

COMMUNITY GRANT PROGRAM

Accepting Applications from January 12 to February 19, 2026 at 5:00 p.m.

The Community Grant Program offers one application cycle annually.

The maximum request is \$10,000.00

This grant program gives Whitefish Community Foundation the opportunity to learn more about a nonprofit's programs, governance, and financial health. Nonprofits that are new to Whitefish Community Foundation are encouraged to apply for a Community Grant. Receiving a Community Grant is a stepping stone for nonprofits to apply to participate in the Great Fish Community Challenge.

The 2026 Community Grant Program will prioritize funding requests from organizations that do not participate in the Great Fish Community Challenge.

Organizations that have not participated in the Great Fish Community Challenge may apply for a Community Grant to support:

- Programs furthering the mission of the organization, OR
- Capital projects

Organizations that participated in the 2025 Great Fish Community Challenge may also apply for a Community Grant. Eligible requests include:

- An unforeseen need or opportunity
- A new program
- Small capital projects outside of the organizational operating budget that fill a new or significant need

****Please Note:**

These requests must represent projects or programs that fall clearly outside of general operations and programs funded through the Great Fish Community Challenge.

Eligibility Requirements:

- Eligible applicants must serve residents of Flathead County, Lincoln County, or Glacier County, Montana.
- Applicants based in Flathead County may apply to support any project or program that furthers their mission. Applicants based in Lincoln or Glacier counties may apply to support health and human service-related programs only.
- The applicant must be an I.R.S designated §501(c)(3) nonprofit public charity described in either I.R.C. §509(a)(1) or (a)(2), or a publicly-owned tax-exempt corporation. Supporting organizations described in I.R.C. §509(a)(3) should contact WCF to discuss eligibility.
- The applicant must have an IRS determination letter (recognition of nonprofit status), which can be verified in the applicant's GuideStar profile. Eligible supporting organizations and applicants that rely on a group exemption letter should contact Whitefish Community Foundation to discuss verification of nonprofit status.

- §501(c)(4) service organizations or §501(c)(6) trade organizations presenting a specific project or program that serves a charitable purpose for residents of Flathead County, Montana may apply.
- Applicants must have submitted all required documentation for previous grant awards by the specified deadline.
- Organizations operating under a fiscal sponsorship are not eligible to apply.

Applying organizations must be one of the following:

- a. An organization that predominantly works in or serves Flathead County, MT, with Flathead County representation on the board of directors, or
- b. An official Flathead County, MT chapter in good standing of a state/regional/national organization, with a board or local advisory board comprised predominantly of Flathead County, MT residents, or
- c. A regional/national organization, with a board or local advisory board comprised predominantly of Flathead County, MT residents, or
- d. A Montana organization with Flathead County, MT representation on the board of directors, and at least one paid employee whose responsibilities are to provide a program or complete a project that will have significant impact for Flathead County residents, or
- e. An organization based in Lincoln County or Glacier County with ties to Flathead County organizations and/or programs, providing or supporting health and human services

****YOUTH SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS:**

Youth sports organizations that do not participate in the Great Fish Community Challenge now have their own grant program – the Youth Sports Grant Program.

The following organizations may submit an application to the Youth Sports Grant Program, **NOT** the Community Grant Program:

- 501(c)(3) nonprofit public charities raising funds to support school-sanctioned, but not funded high school sports programs. (self-supporting high school sports programs)
- 501(c)(3) nonprofit public charities running Flathead Valley youth sports programs

If your youth sports organization meets either of these criteria and you did not participate in the 2025 Great Fish Community Challenge, please click "Apply" on the top toolbar and submit an application to the Youth Sports Grant Program.

If you are a youth sports organization that participated in the 2025 Great Fish Community Challenge, your organization is eligible to apply for a Community Grant.

Still unsure? Give us a call at 406.863.1781 or email grants@whitefishcommunityfoundation.org

Whitefish Community Foundation will not consider requests to fund:

- Individuals
- Deficits or retirement of debt
- Programs or projects promoting a religious doctrine
- Political campaigns or projects/programs promoting a political agenda
- Conduit organizations and/or fiscal sponsors, i.e. organizations or events that pass funds to other organizations
- Seed money for projects or programs not yet started by newly established organizations, or for projects or programs that are completed prior to the grant award date
- Fundraising event sponsorships

Documents uploaded into the application:

1. Detailed Project/Program Budget for the project or program to be supported by this grant
The budget will include all budgeted income sources and expenses
2. Budget versus Actual Profit and Loss Statement for the most recently completed fiscal year
Profit & Loss Statements that do not include a budget column will not be accepted
3. Two-Year Comparative Balance Sheet for the organization's two most recently completed fiscal years
4. IRS 501(c)(3) Determination Letter (all pages)

Please submit your application **EARLY!**

We will review your application and you will be able to edit information or make corrections to financial reports before the deadline. We will provide as much assistance as possible, but in order for the application to be reviewed by the Grants Committee, it must be complete and financial reports must be accurate and in the correct format by February 19 at 5 p.m.

Applicants will be notified the week of April 13, 2026.

Successful applicants are required to be present at the Community Grants Award Ceremony at the O'Shaughnessy Center in Whitefish, on the evening of Tuesday, April 28, 2026 to receive their grant.

Please contact Lynnette Donaldson or Jill Seigmund at (406) 863-1781 or [via email](#) if you have questions about Community Grant Program eligibility.