Exhibit strong financial management; and
- ◆ Provide programming/services that align with the Foundation's [Impact Areas](#) and associated metrics.

When reviewing Grant Application Supplements, the second stage of review, the Foundation will prioritize organizations that:

- ◆ Demonstrate active use of a current strategic or business plan through the use of a comprehensive implementation plan and regular written assessments by staff and board that measure organizational progress towards goals;
- ◆ Update and adapt programs and plans to reflect the current economy and community needs;
- ◆ Have board members who represent the diversity of the community served and are engaged in fundraising;
- ◆ Demonstrate solid financial practices related to budgeting, forecasting and reporting to the board;
- ◆ Invest in their people, operations and technology;
- ◆ Have written strategies to address access, inclusion and inequity;
- ◆ Demonstrate understanding of their program participants or audience through data and surveys;
- ◆ Clearly articulate organizational challenges and goals and develop innovative solutions and partnerships to address them; and
- ◆ Are appropriately engaged in matters of advocacy and public policy.

How do I learn more about general operating support?

Community Foundation staff hosted an online orientation session on **Monday, May 20** and recorded the webinar. A link to that recording is found [here](#).

If you have questions after reviewing the guidelines and the orientation session webinar, please email us at grants@cfgreateratlanta.org.