



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) - Our Grantmaking

Thank you for your interest in Waco Foundation's Grantmaking!

The Foundation strongly encourages all potential applicants to review this FAQ document in full and contact Nicole Wynter, at nwynter@wacofoundation.org or 254.754.3404, before starting an application.

FAQs:

Do you restrict your giving to a particular geographic area?

Yes, as the community foundation for McLennan County, Waco Foundation awards grants to 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, nonprofit organizations that are physically located in and provide service to McLennan County, Texas.

What type of project is the Foundation interested in funding?

As a community foundation, we seek to be responsive to the needs of our nonprofit community while remaining committed to our mission of promoting solutions to community challenges.

With that in mind, the Foundation has placed a high priority on the following:

Helping people overcome poverty permanently. Priority will be given supporting to the most focused, cost-effective methods of:

- Significantly reducing teen pregnancy
- Significantly increasing graduation rates from high school, technical school, community college and college

Supporting valuable projects that are:

- Interesting, unique and energizing; and which seek to make Waco a vibrant, inclusive and attractive community
- Considered to be critical components and high priorities of the *entire* community

Increasing the capacity of McLennan County's nonprofit sector and the ability of the community-at-large, to address challenges by:

- Strengthening nonprofit sustainability
- Helping local organizations collaborate
- Increasing leadership capacity and pathways

Funding organizations which provide support and service to our most vulnerable residents – people in poverty, people with disabilities, the elderly, children and youth (primarily through Immediate Impact Grants).

We also may engage in activities that create general awareness about problems that pose significant challenges to the community but are not receiving the community's focus or attention.

NOTE: It is important to note that all grants are awarded on a reimbursement basis, meaning dollars are not disbursed without proof that purchases/services have been received and paid for.

What type of project is the Foundation not interested in funding?

The Foundation considers the following to be low giving priorities:

- Annual operating expenses of established agencies including debt reduction or retirement, deficit financing, reducing operating deficits or replenishing resources used to pay for such purposes;
- Historic preservation;
- Individuals, except through our educational scholarships;
- Local, state or national fundraising or awareness activities (including annual fund drives, benefit tickets, event sponsoring and telephone solicitations);
- Maintenance expenses or maintenance issues created due to deferred maintenance;
- Medical or scholarly research;
- Membership fees;
- Organizations located outside the Waco/McLennan County area even though their project may benefit local residents and communities;
- Political lobbying or legislative activities;
- Publications, videos, etc.;
- Religious activities or programs that serve, or appear to serve specific religious groups or denominations. Projects that will serve a broad segment of the general population will be considered on the same basis as proposals from other agencies;
- Retroactive funding for current projects, programs or equipment;

- Start-up funding for new organizations;
- Tax supported entities (e.g. cities, schools)*; and
- The use of and payment for services of a fiscal agent.

*The Foundation Board will consider providing financial support to taxing entities via the Immediate Impact Grants Program. All other support activities will occur at the Board's initiative, based on perceived community need.

Does Waco Foundation make grants to support research?

Typically, we do not make grants for research. We conduct research of our own and, on occasion, contract with others for research when the research product is something that will benefit the entire community and will help advise our community's collective, strategic direction.

What do you look for in a successful project application?

A successful grant application will have a number of things included. Whenever possible, we encourage nonprofits seeking our support to present a **project** that does the following:

- Proposes a practical solution to a community problem;
- Is responsive to changing or emerging community needs;
- Is based on evidence informed practices that have a track record of success;
- Demonstrates clear, positive outputs and outcomes;
- Leverages or generates other funding or resources;
- Promotes cooperation among nonprofit agencies without duplicating efforts;
- Addresses prevention while providing immediate assistance for a problem; and/or,
- Enhances and encourages sustainability.

When reviewing grants, consideration is also given to the **organization** submitting the request. Some of the things we commonly assess are:

- The degree to which their efforts help address community needs;
- The capability of the agency and its personnel to achieve expected results;
- The demonstration of good governance, leadership and administration;
- The financial health and sustainability of the project and organization; and
- Demonstrated collaboration with and/or support of agencies involved in similar projects.

The Foundation has created a few documents to help nonprofits - especially those submitting requests for **Capital and Program/Operating Grant** support – prepare for the application a review process.

If you have not already done so, we recommend that you check out the:

- Organizational Readiness Checklist
- Statement regarding Outcome Measures

What are your application deadlines?

Two years ago Waco Foundation began to offer multiple grant cycles throughout the year. Based on the response and a survey of submissions, the Foundation will return to offering two grant cycles each year. The dates listed below reflect times for Immediate Impact Grants & Small Capital Grants. Applicants submitting a Letter of Inquiry may need to add two months processing/wait time to their schedule.

Submissions are **due by 11:59 P.M. Central time on the date listed below**. Anything submitted on the date referenced below but later than 11:59 pm will not be reviewed until the next grant cycle.

Requests received by:

July 1, 2018
January 1, 2019

Will be reviewed by:

October 1, 2018
April 1, 2019

Are all organizations required to have an audit to apply?

Organizations with receipts of \$300,000 or more must submit a copy of their most recent audit AND the letter on internal controls as part of their application. If a letter on internal controls was not issued, you will need to submit a letter from the auditor stating such.

Will you fund requests/award grants at amounts less than requested?

Waco Foundation may choose to support requests at a level equal to or less than the amount requested. We strongly encourage applicants to develop a diversified fundraising plan/strategy for the project they are seeking our support for, as we typically prefer not to serve as a project's sole funder.

Can my organization apply for a multi-year grant?

The Foundation does not consider itself an annual funder and as such, typically does not provide multiyear or repeat funding for a single project/initiative. However, some projects may be invited to return with a subsequent request for funds if the Board deems it appropriate.

It is also important to note that any nonprofit awarded a capital or program/operating competitive grant must wait a period of 12 months following the **completion** of that award before applying for another grant award (capital, program/operating). The wait time is 24 months for immediate impact grants.

How long will it take to review my application?

Response times are largely determined by Board meeting dates and the type of funding being requested. The dates listed above reflect response times for Immediate Impact Grants and Small Capital Grants. Applicants submitting a Letter of Inquiry should add a minimum of 2 months wait time to their schedule.

What does the actual review process look like?

- Letter of Inquiry Process: The Board will review Letters of Inquiry for large capital and program/operating grants and determine which organizations will be invited to submit a grant proposal. Submitting organizations will be notified by email of the Board's decision and will receive a copy of their proposal questions **after** they are invited to continue on with the grantmaking process.
- Small Capital Projects & Immediate Impact Grant Process: Similarly, the Board will review all applications for small capital projects and Immediate Impact Grants and determine which projects should receive funds. Submitting organizations will be notified via email of the Board's decision.

How often can I apply to Waco Foundation for funds?

With the exception of Capacity Building Mini Grants or Endowment Match Campaign Grants, organizations may not apply for more than one type of grant award at the same time. They may however, apply for more than one grant in the same year if their first request for funding is not successful.

The Foundation does not award more than one competitive grant to an organization within a twelve-month period and all grants are awarded on a reimbursement basis.