

Aspen Community Foundation (ACF) addresses the diverse and changing needs of the region through collaborations, partnerships, and grantmaking. Since 2012, the Aspen to Parachute Cradle to Career Initiative has been ACF's strategy for accelerating the wellbeing of children and families, particularly those living in poverty. ACF's Community Grantmaking advances the Cradle to Career goals by providing general operating and program support to nonprofit organizations addressing the complex and persistent barriers to positive youth outcomes. Funding is made possible by annual contributions from donors wishing to support a pooled grantmaking fund. Historically, ACF has been able to raise and award between \$400,000 and \$600,000 each year to 35-40 nonprofit organizations.

### **PRIORITIES**

ACF's grantmaking prioritizes nonprofits working in the areas of early care and education, youth development, education, and family support that have a demonstrated impact on at least one of the four Cradle to Career goals:

1. Children are ready for kindergarten
2. Youth develop social and life assets for success and happiness
3. Students succeed academically
4. Students graduate from high school ready for college and career

Recognizing that youth success is also impacted by essential human services, nonprofits providing food, shelter, safety, healthcare and other basic needs for youth and families will also be considered.

### **CRITERIA**

Applications for Community Grantmaking funding are evaluated using following criteria:

- Use of **best practices**, evidence-based interventions, or those specifically designed for the population being served
- **Demonstrated impact** on at least one of the Cradle to Career goals or demonstration of positive outcomes for clients and the community
- Commitment to serving **under-resourced people and/or communities**
- Willingness to address the region's **demand for services**, with a particular focus on the 20% who are not accessing services or programs
- **Scale or scope** of the organization's reach into the community
- **Depth and duration of contact** with those served
- **Leadership** strength and capacity
- **Operational and financial health** including efficiency, solvency, and sustainability
- **Collaboration** to avoid duplication and to improve community outcomes
- Necessity of ACF funding

### **LIMITATIONS**

1. Support is generally limited to nonprofit organizations located in, and whose work primarily serves, the residents of Pitkin and Garfield counties and portions of Eagle County in the Roaring Fork Valley of Colorado.
2. Applicants must be tax exempt and in good standing under the provision of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
3. Although each proposal is reviewed separately, grants are generally not considered for:
  - Organizations outside of ACF's service area
  - Projects which have been completed prior to allocation decisions

- Deficits, retirement of debt, or endowments
  - Religious purposes
  - Political campaigns
  - Medical research or hospital equipment
  - Program design, product development, or marketing and promotion
  - Conduit organizations (organizations or events that pass funds to other organizations)
  - Individual schools/classrooms, departments/programs of universities or colleges, or education foundations/organizations that have not coordinated the request with their central school district/university administration or fundraising arm
  - Organizations, projects, or programs in operation for less than one year or are less than one year from receipt of 501(c)(3) approval
  - Organizations in leadership transition
  - Organizations primarily supported by tax-derived funding unless funding supports a new program that is outside of the organization's operating budget
4. Aspen Community Foundation does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sexual preference or identity, physical circumstances, or national origin. Applicants must hold and demonstrate similar standards.
  5. Only one Community Grantmaking application per organization will be accepted each year.
  6. Past funding from ACF does not guarantee funding for future years.

## PROCESS

ACF's Community Grantmaking is a two-stage process. The application for funding and all supporting documents must be submitted via ACF's online grant platform. Specific deadlines are on ACF's website.

1. Each organization seeking funding should first review of these guidelines and determine whether its proposal meets the criteria and priorities of ACF.
2. If the organization meets these guidelines, begin the application process by completing the Qualifying Application.
3. Qualified applicants will be invited to submit a Full Application for Funding including supporting documents such as budgets, board and staff lists, Form 990s, etc.
4. ACF staff may elect at any time to schedule a meeting with the organization's executive director and/or board chair to discuss the proposal or to request additional or clarifying information.
5. Grant recommendations are considered by ACF's Board of Directors in the fall with funding decisions announced shortly thereafter. Final approval of grants is the sole responsibility of ACF's Board of Directors. The Board requests that individual members not be lobbied.

## ADMINISTRATION

- If the contact person becomes unavailable after application submission, please notify ACF of a new contact and phone number. Applications will not be considered if ACF staff cannot reach the contact person.
- Organizations receiving funding will be required to sign an agreement setting forth the grant's terms and conditions. The agreement will include marketing and reporting requirements, limitations on the grant funds, disposition of unused funds, and other conditions.