

## 2019 LOI PROCESS

The Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo is now accepting Letters of Intent (LOI) for our 2019 Competitive Grants Cycle.

The LOI is the first step in the Community Foundation's 2019 competitive grant process. It involves completion of a simple electronic form to determine if a project merits further consideration in light of available resources and current priorities. *Please note, this is the ONLY Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo competitive grant cycle for 2019.*

### ***Deadlines:***

**LOI will be accepted until February 4, 2019 at 4 PM**

Invitations for full grant proposals will be sent by April 8, 2019

Grant briefing, for those applicants invited to submit a full application, will be April 12, 2019 at 10 AM

Full proposals will be due May 3, 2019 at 4 PM

Grant outcome notification will be sent to applicants in mid-July 2019

*To submit a LOI for a competitive grant, please go to <https://www.cfgb.org/nonprofits/grants/community-foundation/>*

*LOI proposals must address at least one of the Solutions listed under the Community Foundation's four Community Goals. Special consideration will be given to requests which advance racial equity: [www.racialequitybuffalo.org](http://www.racialequitybuffalo.org):*

**I. Improve educational achievement for students living in low-income households. Requests must address one of the following Solutions:**

*Solutions*

1. Improve the academic achievement and postsecondary completion of students living in low-income households, with a preference for systems change.
2. Improve the school readiness of children living in low-income households.

**II. Increase racial/ethnic equity. Requests must address the following Solution:**

*Solution*

1. Increase opportunities for residents to interact across racial/ethnic lines resulting in improved understanding.

**III. Protect and restore significant environmental resources and promote equitable access. Requests must address one of the following Solutions:**

*Solutions*

1. Protect and restore the region's waterways and promote equitable access.
2. Strengthen individual environmental organizations and support a more racially inclusive and collaborative environmental community.

**IV. Strengthen the region as a center for architecture, arts, and culture. Requests must address one of the following Solutions:**

*Solutions*

1. Increase access to long term arts instruction for children and youth living in low-income households.
2. Increase opportunities for residents to engage across racial/ethnic lines through the arts.
3. Restore and leverage significant historic buildings and architectural landmarks, with a preference for sites that promote cultural tourism. (Defining historic as official recognition by State/National Register of Historic Places or local preservation ordinance.)

**NOTE:** Special funding available to support the following:

- Programs that serve the visual, speech or hearing impaired (~\$5,000)

*Preference for this special funding will be given to applications that align with one or more of the four Community Goals.*

### ***Eligibility***

- Grants are awarded only to organizations that have current Section 501(c)(3) status as determined by the Internal Revenue Service.
- Applicants must be located in or serving one of the eight counties of Western New York: Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans, and Wyoming.
- At any given time, organizations can only have one open Community Foundation competitive grant. Should you have an open grant from the 2018 or prior cycle, you are ineligible.

### **Other Matters**

- Funding request must be for the same amount requested in your Letter of Intent submission unless a change is approved by the Foundation.
- Any one organization may submit up to two LOI maximum. If an invitation to submit a full application is extended, only one of the LOI will be chosen and that choice is at the full discretion of the Foundation.
- Eligible organizations can receive only one competitive grant per year.
- *On a very limited basis*, the Foundation will offer the opportunity for two-year support with second year support contingent upon year one outcomes.
- The Foundation requires that all grants be closed out within one year of the receipt of funds, with the exception of two-year awards.
- The Foundation is receptive to requests that address advocacy, research and policy analysis aligned with the four Community Goals.
- The Foundation will consider the applicant's board, including the diversity of representation, in the evaluation process. Please be aware that the Foundation will give board diversification increased weighting when making final decisions. The ethnic/racial composition of the board of any organization should represent the community it serves.
- The use of local, minority owned businesses are encouraged.
- The Foundation is a strong supporter of the charitySTRONG initiative which assists public charities in achieving the highest standards of board leadership, governance and oversight. We recommend organizations utilize this service to improve their capacity strengthen their boards by providing access to a pool of talent for board service and governance resources: [www.charitystrong.org](http://www.charitystrong.org)
- The Foundation will consider allowing up to 10% of the grant amount for indirect costs.
- The Foundation reserves the right to pay grants in a single installment or in "draws" at its sole discretion.
- The Foundation requires that all successful applicants obtain three bids for any equipment purchase of \$10,000 and above.
- The Community Foundation reserves the right to conduct an independent evaluation of grant expenditures for up to four years. The grantee agrees to provide the information necessary to complete such an evaluation. Failure to submit requested information in a timely fashion may obligate the grantee to refund the grant.
- The use of grant funds for purposes not pre-approved by the Foundation or not supported through required documentation will result in a request that those grant funds be returned to the Foundation.
- The failure of an applicant to properly close out a grant in a timely manner will be a factor when considering new grants.

- The Foundation will not consider competitive funding for:
  - Higher education scholarships (separate application, deadlines, and process)
  - Projects outside the eight Western New York counties (Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Orleans and Wyoming)
  - Religious purposes
  - Schools not registered with the New York State Education Department
  - Attendance at or sponsorship of fundraising events for organizations
  - Annual events or festivals
  - Any partisan political activity. Funds from the foundation cannot be used to support or oppose a candidate for political office.
  - Projects and activities that have occurred. The Foundation will not, except in extraordinary cases, provide payment or reimbursement for expenses incurred prior to the funding decision being communicated to the applicant.

#### Funding amounts

- *The historical average for a competitive grant through this process is in the \$18,000 to \$20,000 range.*
- The maximum grant available through the Community Foundation competitive process is \$50,000.
  - Grants in the amount of \$50,000 are rare and usually are awarded when a unique opportunity, such as a funding match, is presented.
  - Should an organization be requesting more than \$50,000, they **must** contact the Foundation in advance to discuss their LOI.
- Please be sure to review grant history listed on the Foundation website for more information.