



Discretionary General Support Proposal Template

This template is designed for nonprofit organizations applying for discretionary general support grants from community foundations. It emphasizes organizational stability, community impact, and alignment with local priorities, using clear and accessible language for applicants with limited grantwriting experience.

Proposal Summary

Provide a concise, one-paragraph overview of your organization and funding request. Include the amount requested, how discretionary general operating support will be used, and a brief statement of the community impact this funding will enable.

Suggested length: 4–6 sentences.

Organization Description (Who We Are)

Briefly describe your organization’s mission, history, and role in the community. Include the year the organization was founded and the population(s) served. Provide measurable information about your reach (for example, number of individuals or households served annually) and one or two indicators of impact or effectiveness.

Suggested length: 1–2 short paragraphs.

Community Context and Need

Describe the local community need or challenge your organization addresses. Explain why this issue matters in your community and identify any underlying or contributing factors. Briefly explain why your organization is trusted, relevant, and well-positioned to respond.

Suggested length: 1 paragraph.

Our Work (Programs and Services)

Provide a high-level overview of your primary programs or services. Focus on how this work contributes to community well-being and advances your mission. Avoid detailed program descriptions—community foundations typically seek an understanding of overall organizational impact.

Suggested length: 1 paragraph.

Use of Discretionary General Support

Explain how flexible general operating funds will strengthen your organization. This may include staffing, infrastructure, evaluation, outreach, partnerships, or financial stability.

Emphasize how discretionary support enables your organization to respond to community needs and sustain impact.

Suggested length: 1 paragraph.

Anticipated Outcomes

Describe the results you expect to achieve as a result of strengthened organizational capacity. Outcomes should reflect meaningful change (such as improved access, increased participation, or greater organizational effectiveness). Use numbers, percentages, or other measurable indicators when possible.

Suggested length: 4–6 bullet points or 1 short paragraph.

Evaluation and Learning

Explain how you monitor progress and assess effectiveness. Identify key metrics or indicators you track and how this information is used for learning, improvement, or accountability. Evaluation approaches may be proportional to organizational size and capacity.

Suggested length: 1 paragraph.

Leadership and Staff Capacity

Provide brief descriptions of key staff or leadership responsible for guiding the organization's work. Highlight relevant experience, community knowledge, and lived or professional expertise that support effective implementation.

Suggested length: 3–5 sentences or short bullet points.

Current and Pending Support

List funding already secured and pending funding requests. Include grants, individual donations, in-kind contributions, and other revenue sources. When available, note anticipated decision dates for pending requests.

Suggested format: simple table or bullet list.

Conclusion

Conclude with a brief paragraph that reinforces your organization's commitment to the community, summarizes the value of discretionary general support, and thanks the community foundation for its consideration.

Suggested length: 3–4 sentences.