Arts & Social Cohesion (2024) LOI

Vermont Community Foundation

Guidelines

The sense of belonging and connection that people feel in their community has a powerful influence on mental and physical health. At a time of polarization, ongoing disruption, and disconnection following the COVID-19 pandemic, the arts can help bring people back together to work, play, create, and solve problems at the community level—which has meaningful impacts on belonging and wellbeing.

The Community Foundation is seeking Letters of Interest (LOI) for projects and events in the visual, performing, music, and literary arts that create opportunities for positive social interaction, engagement, and collaboration. Projects should strengthen belonging and community cohesion in ways that are likely to persist and grow.

Here are some examples of what the program will fund:

- participatory mural projects;
- artist residencies that connect artists with community members for co-design and co-creation;
- public arts installations with community engagement elements;
- interactive musical or dance performances;
- new choral collaborations;
- talent shows;
- hands-on workshops;
- free public classes and events.

Successful projects will:

- Reach broad and diverse audiences, including those who may feel marginalized in their community
- Engage people as participants, co-designers, and co-creators
- Feature diverse artists as leaders and facilitators
- Create a safe, inclusive environment for creative expression
- Build new connections between neighbors
- Foster trust, fun, and resilience

Guidance for Letters of Interest

Letters of Interest should describe the project concept and the intended audience, as well as an explanation of how the project will create connection and belonging in the community. A budget estimate and draft project timeline are also required. LOIs that focus on planning for a future project that requires longer lead times or complex collaboration will be considered.

Grant Size

Grants will be awarded up to $10,000. We intend to fund a range of project types and sizes in communities across the state with an average grant size of $5,000.

Letter of Interest Deadline & Notification

LOIs will be accepted between May 14 and June 11, 2024. LOIs must be received by 5PM on Tuesday, June 11 to be considered. Following a review of all LOIs received, a smaller number of organizations will be invited to submit a full application for funding consideration. Organizations will be notified regarding the status of their LOI by July 2.

You may view the full program guidelines online here.

Helpful Hints

- Character limits include spaces and punctuation.

- Be sure to save your work frequently by clicking the "Save" button at the bottom of the page as the system will log out after 90 minutes of inactivity.

- The size of text boxes can be adjusted by dragging on the lower right corner.

- Create a PDF version of your application via the "Application Packet" button at the top of the page. All content and attachments will be included.

All letters of interest must be submitted electronically to the Vermont Community Foundation through the LOI form in the Online Grants Manager, which can be accessed at www.vermontcf.org/OGM. LOIs will not be accepted by mail or email. If you have questions about the Online Grants Manager, please contact jmulcahy@vermontcf.org or 802-828-7760. With questions related to the Arts and Community Cohesion program, please contact Andy Barker at abarker@vermontcf.org or 802-995-2268.

Organizational Questions Part I

Please share the mission of the organization.*
Character Limit: 500

Issues your organization works to address (words not sentences).*
Ex. homelessness, food insecurity, carbon emissions, forest fragmentation, childcare, substance misuse.

Character Limit: 500

What is your organization's annual operating budget?*
Character Limit: 20

Did you receive a grant from the Community Foundation in either 2022 or 2023?*
Choices
Yes
No
Unsure

What status best describes the applicant?*
Our grants must be paid to a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit, place of worship/religious group, or town/municipal agency. If your organization or group does not fall into one of these categories, you will need to use a fiscal sponsor. If you have questions, please contact 802-388-3355 ext. 222. We are happy to talk through your options.

Choices
Municipal entity (i.e., town, public school, or other municipal department or agency)
Registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit
Place of worship or religious group
Other - Please provide details in your answer to the next question.

Use this space to provide additional information about the applicant's status. (If Applicable)
If you have a fiscal sponsor—or if you operate under the umbrella of a larger registered nonprofit—provide their name below.
Character Limit: 200

Which areas of the state does the organization serve?*
Choose all that apply.

Choices
Statewide
Addison County
Bennington County
Caledonia County
Chittenden County
Essex County
Franklin County
Grand Isle County
Lamoille County
Orange County
Orleans County
Rutland County
Washington County
Windham County

Windsor County

Which of the following strategic focus area(s) aligns best with the work of your organization?*

Choose all that apply.

Choices
Economic Equity
Climate & Environment
Health & Wellbeing
Education & Training
Democracy, Trust, & Community Leadership

Economic Equity

Choose from the following to further define how your work aligns with Economic Equity.

Choose all that apply.

Choices
Enabling Home Ownership and Housing Creation
Supporting Economic Innovation
Catalyzing Business Ownership and Entrepreneurship

Other:
Character Limit: 500

Climate & Environment

Choose from the following to further define how your work aligns with Climate & Environment.

