

# Montgomery County Community Foundation 2021 Grants Guidelines Unrestricted and COVID-19 Operating Support



## MISSION

The Montgomery County Community Foundation (MCCF) builds bridges to support the future of Montgomery County.

## ELIGIBILITY

Grant applications will be accepted from any new or existing nonprofit organization in Montgomery County. These organizations must be a tax-exempt organization whose purposes are described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code. Grant applications will also be accepted from local governmental entities, such as the three Montgomery County school corporations, for charitable purposes. If an organization has received funding from MCCF in the past, all post-grant reporting requirements must be current (not past-due) before an organization is eligible to submit a new request.

### GRANTMAKING AREAS OF INTEREST

Art & Culture - Community Development - Education  
History - Health - Human Services - Youth  
With a current emphasis on Early Childhood Education

## APPLICATION PROCEDURES

The online application platform is accessed at [www.mccf-in.org](http://www.mccf-in.org). Under the “Grants” tab, click “How to Apply.” After reading through the guidelines, the various grant application links are listed under “Resources.” Log into (or create) your online account to access the application form.

Supported Internet browsers for PC or MAC: Internet Explorer 9, 10, 11 or Edge for Windows; Firefox or Chrome for Windows or Mac; Safari for Mac. See details under “Browser Compatibility”.

**IMPORTANT:** Late applications will not be accepted, regardless of the reason (computer problems, power outages, Internet connectivity issues etc.) so plan to fill in and “SUBMIT” the application well in advance of the deadline. If you’re “in progress” at the deadline, you will be locked out of the application.

## GRANT POLICIES

MCCF will consider all requests fairly and impartially. Grants will ordinarily be made for one (1) year only. An organization must spend all grant funds as described in the grant proposal. Unused funds must be returned within one (1) year unless an extension is requested in writing, and approved by MCCF.

### *In consideration of COVID-19 hardships:*

1. Agencies with current unrestricted grants may request to use them for general operating by submitting a request in writing, outlining the rationale.
2. Agencies may apply for both a COVID-19 Operating Support Grant and an Unrestricted Grant in 2021, providing Post Grant Reports are up to date.
3. COVID-19 Operating Support requests will be a strong priority.

A strong proposal will have several or all of the following characteristics:

- Include an estimation of the number of people in Montgomery County who will benefit from this project or program.
- Reach a broad segment of the community.
- Show initiative and results by the organization to raise funds toward the project or program.
- Improve the ability of organizations to serve the community over the long term.
- Address a community problem or special project of some significance for which funding is needed and the funding is not covered by the regular budget.
- Present an innovative and practical approach to solve a community problem or project.
- Set forth a work plan that shows an ability to achieve the project’s goal.
- Identify the sources of possible future funding if the project is to be an ongoing one.
- Give evidence of the qualifications and stability of the organization applying.
- Include projects or programs that are not normally expected to be funded by government entities.
- Promote cooperation and avoid duplication of efforts.

Generally, MCCF will not support the following from unrestricted and field of interest funds:

- Grants to individuals (other than scholarships).
- Programs that are religious or sectarian in nature. Proposals from religious groups will be considered when the program is open to the entire community and is not designed to teach or promote a particular religion.
- Parades, festivals and sporting events.
- Endowment funds.
- Multiple grants to a single organization in one calendar year, except in the case of COVID-19 Operating Support, or COVID-19 Emergency Grants.
- Any propaganda, political or otherwise, attempting to influence legislation or intervene in any political affairs or campaigns.
- An organization's past debts or existing obligations.
- Post-event or after-the-fact situations.

### OPERATING SUPPORT

Historically, MCCF has not placed the highest priority on requests for operating expenses. However, considering the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, we believe that operating support may be critical to the survival of some organizations. A strong request for operating support will address these points:

- Identify and quantify the financial shortfalls being experienced. For example, a drop in donations, a decline in user fees, admissions, sales, etc. Or an increase in demand for services, canceled fund raisers, etc.
- Describe efforts taken to date to offset the deficit.
- Identify the organizations financial reserves and describe how you plan to use them.
- Without the requested funding, describe the consequences. Will it result in shorter hours, dropped programs, reduced staff, etc.?
- Outline a plan for recovery.
- A conversation with the MCCF Grants Director is strongly recommended before persuing Operating Support.

Other factors the board will take into consideration for operating support are:

1. Is the request for the support of a program that is key to the nonprofits mission?
2. The Grantees Track Record – does the nonprofit have a track record of success and impact on its constituency or target population?

3. Leadership and Readiness – are staff and board leaders demonstrating smart planning and accountability?

### APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

The Grants Committee will review all applications and in some cases, may make site visits. The committee makes recommendations to the MCCF Board of Directors who are responsible for making the final decision regarding grant awards.

Grant proposals will be reviewed using the following criteria:

- The appropriateness for MCCF to make this grant or are there more compatible funding sources?
- The ability of MCCF to fund the project or program.
- The number of people who will benefit from or be served by the project.
- The extent to which the proposal addresses the root cause of a problem and “changes lives.”
- The geographic area served.
- The extent to which the proposal addresses an innovative or practical approach to address a community need.
- The extent to which the project encourages cooperation and/or collaboration between organizations.
- The extent to which the project may represent a duplication of services provided by other organizations.
- The extent to which the project looks to the future and/or demonstrates a lasting impact on the community.
- The financial stability (historically) of the organization submitting the application and whether or not there are financial controls in place to ensure that the funds will be effectively utilized.
- The extent to which the plan submitted demonstrates adequate avenues for future funding.
- The extent to which the grant, if awarded, may be leveraged for additional funding.
- The ability of the organization to obtain additional funding, if necessary.
- The extent to which the grantee may develop challenge or matching grant programs.

### Grants Due Dates

Grant Cycle	Applications due by 5 PM	MCCF Board Review
Cycle #1	Monday, April 5	May 17
Cycle #2	Monday, October 11	November 15