

Frequently Asked Questions about Discretionary, Competitive Grant Opportunities

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Eligibility

If our organization received a discretionary grant in the fall 2022, does it matter if we apply in the spring 2023 cycle, or should we apply again for the fall 2023 cycle?

Organizations must complete the initial discretionary grant before reapplying for a new discretionary grant so you should reapply during the cycle in which you were funded (i.e. Funded in Fall 2022, apply again in Fall 2023).

What if our organization is very large but our specific division would like to apply for a grant, and another division separate from our division is an early childhood care program, does that disqualify us?

No. You are not disqualified because your organization offers childcare.

If we received the DA grant before, can we apply again?

Yes, as long as you apply in a cycle for which funding would begin after your original award is ending.

Are programs and/or organizations that previously received a discretionary grant eligible to apply again?

Yes, at the conclusion of your grant period. For example, if you received a grant last fall, then you would need to wait until fall 2023. If a previous grant application was denied, you are eligible at the start of the next calendar year.

Please note you can only apply once per year for a discretionary grant.

My nonprofit is new, and we are just starting to apply for grants. We currently do not have any paid staff members. Does this disqualify us?

To apply for a discretionary grant and some of the special initiatives grants, you are required to have W2 staff. However, a few of our special initiatives do not have that requirement. Please review the guidelines for each grant to determine if W2 staff is a requirement.

Also, if your program serves youth or seniors, The Henrietta Tower Wurts Memorial grants is a good place to start.

Are 501c3 non-profits that directly support schools eligible?

Yes. Program costs should support activities outside of teacher salaries, instructional supplies and equipment, or school operating costs for the school day.

Are faith-based 501c3 non-profits eligible if program/project is inclusive regardless of religious affiliation/participation?

Yes, as long as both your mission and your statement of nondiscrimination demonstrate that inclusiveness. Also, programs supported by our grants cannot include religious activities or requirements of any kind.

Our organization is located in Camden, New Jersey. Do we need a PA bureau of charitable organizations certificate?

Yes. Please visit the following website for more information.

<http://www.dos.pa.gov/charities>

I have a 501c(3) in memory of my mother that profit distributes annual scholarships to high school seniors and college student students majoring in music performance or music education. We don't qualify for any of these grants. Are there any other grants for which we might qualify?

Philadelphia Foundation does not offer grants to scholarship organizations. We encourage you to visit the Philanthropy Network website for information about other possible funders. www.philanthropynetwork.org

Are new 501c3 organizations disqualified from applying?

No, as long as all the 501(c)3 designation has been received from the IRS, however, budget minimums and having at least one Fulltime Equivalent staff member are required.

The Youth grants said childcare organizations are ineligible. However, are early childhood education organizations excluded from all discretionary grants?

There are instances of funding a few programs which are like Out of School time enrichment, but these are rare. If you still have questions, please contact [Angelines Pabon](#)

Is a Community Umbrella Agency (CUA) considered a government organization?

No

What if you have no 'paid' staff. Consultants are utilized to coordinate various programs and initiatives and they complete W9s?

To apply for a discretionary grant and some of the special initiatives grants, you are required to have W2 staff. However, a few of our special initiatives do not have that requirement. Please review the guidelines for each grant to determine if W2 staff is a requirement.

One of our programs primarily serves Philadelphia Youth, but we are expanding to PA areas outside of the Greater Philadelphia Area. Would this disqualify the program from receiving a Fund For Children grant?

No, but 100% of the children and youth served by the proposed grant should reside in Philadelphia for Fund for Children grants.

Grant Category Questions

Can you apply to two or more different discretionary grantmaking categories at the same time?

No, organizations can only apply to one of the following discretionary, competitive grant opportunities: Advocacy, Direct Service, Fund for Children, Impact or Leadership.

Can you apply for a discretionary grant and a special initiative grant to support two different projects in the same fiscal year?

Yes. Organizations can apply for one of the discretionary, competitive grants and one or more of the following grants in the same fiscal year.

- [Art Works](#)
- [Black Community Leaders Grants](#)
- [Brook J. Lenfest Foundation Grants](#)
- [Edna W. Andrade Grants](#)
- [Forman Family Fund Grants](#)
- [GSK IMPACT Awards](#)
- [Henrietta Tower Wurts](#)
- [Philadelphia District Attorney's Office Grants](#)
- [Transition Network Grants](#)

Must the discretionary grantmaking funds be for a program already running? Or can a grant application propose a new program?

Impact Program grants can support new programs, but will need a documented logic model/theory of change + related past experience with that population.

For Impact Grants, if the program (an aspect of an ongoing program) is in the middle of its first year, would it still be considered a Pilot Program?

Yes, it's likely to be considered a pilot; however any related past work + a documented Theory of Change/logic model will make for a more competitive application. Please contact the [grant making services team](#) to discuss.

Will you be providing ask amount ranges for each funding opportunity?

