



## Grant Guidelines

This document will tell you everything you need to know about applying for a grant from our foundation. **Please review it carefully, even if your agency has received a grant before, since there have been some important changes:**

- Additional criteria for education related grants
- Availability of 3-year grants for programs or general operating expenses (*see details under Eligibility for Grants*)
- Migration to an online application system effective November 1, 2018
- Grant review and award schedule (*three times per year instead of four; dates have changed*)

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## Grant Guidelines

The Liberty Bank Foundation was established in 1997 as an extension of Liberty Bank's commitment to the Connecticut communities the bank and its employees have served since 1825. We feel that, as bankers, we have a responsibility not only to provide excellent financial products and services, but also to make our communities better places to live and work. Through our Foundation, we support nonprofit organizations that our neighbors depend on to build strong families and communities. Our grantmaking is focused on organizations that serve people within Liberty Bank's market area.

### Mission

The mission of the Liberty Bank Foundation is to support preventive programs that assist low- and moderate-income residents of Liberty Bank's market area in achieving their personal goals and reaching their potential. We advance this mission by providing financial support to nonprofit organizations and by acting as a philanthropic leader in the communities we serve.

### Geographic Area Served

The Liberty Bank Foundation supports organizations and programs that operate within Liberty Bank's service area, which consists of Middlesex, New Haven, and western New London Counties, as well as the towns of Berlin, Bristol, East Hartford, Glastonbury, Hartford, Manchester, Mansfield, Marlborough, New Britain, Newington, Plainville, Shelton, Southington, West Hartford, Wethersfield, and Windham.

### Funding Priorities

We recognize that all too many Connecticut families still live just one missed paycheck away from economic disaster. The foundation's goal is to assist low- and moderate-income families to improve their economic situation and quality of life. Toward that end, our grantmaking will focus on the following priority areas:

- **Preventive education programs that lead to economic success for children and families**
- **Affordable housing and ending homelessness**
- **Building the capacity of nonprofits engaged in the first two priority areas**
- **Large-scale food programs for people in crisis**

***Prevention-oriented Education for Economic Success:*** The Foundation seeks to support education programs and activities that are preventive in nature—designed to build the knowledge that parents and children need to become economically successful citizens who can address their own needs and contribute to their communities. In reviewing grant requests to support preventive programs, we consider the following criteria to be of primary importance:

- The number of people to be served.
- The level of need of the people to be served. Are they of low/moderate income? Are they at risk of some type of negative outcome (for example, failing in school)?

- The potential impact of the program. Will it truly generate long-term change by preventing a potential problem from occurring, or just provide temporary relief? Will it contribute to the participants' *economic* success?

Our prevention strategy also emphasizes collaboration among existing resources—nonprofit, public, and private. Funding will focus on education programs that benefit children and families of low or moderate income. Examples of programs funded under this area include:

- Early childhood education
- After-school tutoring and mentoring programs
- College/career exploration and preparation programs
- Parent leadership training
- Job preparation and training
- Financial literacy education
- Collective impact collaboratives/cradle-to-career partnerships that seek to align organizations and resources to support student success
- Educating the public and policy makers on issues relating to strengthening the economic stability of children and families

In reviewing education programs targeting children, we look for these characteristics:

- Demonstrated coordination between the program and the local public school system. This supports alignment with classroom goals and curriculum, as well as robust data collection.
- Measurement of attendance, both at the program and at school
- Age-appropriate measurement of academic progress: for example, 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading, 8<sup>th</sup> grade math or science
- Age-appropriate measurements of desirable behaviors, such as time on task, persistence, decrease in disciplinary referrals

***Affordable Housing and Ending Homelessness:*** Despite gains in recent years, Connecticut continues to suffer a serious shortage of affordable housing; that shortage, in turn, contributes to the problem of homelessness. At the same time, our state has made tremendous progress in building systems that have reduced chronic homelessness, making it a national leader. We recognize the connection between housing and homelessness and seek to support solutions all along that spectrum. Examples of programs eligible for housing and homelessness grants include:

- Development of low/moderate-income housing, with or without supportive services
- Technical assistance and general operating support for nonprofit developers of affordable housing
- Community organizing, education, and advocacy to build support for the development of affordable and supportive housing
- Foreclosure prevention and homeowner counseling programs
- Homebuyer education and/or landlord education for aspiring homeowners of low/moderate-income
- Emergency shelter, shelter diversion, and rapid re-housing for people experiencing homelessness
- Coordinated Access Networks and other initiatives/activities aimed at improving systems to address homelessness

***Building the Capacity of Nonprofits:*** The Liberty Bank Foundation is committed to helping nonprofit organizations engaged in its first two funding priority areas to adapt to address community needs. Our goal is

to assist in making organizations more effective, efficient, flexible, sustainable, and productive. Capacity building funding is generally targeted to agencies with which the foundation has an existing relationship. Following are some examples of ways in which the Foundation supports nonprofit capacity building:

- Making grants that assist nonprofits to expand their services or become more efficient, effective, and sustainable
- Supporting educational opportunities or forums for nonprofits (for example, our annual conference, workshops on effective grantwriting, program evaluation, board development, and fundraising)
- Making grants that promote collaboration and sharing of resources among nonprofits
- Supporting efforts to improve systems (for example, development of the Coordinated Access Network system to address homelessness)
- Convening nonprofits and other sectors to address community needs and issues in a holistic fashion: considering the multiple viewpoints involved, building consensus about solutions, and combining resources to put those solutions into action.

**Food Programs for People in Crisis:** While the Liberty Bank Foundation believes prevention is the most effective way to improve people's lives and achieve long-term savings, we recognize the ongoing need for food programs for people in crisis. For this reason, we support large-scale food pantries and soup kitchens, chiefly in the larger towns and cities within our service area.

