

Environmental Justice Small Grant Program (2023)

Vermont Community Foundation

Guidelines

The Vermont Community Foundation (VCF) is seeking proposals for community-driven programs or projects that help local communities adapt to the impacts of Vermont's changing climate and the increase of severe weather events. The Environmental Justice Small Grant Program is designed to support Vermont communities as they confront increasingly severe weather events and rising temperatures. Just as Vermonters adapt to the changing seasons, it is important that our communities prepare themselves for the long-term effects of a changing climate.

This grant program is designed to support communities with heightened risk and increased sensitivity to climate change and that have less capacity and fewer resources to cope with, adapt to, or recover from climate impacts. The degree of risk and sensitivity stems from physical (built and environmental), social, political, and/or economic factors, which interact with each other and are exacerbated by climate impacts. These factors include race, class, sexual orientation and identification, national origin, and income inequality. Projects may represent a wide spectrum of ideas and activities, including arts, community education and skill building, food access, green jobs, projects that reduce risk and harm, multi-generational climate activities, youth leadership, movement building and more.

What We Fund

The Vermont Community Foundation is seeking proposals for community-driven programs or projects that help local communities adapt to the impacts of Vermont's changing climate and the increase of severe weather events. Projects may represent a wide spectrum of ideas and activities, including arts, community education and skill building, food access, green jobs, projects that reduce risk and harm, multi-generational climate activities, youth leadership, movement building, and more.

For this pilot grant cycle, the Vermont Community Foundation is seeking programs or projects that:

- Support community resilience to climate change and climate-related impacts by reducing the physical and/or financial risk experienced by frontline communities
- Yield tangible, equitable benefits for local communities by addressing or adapting to climate change impacts
- Consider local knowledge and transform that knowledge into an innovative action or solution

- Build partnerships that respond to community-identified challenges

Funds may be used for salaries, benefits, contracted workers, project materials and equipment, reasonable overhead costs, and similar, necessary project expenses.

What We Do Not Fund

- Capital costs and campaigns
- Performance ticket subsidies or scholarships that are not directly connected to community-building work
- Debt reduction or deficit funding
- Individuals (applicants should apply as part of a nonprofit organization, community group, municipality, or similar entity)
- Expenses that have already been incurred
- Programs with religious instruction
- Indirect expenses unrelated to the project such as fiscal sponsor fees, rent, or financing costs

Who May Apply

Eligible applicants must be nonprofit organizations, municipalities, or schools whose primary service area is in the state of Vermont. These might be community-based organizations, libraries, community centers, senior centers, youth programs, service providers, or other entities. Projects without 501c3 status who have a fiscal sponsor are eligible. All applicants to programs at the Vermont Community Foundation must meet these guidelines.

VCF encourages applications from frontline and grassroots organizations serving low-income youth, older adults, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, Persons of Color), and LGBTQIA+ Vermonters, people with disabilities, and other marginalized groups.

VCF encourages applications from communities impacted by the recent severe weather and the July 2023 Flood to submit applications. Flood-related applications will be considered separately from non-flood-related applications.

Grant Size and Term

This program will award grants of up to \$10,000 for an 18-month project period.

With questions, please contact Kate Neubauer, Program Officer, Climate & Environment at (802) 388-3355 ext. 250 or email kneubauer@vermontcf.org.

For more information visit vermontcf.org/ejgrants

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 applications must be submitted electronically to the Vermont Community Foundation through the application form in the Online Grants Manager, which can be accessed at www.vermontcf.org/OGM. If you have questions about the Online Grants Manager, please contact the grants team at grants@vermontcf.org or 802-388-3355 opt. 6.

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 2021 or 2022?*

Choices

Yes

No

Unsure

Financial Statements - Completed Fiscal Year*

Please upload a copy of your organization's profit/loss statement and balance sheet from its most recently completed fiscal year. Sample documents can be downloaded from the Community Foundation's website - visit our Online Grants Center FAQ for more details.

File Size Limit: 3 MB

Financial Statements - Current Fiscal Year*

Upload a copy of your organization's budget to actual, including both revenue and expenses, from its current fiscal year. Sample documents can be downloaded from the Community Foundation's website - visit our Online Grants Center FAQ for more details.

File Size Limit: 3 MB

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

Fiscal Sponsor Agreement Form (If Applicable)

Download a blank Fiscal Sponsor Agreement Form ([click here to download the form](#)) and forward it to your fiscal sponsor to print, fill out, and sign. The form must be filled out completely and you must use the official VCF form. Please call 802-388-3355 if you have questions.

Upload the form here.

File Size Limit: 3 MB

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

Application Questions

Project Name*

Character Limit: 100

Total Amount Requested*

Character Limit: 20

Applicants may apply for up to \$10,000 for an 18-month project period.

Area Served*

What municipality or municipalities are served by this project?

Character Limit: 50

About the Project*

Summarize your project and the activities or steps you will take to complete it. Include your timeline.

Character Limit: 2500

Outcomes*

What will be different because of this project, and how will you know?

Character Limit: 2500

Timeliness*

Why is the proposed approach the best one at this time?

Character Limit: 1500

Community engagement in project development*

Who was involved in developing this project? How did you decide on this approach? *The strongest projects are those that have been developed in partnership with diverse groups of people, with varied lived experience.*

Character Limit: 2500

Project Budget - Itemized*

Attach a copy of your itemized project budget. You should include both expenses and revenue, as well as pending and secured support. *Sample documents can be downloaded from the Community Foundation's website - visit our [Online Grants Center FAQ](#) for more details.*

File Size Limit: 3 MB

Project Budget - Additional Details (optional)

If this information is not provided elsewhere in the application materials, please provide a brief budget narrative for your proposed activities.

Character Limit: 2500

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
- Woman led organization (Executive or Assistant Director, CEO, etc.)
- Women members on the Board of Directors
- None of the above
- Unknown or prefer not to say
- Other, describe:

Other:

Character Limit: 500

Save and Submit

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.