



Community Foundation of Greater New Britain Community Investment Guidelines

The mission of the Community Foundation of Greater New Britain is to improve the quality of life in Berlin, New Britain, Plainville and Southington. One way we accomplish our mission is by investing in organizations and programs that achieve clear human gains for those in our region. We view ourselves as investors focused on ensuring the greatest possible increase to the quality of life with the money we have available. Each proposal we receive is evaluated with respect to available dollars and alignment with three questions:

1. What will be the result from this proposed grant and how will you know it has been achieved? Results are not the services or programs offered but the gains for people and conditions in our area as a result of participation.
2. What are the chances that the results will happen? Our focus is on such factors as past success of program and group, key personnel leading the project, validity of approach or model, and organizational capability.
3. Is this the best possible use of Foundation funds given other opportunities before us? We consider the cost relative to the gain—not just for our funds but all monies going into a project or program.

Type of Investments

The Community Foundation of Greater New Britain makes two types of investments from discretionary funds. All proposals must clearly state the expected measurable results and include evaluation strategies (not just activity and process).

Improving Lives and Conditions: We will invest in programs and services across a broad range of fields created to strongly influence the quality of life for the citizens of Berlin, New Britain, Plainville and Southington. (See Interest Areas for Our Investments - described in the next section.)

Investing in Organizations: We will invest in organizations that deliver valuable services to the community. Proposals should focus on the needs of the organization that will strengthen its ability to achieve its mission. This type of proposal might include, but is not limited to:

- Staff development – training and professional development that helps staff to deliver services more effectively
- Strategic, fundraising or other plans and direction-setting – We support both planning and implementation of plans.
- Technology and equipment - The purchase of equipment or technology upgrades will be considered, but only as a component of a comprehensive program to move to a needed level of greater sophistication.

Interest Areas for Our Investments

The Foundation invests in organizations across a broad range of fields including arts, culture & heritage, community and economic development, education, and health and human services. While we are always willing to look at all proposals with a strong influence on the quality of life in our area, amidst these, a priority area that we will focus on through 2012 is early childhood:

First Years First: We believe that preparing the children of Berlin, New Britain, Plainville & Southington for success in school and in life by enhancing their early childhood development education experience is fundamental to any meaningful expression of the Foundation's mission. Therefore, the Foundation plans to invest an estimated \$1 Million of its discretionary grant funds over the next five years in our new signature initiative, **First Years First**. Simply stated, the Goal of this initiative is to help all children from Berlin, New Britain, Plainville and Southington come to their first day of kindergarten ready to learn. The Foundation will do this by:

- Partnering with the Early Childhood Development Department of Tunxis Community College to create and support the Early Childhood Professional Educators Consortium to improve the quality of our area's early childhood development programs through professional development and training, sharing of expertise, increased use of proven, research-based curriculums, and assistance to providers in the attainment of national accreditation for their programs through the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).
- Bringing existing Foundation-supported early childhood development programs (such as the New Britain Discovery Collaborative and the Early Childhood Development Collaborative of Southington) under the **First Years First** umbrella to create synergy, develop and promote like-minded - yet keenly localized - goals and to help maximize their reach into their respective communities.
- Raising awareness of the importance and value of high quality early childhood development programs among parents, providers, stakeholders, public officials and others interested in the welfare and future of our area's children.

In addition to the activities listed above, proposals designed to achieve the following results are encouraged:

- Projects and programs that support the growth and availability of proven emergent and family literacy programs so that all families, regardless of their national origin or first language, may actively participate in their children's educational preparedness
- Projects and programs that are in line with the goals with the State's "Ready by 5, Fine by 9" initiative

Beyond this priority area, the Foundation will maintain its interest in proposals which address the following interest areas, presented in alphabetic order:

Arts, Culture & Heritage: We believe that when the Foundation supports arts, culture and heritage programs, we not only enhance the quality of life for all residents in those communities, but also invest in the long-term economic vitality and well being of the Greater New Britain area. Proposals designed to achieve the following results are encouraged:

- Strengthening the organizational capability of our area’s arts, cultural & heritage organizations in order to increase effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and successful contributions to the economic vitality of the communities they serve
- Thoughtful efforts which increase meaningful and lasting participation by emerging ethnic groups and historically underserved populations in our area’s arts, culture and heritage.

Community and Economic Development: We believe that supporting community and economic development efforts will add to the strength and stability of neighborhoods and the citizens that live within them. Proposals designed to achieve the following results are encouraged:

- Increasing community leadership and civic participation
- Helping citizens access and maintain safe and affordable housing
- Preventing or ending homelessness by helping those at risk to become employed or secure housing
- Developing employment skills and job training needed to attain and maintain employment that results in long-term economic independence
- Improving land use planning and preserving natural resources that contribute to community livability

Education: We believe in the saying that “knowledge is power.” When the Foundation invests in education, it is helping to provide citizens with a key that can help open many doors. In addition to our focus on early childhood education, proposals designed to achieve the following results are encouraged:

- School-community partnerships that demonstrate measurable improvement on the academic achievement of participants in order to reduce the achievement gap and academic disparities among students
- Increasing the high school graduation rate
- Improving literacy skills among adults so they can become active and contributing members of their community

Health and Human Services: We believe that having access to services that help to maintain or improve health or which help citizens to access basic human services are fundamental to the quality of life. Proposals designed to achieve the following results are encouraged:

- Increase use and availability of resources for all ages that address health and human needs fundamental to the quality of life
- Improve food security, defined as ensuring access by all people at all times to enough food for an active and healthy life
- Helping senior citizens to maintain their independence

Eligibility

We make grants to non-profit organizations that have tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code or that are a qualified entity eligible to receive grants from community foundations under the IRS Code. We will consider funding a grassroots group, if it consists of at least five people, has a governing body and a fiscal agent with the appropriate tax status.