Choose all that apply.

Choices
Improving Land Use and the Forest Economy
Strengthening Farm Viability and Food Systems
Protecting Climate and Environmental Justice
Promoting Clean and Efficient Energy Use

Other:
Character Limit: 500

Health & Wellbeing

Choose from the following to further define how your work aligns with Health & Wellbeing.

Choose all that apply.

Choices

Supporting Mental Health and Wellness
Ensuring Health Equity
Helping Youth to Thrive
Caring for Older Vermonters
Fostering Social Connectivity
Other

Other:

Character Limit: 500

Education & Training

Choose from the following to further define how your work aligns with Education & Training.

Choose all that apply.

Choices

Addressing College Affordability, Access, and Persistence
Building Pathways to Promising Careers
Strengthening Early Childhood Education and Childcare
Increasing Access to Expanded Learning Opportunities
Other

Other:

Character Limit: 500

Democracy, Trust, & Community Leadership

Choose from the following to further define how your work aligns with Democracy, Trust, Leadership.

Choose all that apply.

Choices

Engaging Vermonters in Decision Making and Democracy
Building Trust and Connection
Supporting Strong, Skilled Community Leaders
Exploring Innovations in Democracy
Other

Other:
Character Limit: 500

Addison County

Which towns in Addison County does the organization serve?*
Check all that apply.

Choices
Addison
Bridport
Bristol
Cornwall
Ferrisburg
Goshen
Granville
Hancock
Leicester
Lincoln
Middlebury
Monkton
New Haven
Orwell
Panton
Ripton
Salisbury
Shoreham
Starksboro
Vergennes
Waltham
Weybridge
Whiting

Bennington County

Which towns in Bennington County does the organization serve?*
Check all that apply.

Choices
Arlington
Bennington
Dorset
Glastenbury
Landgrove
Manchester

Peru
Pownal
Readsboro
Rupert
Sandgate
Searsburg
Shaftsbury
Stamford
Sunderland
Winhall
Woodford

Caledonia County

Which towns in Caledonia County does the organization serve?*

Check all that apply.

Choices
Barnet
Burke
Danville
Groton
Hardwick
Kirby
Lyndon
Newark
Peacham
Ryegate
Sheffield
St. Johnsbury
Stannard
Sutton
Walden
Waterford
Wheelock

Chittenden County

Which towns in Chittenden County does the organization serve?*

Check all that apply.

Choices
Bolton
Buel's Gore
Burlington
Charlotte

Colchester
Essex
Hinesburg
Huntington
Jericho
Milton
Richmond
Shelburne
South Burlington
St. George
Underhill
Westford
Williston
Winooski

Essex County

Which towns in Essex County does the organization serve?*

Check all that apply.

Choices
Averill
Avery's Gore
Bloomfield
Brighton
Brunswick
Canaan
Concord
East Haven
Ferdinand
Granby
Guildhall
Lemington
Lewis
Lunenburg
Maidstone
Norton
Victory
Warner's Grant
Warren Grove

Franklin County

Which towns in Franklin County does the organization serve?*

Check all that apply.

Choices

Bakersfield
Berkshire
Enosburg
Fairfax
Fairfield
Fletcher
Franklin
Georgia
Highgate
Montgomery
Richford
Sheldon
St, Albans Town
St. Albans City
Swanton

Grand Isle County

Which towns in Grand Isle County does the organization serve?*

Check all that apply.

Choices

Alburgh
Grand Isle
Isle La Motte
North Hero
South Hero

Lamoille County

Which towns in Lamoille County does the organization serve?*

Check all that apply.

Choices

Belvidere
Cambridge
Eden
Elmore
Hyde Park
Johnson
Morristown
Stowe
Waterville
Wolcott

Orange County

Which towns in Orange County does the organization serve?*

Check all that apply.

Choices
Bradford
Braintree
Brookfield
Chelsea
Corinth
Fairlee
Newbury
Orange
Randolph
Strafford
Thetford
Topsham
Tunbridge
Vershire
Washington
West Fairlee
Williamstown

Orleans County

Which towns in Orleans County does the organization serve?*

Check all that apply.

Choices
Albany
Barton
Brownington
Charleston
Coventry
Craftsbury
Derby
Glover
Greensboro
Holland
Irasburg
Jay
Lowell
Morgan
Newport City
Newport Town
Troy
Westfield

Westmore

Rutland County

Which towns in Rutland County does the organization serve?*

Check all that apply.

