

## Fall Community Impact Grant Guidelines 2026

Our community is dependent on our local nonprofit organizations’ vital services to create vibrant communities where all people can thrive. The Community Foundation of Johnson County supports these nonprofit organizations through training, convenings, resources, and grantmaking. We are partners in the Better Together 2030 Initiative and are working to align our discretionary grantmaking with the Better Together All in Vision created by and for our community in 2022. Our annual competitive grantmaking is a small portion of the \$4 million we award each year.

Each year, the Community Foundation of Johnson County receives funding through the County Endowment Fund Program to re-grant to local nonprofit organizations in one (or more) of the following categories: Arts, Culture, & Humanities, Education, Environment & Animals, Health, Human Services, and Public & Societal Benefit. The following are the guidelines for the Community Foundation of Johnson County’s Community Impact Grants, funded through this program. Please read these guidelines completely prior to applying for this grant cycle.

**Purpose:** To invest in major projects which substantially increase quality of life for Johnson County residents through services provided by local nonprofit organizations.

**Request Amount:** There will be five \$25,000 grant awards available. Grant requests should be made for \$25,000 with budget narratives indicating how the monies will be spent and/or leveraged. We encourage leveraging these funds to secure additional funding to make a larger impact for our community.

**Basic Eligibility Requirements** (see Areas for Funding section for more information on what the committee prefers to fund):

All applicants should fit the following criteria:

- 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations, churches, the ICCSD, and government entities
  - Those without a 501(c)3 status are encouraged to find a fiscal sponsor to apply
- Significantly serving Johnson County, Iowa
- Fit within one or more of the CFJC’s target areas for funding as listed in the section below

### Areas for Funding

Funding Area	Prefer to Fund	Prefer Not to Fund/Ineligible
<b>General/All Funding Areas</b>	<p><b>Equity-centered</b> strategies and programs.</p> <p><b>Collaborative requests</b> that involve multiple organizations working together.</p> <p><b>Leveraging this grant award</b> to obtain funding from other funders, partners, and stakeholders to create larger impact for our community.</p> <p><b>Infrastructure:</b> Capital campaigns that will significantly increase the organization’s capacity to serve Johnson County residents.</p> <p><b>Quality of Life:</b> New and collaborative programs that will significantly increase quality of life for Johnson County residents.</p> <p><b>Transformational:</b> Programs that work at the systems change level to ‘move the needle’ on a community issue.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing annual operating or program expenses</li> <li>• Facility improvements that do not significantly increase the capacity of the organization to serve clients</li> </ul>
<b>Arts, Culture, &amp; Humanities</b>	<p><b>Access:</b> Programs that expand access or offer new access to the arts and cultural experiences. (Geographic or Demographic)</p> <p><b>Talent Development:</b> Programs that teach or grow the skills of local artists in unique ways or through multi-sector partnerships.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual artists</li> </ul>

<b>Education</b>	<p><b>Childcare Access:</b> Programs that significantly or specifically reduce barriers and provide access to childcare.</p> <p><b>Vocational Readiness:</b> New and multi-sector programs to support workforce readiness.</p> <p><b>Social &amp; Emotional Learning:</b> Programs that support the wrap-around services which reduce barriers for K-12 students to achieve academic success.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Program supplies for current educational programs</li> <li>• Single-classroom needs</li> <li>• Athletic and recreational opportunities</li> </ul> <p>*Schools within the Iowa City Community School District should apply through the ICCSD Foundation</p>
<b>Environment &amp; Animals</b>	<p><b>Conservation, Restoration, &amp; Preservation:</b> Programs that protect local ecosystems and natural resources.</p> <p><b>Public Education:</b> Programs that expand widespread local knowledge and understanding of environmental and sustainability issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spay/neuter events</li> <li>• Ongoing costs of operating a wildlife refuge or shelter</li> </ul>
<b>Health</b>	<p><b>Referral and Shared Services:</b> Programs that expand referrals and continuous management of client services within and between service-providing organizations.</p> <p><b>Prevention Services and Barrier Reduction:</b> Programs that improve access to quality mental and physical healthcare through barrier reduction, awareness, and screening opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Period product purchasing and distribution</li> </ul>
<b>Human Services</b>	<p><b>Collaboration and Shared Services:</b> Programs that bring multi-sector or multi-organizational approaches to address social determinants of health and basic needs issues for clients.</p> <p><b>Access:</b> Expansion or new programs to increase geographic or demographic access to services which meet basic needs (food, shelter, transportation, mental health crisis, and emergency assistance).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing program supply needs</li> </ul>
<b>Public &amp; Societal Benefit</b>	<p><b>Public Facilities:</b> Creation or expansion of shared amenities such as libraries, trails, parks, etc.</p> <p><b>Economic Development:</b> Opportunities for public/private partnership to enhance quality of life for Johnson County residents.</p> <p><b>Rural Development:</b> Opportunities to enhance downtown and main street districts, community connection and pride, and economic opportunity in our rural communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintenance of current shared amenities/public spaces</li> </ul>