Grant Size

Typically, grants range between \$5,000 and \$25,000 per year. However, grant awards vary widely depending on the scope and type of project. The Foundation will rarely be the sole supporter of a project; therefore, assembling a project plan that includes other funders is strongly encouraged.

Duration of Grants

In general, Foundation grants are one year in duration. Multi-year grants may be considered under certain, very select circumstances. (See section below titled, “Limitations and Restrictions.”)

What We Do Not Fund

The Foundation does not make grants for:

- Sectarian or religious activities
- Previously incurred expenses
- Annual or endowment campaigns
- Sponsorships or fundraisers
- Political or lobbying activities
- Direct support of individuals
- Camperships or scholarships for academic and/or enrichment programs

In addition, the Foundation generally does not make grants for performances or one-time events, conferences or advertising.

Application Process

The process for all requests to the Foundation should begin with a Letter of Intent, available on the Foundation’s website. If you wish to discuss your proposal before submitting your Letter of Intent, please feel free to call to Joeline Wruck, Director of Program, at 860-229-6018 x307 or email her: jwruck@cfgnb.org. Once your Letter of Intent is received, it will be reviewed by staff. You will then be contacted by staff regarding the next steps you should take regarding submission of a full application.

Grant Deadlines

The Community Foundation awards grants three times per year, in spring, fall and winter. Grant deadlines for these cycles are February 15 (spring), June 15 (fall) and October 15 (winter).

How Grant Decisions Are Made

Each final proposal we receive is evaluated with respect to available dollars and alignment with our three investor questions outlined on page 1 of this document. When your proposal is received, it will be reviewed and you will be contacted if additional information is necessary. After staff has had the opportunity to study your complete proposal, we may contact you to arrange a conference or site visit. Final grant decisions are made by our Board of Directors. Applicants will be notified by mail of grant decisions.

Limitations and Restrictions

- **Geographic area:** Community Foundation grants are available to nonprofit organizations that provide services in Berlin, New Britain, Plainville and Southington. Organizations that seek funding to provide services in our communities but are headquartered elsewhere must *both a)* collaborate with local agencies in program delivery *and b)* have a local partner in submitting the application.
- **IRS charitable status:** A nonprofit organization should have tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code or be a qualified entity eligible to receive grants from community foundations under the IRS Code. We will consider funding a grassroots group, if it consists of at least five people, has a governing body and a fiscal agent with the appropriate tax status.
- **Operating Grants:** On rare occasions, the Foundation may invest in an organization with an operating grant. Such requests would be by invitation only. Organizations selected for this type of grant would have a strong track record and meet needs that affect the quality of life in Berlin, New Britain, Plainville and Southington. Operating grants would be made to strengthen an organization and/or make possible an expansion of the critical services it provides.
- **Capital Grants:** As an investor, we view every capital grant application in terms of the ways in which the improvement you seek can enhance your ability to achieve stronger results for those you serve. We are, therefore, less focused on the new or revamped space you want to create or the new computers or van you want to buy. They are the means, not the end. We want to know how they will be used to increase efficiency or effectiveness in your organization.
- **Grants for programs in the schools:** Requests from organizations seeking to provide services in a public school setting will be considered only if the proposed program enhances or directly benefits a specific aspect of the curriculum or if it is directly related to the school improvement plan. If it does provide this benefit, a letter confirming that public funds will continue the program once the Foundation grant is complete must be submitted and signed by the school principal and/or Superintendent.
- **School system requests:** Requests that come directly from schools must come from the system's Grants Office and be approved and signed by the Superintendent. Any program that serves an individual school must be a pilot project that, if successful, would be duplicated in other schools in the system.
- **Multi-department/branch grantees:** Large organizations with many branches or departments (e.g. universities, hospitals, libraries) must submit requests from the office of the President or Executive Director.
- **New submissions by previous grantees:** Generally, any organization that has previously been awarded a grant is NOT eligible to submit another proposal as long as funds remain unspent from that previous grant or if required reports have not been submitted.

- **Multiple or repeat submissions:** Each organization is limited to one grant proposal for consideration during a single grant cycle. If a proposal does not receive funding, it cannot be resubmitted for future consideration, except by invitation.
- **Multi-year grants:** When appropriate, the Foundation will consider multi-year investments based on the achievement of very specific, year-to-year results.

Funding Considerations

- **Leveraging Foundation support** to bring grants and support from other funders is encouraged.
- **Diversification:** Grant proposals that exhibit diversification of funding sources are more likely to receive funding.
- **Financial plans** that are detailed and comprehensive are vital to any program planning and should underlie any request.
- **Sustainability:** Projects with a realistic sustainability plan for continuation beyond the grant period are more likely to receive funding.