Choices

Benson
Brandon
Castleton
Chittenden
Clarendon
Danby
Fair Haven
Hubbardton
Ira
Killington
Mendon
Middletown Springs
Mount Holly
Mount Tabor
Pawlet
Pittsfield
Pittsford
Poultney
Proctor
Rutland City
Rutland Town
Shrewsbury
Sudbury
Tinmouth
Wallingford
Wells
West Haven
West Rutland

Washington County

Which towns in Washington County does the organization serve?*

Check all that apply.

Choices

Barre City
Barre Town
Berlin

Cabot
Calais
Duxbury
East Montpelier
Fayston
Marshfield
Middlesex
Montpelier
Moretown
Northfield
Plainfield
Roxbury
Waitsfield
Warren
Waterbury
Woodbury
Worcester

Windham County

Which towns in Windham County does the organization serve?*

Check all that apply.

Choices

Athens
Brattleboro
Brookline
Dover
Dummerston
Grafton
Guilford
Halifax
Jamaica
Londonderry
Marlboro
Newfane
Putney
Rockingham
Somerset
Stratton
Townshend
Vernon
Wardsboro
Westminster
Whitingham
Wilmington
Windham

Windsor County

Which towns in Windsor County does the organization serve?*

Check all that apply.

Choices

Andover
Baltimore
Barnard
Bethel
Bridgewater
Cavendish
Chester
Hartford
Hartland
Ludlow
Norwich
Plymouth
Pomfret
Reading
Rochester
Royalton
Sharon
Springfield
Stockbridge
Weathersfield
West Windsor
Weston
Windsor
Woodstock

LOI Questions

Project Name*

Character Limit: 100

Project Description*

Please provide a brief description of your project concept (2-4 sentences).

Character Limit: 1200

Who will be involved in this project, as lead artist(s), participants, and/or audience members?*

Character Limit: 1200

How will this project create a stronger sense of connection and belonging in the community?*

Character Limit: 1200

Total Amount Requested*

Character Limit: 20

Maximum grant amount $10,000

Geographic Area Served*

Where will your project happen? Provide town names and/or counties.

Character Limit: 1200

Timeline*

When will this project be created and/or presented in the community? A general answer is acceptable. The grant term begins in October 2024.

Character Limit: 1200

Draft Project Budget*

Please outline the anticipated project expenses. Revenue estimates are not needed.

Character Limit: 1200

Optional: Additional information you would like to share about this project.

Character Limit: 1200

Optional: Link you would like to share that illustrates the work described above.

Character Limit: 2000

Optional: Image you would like to share that illustrates the work described above.

File types accepted: png, jpeg, jpg.

File Size Limit: 3 MB

Organizational Questions Part II

Which of the following populations does your organization serve? Please check all that apply.*

Choices

Children and youth
Families
Older Vermonters (age 65+)
Small, rural communities
Low-income or those living in poverty
Black, Brown, or other People of Color

Indigenous People
LGBTQ+
People with disabilities or special needs
No special populations
Unsure
Other, describe:

Other:
Character Limit: 500

Approximately how many people do you serve on a regular basis during the course of a year?*

If your service level varies from year to year, you can use an estimate of the number you served in the last year.

Choices
Fewer than 100
100-499
500-999
1,000-4,999
5,000-24,999
25,000-50,000
More than 50,000
Unsure

How many years has your organization existed?*
Choices
Less than 5 years
5-10 years
11-20 years
21-50 years
More than 50 years
Unsure

How many paid full-time employees or the equivalent does your organization have?*
Choices
no paid employees
1-2 full-time employees (or equivalent)
3-10 full-time employees (or equivalent)
11-20 full-time employees (or equivalent)
21-30 full-time employees (or equivalent)
31-50 full-time employees (or equivalent)
51-100 full-time employees (or equivalent)
More than 100 full-time employees (or equivalent)
Unsure

What are the demographics of your organization's leadership? Please check all that apply.*

Choices

BIPOC led organization (Executive or Assistant Director, CEO, etc.)
BIPOC members on the Board of Directors
LGBTQ+ led organization (Executive or Assistant Director, CEO, etc.)
LGBTQ+ members on the Board of Directors
People with disabilities lead the organization (Executive or Assistant Director, CEO, etc.)
People with disabilities are members of the Board of Directors
None of the above
Unknown or prefer not to say
Other, describe:

Other:

Character Limit: 500

Save and Submit

LOIs will be accepted between May 14 and June 11, 2024. LOIs must be received by 5PM on Tuesday, June 11 to be considered. Following a review of all LOIs received, a smaller number of organizations will be invited to submit a full application for funding consideration. Organizations will be notified regarding the status of their LOI by July 2.

By submitting your application to the Vermont Community Foundation, you give us permission to share your application and information about your project with other potential funders, both individuals and foundations.