### Ineligible Requests

Our application-based granting programs are intended to meet the diverse needs of nonprofits and the people they serve. There are some activities we do not fund with these grant programs, due to our policies and funding priorities. The following areas or program types are not funded by application-based grant programs of the Community Foundation of Johnson County:

- Deficit funding or debt retirement
- Direct financial support to individuals
- Political or lobbying activities
- Projects that are not for a charitable purpose
- Projects or events that have already been completed
- Religious or sectarian activities that attempt to convert a person to a particular faith or perspective, or social service activities that require participation in such
- Organizations or activities which do not comply with our nondiscrimination and diversity policy.

## Timeline

Nonprofit Info Session: July 8<sup>th</sup>, 12pm  
Grant Applications Open: July 15  
Grant Applications Due: August 17  
Decisions: Mid-October  
Community Awards Celebration: October 29, 2026  
Grant Report Due: June 30, 2027

## Reporting

A Grant Report must be submitted by June 30, 2027. This report will be submitted electronically through the online grants management system where the application was submitted. Promotional materials relating to the grant project and outcomes should include “funding provided by the Community Foundation of Johnson County” and photos will be required in the report. The grantee organizations will be required to work with Community Foundation staff on promotional and marketing materials regarding the grant award and impact of the program/project for use in CFJC web and print materials. Community Foundation of Johnson County Board of Directors and Staff members may also schedule site visits. Any organization that does not comply with the due diligence process will not be considered for additional grants until compliance is met.

## How to Apply

Eligible nonprofit organizations are encouraged to reach out to Community Foundation staff below to explore project alignment prior to completing the grant application. Grant applications will be completed via our [online grants management system](#). If your organization does not yet have a user login, please contact our staff team. More information on the grants management system can be [found here](#). Applicants will be asked to submit contact and organizational details, broad demographic information of service area/clients, project information, general budget information, and project impact details. Applicants submitting applications on behalf of multiple organizations should contact CFJC staff prior to applying for additional details on submission.

## Contact

Questions regarding this grant cycle, additional grantmaking through the Community Foundation, or alignment of requests can be directed to Ellie Moore, VP of Community Impact & Outreach at [Ellie@cfjc.org](mailto:Ellie@cfjc.org) or (319) 337-0483.

## FAQs

- How many applications can one organization submit?
  - Only one application will be allowed per organization.
- Am I allowed to utilize Artificial Intelligence to write my application?
  - Yes, feel free to use AI tools according to your organization’s AI practices and policies.
- I have questions about the online grants management system, where can I find more information about that?
  - Online grants management system instructions, walkthroughs, and FAQs can be [found here](#).
- If I apply for this grant, can I also apply for the Spring Capacity Building Grants or 5224GOOD’s grant?
  - Yes, organizations will be able to submit one application per grant cycle.
- Is this application shared with 5224GOOD for funding?
  - No – 5224GOOD has their own, separate grants cycle and application specifically with a focus on their grantmaking priority for 2026: Service for Older Adults.
- Is this application shared with Donor Advised Funds held at the Community Foundation for funding?
  - No – all donor advised fund grantmaking will be through the online Giving Catalog tool. [You can learn more about that tool and add a request here.](#)
- Are Community Reviewers still making grant recommendations?
  - Yes – a small team of community members will be reviewing and evaluating grant applications to make recommendations for funding to the CFJC Board of Directors.
- Am I eligible to apply if I am a United Way Partner Agency?
  - Yes – please indicate your partner agency status in the grant application where directed.