

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.

During 2016, we will fund programs in three priority areas: prevention-oriented education programs that lead to economic success for families and children; affordable housing; and capacity building for nonprofits engaged in the first two priority areas. In addition, we work on an ongoing basis with nonprofits, government, and business to build partnerships and seek innovative solutions to the many complex needs in our communities.

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, Glastonbury, Mansfield, Marlborough, New Britain, Newington, Plainville, Shelton, Southington, West Hartford, Wethersfield, and Windham.

Funding Priorities for 2016

We recognize that, despite the recovering economy, many 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**
- **Building the capacity of nonprofits engaged in the first two priority areas**
- **Basic human services for those most in need**

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 programs
- Mentoring and tutoring programs
- College/career exploration and preparation programs
- Parent leadership training
- Job preparation and training
- Financial literacy education
- Promoting social and emotional health, identity and self-esteem, positive character, basic life skills, and conflict resolution skills
- Educating the public and policy makers on issues relating to strengthening the economic stability of children and families

Affordable Housing: Connecticut continues to struggle with a serious shortage of affordable housing. The Great Recession and its aftermath have exacerbated what was already one of the most significant challenges facing low- and moderate-income families in our state, expanding the problem to encompass many middle-class families who have never before experienced problems paying for housing. Examples of programs eligible for affordable housing grants include:

- Development of low/moderate-income housing, with or without supportive services
- Public education and advocacy to build support for the development of affordable and supportive housing
- Foreclosure prevention and homeowner counseling programs

In addition, the foundation staff will provide in-kind support in the following areas:

- Serving as a convener and facilitating collaborations among nonprofits, funders, government, and business
- Providing a point of access to the education, technical assistance, and financing programs available through Liberty Bank
- Assisting nonprofits in educating the public and policy makers on housing issues

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, and productive. Although grant funds in this area are limited, we will provide additional assistance by offering technical support, fostering collaboration, and serving as a convener. 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 and effective

- Supporting educational opportunities or forums for nonprofits (for example, seminars on effective grantwriting, program evaluation, board development, and management)
- Making grants that promote collaboration and sharing of resources among nonprofits
- 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.

Providing for Basic Human Needs: 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 high-quality intervention services. Our “Good Neighbor Fund” was established to provide support for these services. Preference is given to organizations that have received funding from the foundation in previous years. Following are the types of programs that are eligible for grants through the Good Neighbor Fund:

- Food pantries and soup kitchens
- Emergency shelters for homeless individuals
- Unmet necessities funds

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.

In general, we prefer to fund specific programs rather than capital projects, equipment, or general operating expenses. The foundation generally does not fund multiple-year capital campaigns.

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
- 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 wish 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 calendar 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

The minimum grant amount is \$2,000. Most grants range from \$2,000 to \$5,000.

Applying for a Grant

Before completing and submitting a grant application, please contact the Foundation office at (860) 704-2181 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.

Application Checklist

In order for us to consider your grant request, the following supporting information and documents must be included with your grant application. To avoid a delay in considering your request, please check that all the documents below have been enclosed before signing and mailing your application.

- 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
- 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 note the reason on the grant application form. (For example, if your organization is a municipal agency, you would not have a 501(c)(3) letter.)

Please note: If your organization has received a grant from the foundation within the past three years, you may be eligible to use an abbreviated application process instead of completing a full grant application with all supporting documents. The foundation staff can advise you of your eligibility for this process when you call to discuss your project; please feel free to inquire about it.

Your application, together with supporting documents, should be sent to:

**The Liberty Bank Foundation
1190 Silas Deane Highway
Wethersfield, CT 06109**

Grant applications can also be dropped off at any Liberty Bank branch office, provided that you first notify the foundation staff of your intent to do so. Please address the envelope to the Liberty Bank Foundation and ask the branch staff to forward the application to the Foundation office via interoffice mail. Applications dropped off at Liberty Bank offices are considered to have been received as of the date they were dropped off (for deadline purposes.)

Sorry—we do not accept applications via fax or e-mail.

To download our Grant Application in Microsoft Word format, just return to the Grants page and click the “Grant Application” link. Alternatively, to request a hard copy of the Grant Application, you can e-mail the Foundation office at kpedersen@liberty-bank.com, or call us at (860) 704-2181. And remember: ***please contact us before preparing your application!***

Grant Review and Award Schedule

We review grant requests on the quarterly schedule that appears below. One copy of the completed grant application form, with an original signature and all supporting documents, must be received or postmarked by 5:00 p.m. on the deadline date in order to be considered for that quarter. When the quarterly deadline falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or bank holiday, the deadline will be extended to 5:00 p.m. on the next business day. Requests received after the quarterly deadline will be deferred to the next review cycle.

- Completed applications received by December 31 will be reviewed in March.
- Completed applications received by March 31 will be reviewed in June.
- Completed applications received by June 30 will be reviewed in September.
- Completed applications received by September 30 will be reviewed in December.

Foundation Staff

Sue Murphy
Executive Director
(860) 638-2959
smurphy@liberty-bank.com

Toral Maher
Program Officer
(860) 638-2961
tmaher@liberty-bank.com

Kara Pedersen
Program Associate
(860) 704-2181
kpedersen@liberty-bank.com

Please call the Foundation at (860) 704-2181 at any time if you have questions regarding the application process, your grant request, or our grantmaking in general. Our staff is here to assist you. Best wishes for success in your fundraising efforts!