



Community Organizing Mini-Grant

Program Guidelines

At Liberty Bank Foundation, we recognize that the most difficult part of creating affordable housing isn't actually building it. There are plenty of good contractors who know how to build housing. It isn't even the financing of it, although that's complex, since the funding usually has to be pieced together from multiple sources, including government funds. But there are folks who know how to navigate that process, too.

The most difficult part of developing affordable housing is helping people to understand how it can benefit their town and their local economy. It takes time and conversations to debunk common misconceptions about affordable housing and demonstrate how it contributes to the vibrancy of a community. And then it takes more time and conversations to assess the housing needs of a local community and enable residents to make sound decisions about what kind of housing makes sense for their town, where it should be built, and how to get it built. That calls for community organizing.

Liberty Bank Foundation is proud to introduce a new mini-grant program to support expenses related to community organizing to promote affordable housing development. We know that community organizing requires meetings, and meetings may involve expenses. Our mini-grants are designed to help with them.

Eligible Expenses:

- Meeting space rentals
- Food and beverage
- Audiovisual equipment rentals
- Printed or online promotional and informational materials
- Fees for facilitators or presenters
- Stipends to encourage participation by low-income residents
- Child care
- Transportation
- Other expenses to support community organizing events aimed at promoting affordable housing

Grant Size: Grants of up to \$2,000 will be available, although the average grant size is expected to be \$500-1,000. In most cases, requests for funding should not exceed 50% of the total budget for the event, with the remainder being raised from local sources. A maximum total of \$20,000 will be awarded in 2020.

Eligible Organizations: Nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations and government agencies are eligible to apply for community organizing mini-grants. However, we recognize that grassroots community organizing groups often operate outside of agency structures. If that's the case with your group, you will need to connect with an eligible organization that is willing to act as fiduciary for your group. If your grant application is approved, the check will be made payable to your fiduciary, which is responsible for paying the expenses outlined in the application.

How to Apply: Your first step is a phone call to discuss your event. Once we've determined that it fits within our guidelines, we'll provide you with a link to our online grant application. We've kept it simple; just provide some information on who your target audience is, what activities will take

place, how you'll use the funds, and what goals you hope to accomplish. You'll also need to upload copies of your project budget and the agenda for your meeting (this can be a draft.)

Grant Review Process: Grant applications can be submitted at any time, but please be sure to submit your application at least three weeks before you need to receive the funds. Once we receive your application, we'll be in touch with any questions and get back to you with a decision within two weeks. Your agency (or fiduciary) will need to sign and return a grant agreement, and then we'll send out the check.

Post-Grant Reporting: After your event has taken place, you will need to complete a brief follow-up report on the results. We'll email you a link to the online report form at the appropriate time. As part of that report, we will ask you to upload the finalized event agenda and the attendee list.

Questions? Please feel free to contact Sue Murphy by phone or email with your questions about the mini-grant program. We look forward to hearing from you!

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