Limited funding is available for smaller, local food programs, such as backpack nutrition programs, farmers' markets, community gardens, or small food pantries. These programs may wish to contact their local Rotary Clubs to find out if they might be supported through the Liberty Bank/Rotary Club Thanksgiving Drive. This annual partnership campaign raised over \$365,000 throughout our service area in 2017, with local Rotary Clubs determining the recipients of the funds. It is the foundation's largest yearly investment in food; we provided almost \$75,000 in matching funds last year.

## Eligibility for Grants

The following types of organizations are eligible for grants from the foundation:

- Nonprofit organizations with IRS 501(c)(3) status
- Government agencies (*Certain conditions apply—please contact the foundation staff for details.*)

The foundation also makes grants to collaborative groups working on issues relating to our funding priorities. Collaboratives may include nonprofits, government agencies, businesses, faith communities, and other organizations. If a collaborative is not a separately incorporated entity, an eligible nonprofit or government agency must serve as fiduciary agent for the collaborative. Grant funds would then be paid to the fiduciary agent for the benefit of the collaborative.

For the most part, we prefer to fund specific programs. For previous grantees whose activities all align with our funding priorities, we will consider grants for general operating expenses. On rare occasions, we may consider requests for capital projects or equipment, but only from agencies that have received grants from us in the past.

The Liberty Bank Foundation does not make grants to the following types of applicants:

- Individuals
- Fraternal groups
- Organizations that are not open to the general public

The Liberty Bank Foundation does not make grants to support the following:

- Annual fund drives or campaigns (other than United Way)

- Trips, tours or conferences
- Sponsorship of events
- Multiple-year capital campaigns
- Scientific or medical research
- Single-disease research and/or support organizations
- Deficit spending or debt liquidation
- Lobbying or otherwise influencing the outcome of the legislative or electoral process
- Sectarian or religious programs
- Endowments
- Other grantmaking foundations

Since we receive a large number of requests and want to give fair consideration to everyone, **we generally will not make grants to an organization for more than three consecutive calendar years.** We ask that organizations that have received funding in three consecutive calendar years refrain from reapplying until a waiting period of one year has elapsed. In addition, we can only accept one application from an organization in any calendar year. If you have questions about the eligibility of your organization to apply this year, please contact the foundation office.

### Grant Size and Duration

The minimum grant amount is \$2,000. Most grants range from \$2,000 to \$5,000 and are made on a one-time basis.

**In 2018, the foundation began providing 3-year program or general operating grants to organizations that meet certain criteria.** If your agency has received funding from us for three consecutive years in the period since the beginning of 2012, and did NOT receive a grant from us in 2018, you may be eligible to apply for a 3-year grant in 2019. Applications for 3-year grants must be to fund the same program for all three years, or may be made for general operating expenses under certain conditions. Some additional criteria must be considered to determine your eligibility; please consult your program officer for details when you call us to discuss your grant proposal.

### Applying for a Grant

**The first step in our application process is to call the Foundation office to discuss the project for which you wish to apply for funding—even if you have previously received a grant for the project.** We can then provide guidance as to whether your project falls within our current funding priorities and answer any questions you may have about the application process. We can also inform you at that time whether you are eligible for a 3-year grant. Contact information for the foundation staff is on the last page of this document; please reach out to Toral for education related grants, and to Jane for grants related to housing, homelessness, or food.

After November 1, 2018, all grant applications must be made via our online system. Once we have determined that you are eligible to apply for a grant, we will provide you with instructions on how to access the system. The application period for grants to be reviewed at our June board meeting will open on January 2, 2019.

**Please note:** Because of the migration of our process to an online application system, we have eliminated our abbreviated application process, so the full application must be completed for all grants. The reason for this change is that, once a complete online application has been submitted, in future years you will be able to simply copy it and update it, rather than starting from scratch.

## Application Checklist

In order for us to consider your grant request, the following supporting information and documents must be uploaded with your grant application. To avoid a delay in considering your request, please check that all the documents below have been uploaded before clicking “submit”!

- A copy of the IRS letter documenting the 501(c)(3) status of your organization
- The mission statement of your organization
- A list of your board of directors or trustees, with their affiliations
- A complete budget for the project for which you are requesting funding (including both income and expenses)
- The annual operating budget for your organization for the fiscal year in which the project will take place
- Your most recent audited financial statements, with management letter. If you don't have audited statements, we will need a statement of financial position, statement of activities, and cash flow statement.
- Your most recent annual report
- A copy of your most recent Form 990 return

If any of the above documents are unavailable or inapplicable, please upload a document telling us the reason why you are unable to provide it. (For example, some organizations do not produce an annual report.) You can do the same if you don't have the appropriate document now but plan to submit it later; in that case, please let us know the date by which you expect to upload it.

## Grant Review and Award Schedule – NEW!!!

**Please note that our grant review schedule has changed!** In 2019, we will review grant requests on the schedule that appears below. Your online application, along with supporting documents, must be submitted by 5 p.m. on the deadline date. Requests received after each deadline will be deferred to the next review cycle.

Application Deadline	Review Date
11/1/2018	2/20/2019
3/1/2019*	6/19/2019
7/1/2019	10/16/2019
11/1/2019	2/19/2020

*\*Our online system will open on January 2, 2019, for submission of applications for the 3/1/19 deadline.*

## Foundation Staff Contact Information

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Please call any of us at any time if you have questions regarding the application process, your grant request, or our grantmaking in general. We're here to support you. Best wishes for success in your fundraising efforts!