



December 2021

## **Grant Funding Guidelines & Frequently Asked Questions**

### **About First Federal Community Foundation:**

First Federal Community Foundation is a private 501(c)(3) charitable corporation launched in 2015 with a generous gift of stock and cash valued at nearly \$12 million from the parent company of First Fed, when the bank was converted to a publicly traded company. With this gift, First Fed made clear its commitment to continue its tradition of supporting the communities it serves.

In that same spirit, First Federal Community Foundation's mission is to improve the quality of life in the communities in which First Fed maintains full-service branches.

Committed to creating broad impact, the Foundation has contributed more than \$5 million since 2015 to qualified nonprofit, tribal and government organizations that provide community support, address homelessness and the availability of affordable housing, and deliver economic and community development projects in Clallam, Jefferson, Kitsap and Whatcom Counties.

### **Who is eligible for funding from First Federal Community Foundation?**

Tax-exempt organizations under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3), including public charities as described in IRC 509(a)(1)-(4) and 170(b)-(c). Government units, school districts and tribes are also eligible to receive grants from the Foundation.

### **Will the Foundation award grants to fiscal sponsors on behalf of applicants who are not eligible as 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations?**

Yes, provided the fiscal sponsor meets our eligibility criteria. The grant application must be completed by the fiscal sponsor, and the financial information required will pertain to the fiscal sponsor. Additionally, supplemental information on the sponsored applicant and their proposed project or program is required.

### **What is ineligible for funding?**

- Completed projects.
- Budget deficits.
- Debt reduction.
- General operating expenses. *Note: We understand that projects or programs being proposed in a grant may impact operating costs. As such, those operating costs may not be considered 'general' in nature, may be eligible for funding, and should be identified in the budget submitted with the grant application so that they may be considered as part of the overall project or program costs.*
- Event sponsorships.
- Contributions to individuals.
- Contributions to political or labor organizations, candidates, or causes.
- Contributions that facilitate religious mission, doctrine, or organization.
- Proposals that would cause the Foundation to be in violation of its Conflict of Interest Policy.

## **What are the Foundation's four funding priorities?**

### ***Community Support:***

We contribute to eligible community and human service organizations that improve the quality of life within the communities we serve. We give priority to programs and projects that build capacity to better serve the broader community, and that benefit low- to moderate-income, disadvantaged and/or marginalized persons or families.

### ***Affordable Housing:***

We support programs and projects that address homelessness, and expand the availability of affordable workforce housing, and access to decent, safe, and affordable housing for low- and moderate-income, disadvantaged and/or marginalized persons and/or families in the communities we serve.

### ***Economic Development:***

We fund initiatives that encourage and expand economic development and living-wage job opportunities in the communities we serve, with emphasis on collaborative and public/private initiatives sponsored by local organizations dedicated to economic development.

### ***Community Development:***

We support capital projects that offer valuable benefits to broad segments of the communities we serve, with emphasis on collaborative and public/private initiatives featuring multiple funding sources.

The Foundation appreciates naming rights on the projects we support. You will be asked to describe any naming opportunities on your grant application.

To see the organizations and projects the Foundation funded since its inception in 2015, [click here](#). And, given the extraordinary needs caused and exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which may continue to inform the Foundation's grantmaking, [click here](#) to learn about our giving in 2020.

## **In what regions does the Foundation focus its giving?**

Our mission is to improve the quality of life in the communities in which First Fed – the Foundation's sole donor – maintains full-service branches. As such, the proposals we fund must benefit communities in Clallam, Jefferson, Kitsap and/or Whatcom Counties in Washington state.

## **How much funding is available?**

While the Board may amend the amount of funding annually or by grant cycle, our current giving is as follows: we make grants in two annual grant cycles, one in Spring and one in Fall, contributing \$400,000 in each cycle. Of that amount, \$50,000 is allocated to Community Support grants and the balance allocated to Affordable Housing, Economic Development and Community Development grants.

## **What are the Foundation's parameters for making grants?**

***Community Support grants*** range from \$5,000 minimum to a maximum of \$25,000 for the purposes described above.

***Affordable Housing, Economic Development and Community Development grants*** range from \$25,000 minimum to \$100,000 maximum for the purposes described above.

### **How often does the Foundation review grant applications?**

Currently, we review grant applications semi-annually per the schedule below.

### **What are grant proposal deadlines?**

Applications are accepted only during prescribed periods, as follows:

- **Applications for our Spring grant cycle are accepted between January 1 and March 1.** We typically act on those grant applications in April-May, and we apprise applicants of the status of their applications soon thereafter.
- **Applications for our Fall grant cycle are accepted between July 1 and September 1.** We typically act on those grant applications in October-November, and we apprise applicants of the status of their applications soon thereafter.

### **When are grants funded?**

Grants are typically funded in cash and in full within sixty days of notification of the award, provided all conditions have been met.

### **Do grant awards expire?**

Yes. Grants are funded subject to acceptance within 180 days from the award date, after which the award will expire.

### **Are there restrictions on the length of time needed to complete projects or programs funded by grants?**

- Projects funded by Community Support grants must be completed within twelve months of the grant award date.
- Affordable Housing, Economic Development and Community Development grants are expected to be completed within the time frame outlined in the grant application and referenced in the Grantee's signed Grant Agreement.

### **What criteria does the Foundation use for awarding grants?**

We prioritize our giving based on criteria that includes but may not be limited to: alignment with our giving priorities and regions as described above; perceived potential for the proposal's success; breadth of impact on the community; strength and stability of the applicant organization; availability of funding from other sources to fulfill the goals of the grant; balancing our giving by priority and region; the impact on low- to moderate-income, disadvantaged and/or marginalized persons or families; and the extent to which the proposal advances the Foundation's mission of improving the quality of life in its communities, particularly with regards to hardships caused and exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **Is there a limit to the number of grant proposals an organization can submit? Or the number of times an organization may receive funding?**

Although we do not have a policy limiting the number of grant proposals an organization can submit, or the number of times an organization may receive funding, we typically receive many more proposals than we can fund, and we may prioritize accordingly. Each proposal will be considered on its own merits.

### **Does the Foundation consider multi-year grant proposals?**

Preference will be given to annual grant proposals, but multi-year proposals may be considered on a case-by-case basis.

**Who makes grant award decisions?**

Grant proposals are reviewed by the Foundation's Grant Advisory Committee, which makes recommendations to the Foundation's Board for consideration and determination.

**The grant application asks for "specific and measurable outcomes." What's meant by that?**

We want to know the extent to which the funding we provide will make a measurable impact, and the specific goals and objectives of the grant project or program. To that end, you are asked to state on your application the target population and number of people to be served, the breadth of impact of the project for which you're seeking funding and the specific and measurable outcomes you intend to accomplish. If you're awarded a grant, you'll be required to report on the specific intended outcomes of the grant and the progress made in delivering on them.

For example, if a reduction in homelessness is the purpose of the grant, you'll state on your application the specific amount of that reduction, and how you will measure and report on it. Opinion surveys and group meetings, while valid management tools, are not measurable outcomes. Instead, you're asked to state in your grant application the specific outcomes you're intending to achieve, and how you and the Foundation will know the extent to which you achieved them.

**Can I contact the Foundation if I have additional questions?**

Yes! Please feel free to email our executive director, Jan Simon, at [Jan.Simon@FirstFedCF.org](mailto:Jan.Simon@FirstFedCF.org). Be sure to include a phone number where you can be reached. Or call 360.417.3112.

**How and when can I apply?**

[Click here for application details.](#)