All grants range between \$15,000-30,000 (with a rare \$10K for more start up efforts)

We are a large organization that treats adults 18+ however we have STEM education programs for high school students who reside in underserved communities. Would this program qualify for the Fund for Children?

Yes, the youth-serving program would be eligible, but please note that priority is given to organizations with budgets under \$5 Million.

Are the GSK Impact Awards different than the Impact Grants that are part of the discretionary, competitive grants?

Yes. Philadelphia Foundation's Impact grants are for *proposed* projects and programs in support of an organization's mission, whereas the GSK IMPACT Awards are *retrospective* and recognize organizations past activities, specifically organizations that have demonstrated they are: **I**nnovative, **M**easured, **P**artnered, **A**ccountable, **C**ommunity-centered and **T**ransformative.

Data Questions

Is the term "good data" inclusive of both qualitative data as equal to quantitative data?

Qualitative data is welcome, however, qualitative data in the absence of quantitative data is not sufficient.

Funding Amounts/Use of Funds

What are the funding award amounts?

Most grants range between \$15-30K. Fund for Children, Brook J. Lenfest Foundation, Black Community Leaders Fund and some other special initiatives may be as high as \$100K.

Do any of the funds support capital projects, specifically to acquire a building?

We do not currently support capital projects with our grants, however you can fill out the [form](#) to share with donor services in the event a donor is interested in your capital project.

Can advocacy grants be for advocacy at any level of government - federal, state, local?

Yes, however the proposed advocacy should be realistic given the constraints of the award amount. Remember it needs to address changing a specific policy, regulation or legislation.

Is the District Attorney's grant for Philadelphia only?

Yes.

Alignment with Philadelphia Foundation's Focus

The word "community" is used repeatedly, I'm wondering how Philadelphia Foundation defines community (e.g. is it geographic, racial, artistic, social residential etc.)?

Yes, it is/can be all the above. In your application, we need to see how you define the community you serve, and how you engage folks from that community in structuring, implementing and evaluating your organization.

We applied for the Black led organization funding opportunity and were not funded. I'm genuinely curious about how we can/would fit in with the Foundation's priorities.

We would have to learn more about your organization to best answer this question. It's best to contact the [grant making services team](#) to understand which grant best aligns with your organization prior to applying.

Do you have a list of zip codes of those low(est) income communities? Where do you base that designation?

No, we do not have set zip codes. Each organization can provide their justification for how they based their estimate of low low-income individuals served.

Schools/Scholarships

Are scholarships available for K-8 students?

Not currently.

Do you have scholarships for Private high school?

No, not for private schools. We do have some for specific catholic high schools which are managed by those schools, but we mainly work with post-secondary school scholarships.

Do you fund schools?

We do not fund K-12 instruction, but we have funded school related programs, such as afterschool programs. Such awards are rare. Please contact the [grant making services team](#) to discuss.

Can a 501c3 non-profit of a school apply for a scholarship or are scholarships individually awarded by The Philadelphia Foundation?

Organizations cannot apply for a scholarship. If you need information on how to assist your students to apply for a scholarship you may email schoarships@philafound.org.

Fiscal & Budget Questions

For a local chapter of a national organization is the 75% budget threshold requirement intended for the agency or regional budget?

The Regional budget – expenditures across the regional service area (five Southeastern PA counties and/or two Southern New Jersey counties).

Regarding the 75% budget raising requirement, do direct service fees count as well as grants, sponsorships, individual donations, etc.?

Yes, they all count toward the budget. Note: we usually do not fund programs that are fee based.

Please explain further the “No deficit of more than 10%” requirement?

You'll be requested to explain the deficit- if there is one, but if you aren't sure about the percentage, please contact the [grant making services team](#) to discuss.

Are organizations that serve primarily as intermediaries but also do limited direct services eligible for Impact/program grants?

Direct service programs are going to be more competitive in the Impact grant category, but an intermediary with a strong argument about how their services will lead to direct positive change to a significant number of direct service participants will be considered.

For organizations that span beyond Philadelphia, when you say funds raised locally, do you mean funding raised by staff local to Philadelphia, or funding must be provided by local and regional funders?

This means that the funding must be provided by local fundraising events as well as local and regional funders in the Greater Philadelphia Region

Board Governance/Policies

Is your nepotism policy still in place? If so, can you explain it?

Yes. There should be no reporting relationships between family members or spouses - e.g. Board - ED or within the organization. We also cannot make grants to organizations in which Board members are related.

We are national but not a chapter-based organization so only have a national board. Our CEO is based in Philadelphia, would this satisfy the board’s local requirement?

No. Local organizations affiliated with a statewide/national entity or applying under the statewide/national 501(c)3 are required to have a local advisory board.

How important is it that we have a local board?

Very important. We will only fund national organizations if they have a strong Philadelphia (or local) board.

Other

Will Philadelphia Foundation be administering the GSK Impact Awards again this year?

Yes. The registration process opens a little later this year (March/April).

How do we sign up for the Key Skills Hub? Is emailing keyskillshub@philafound.org the best method?

Yes. The contact is keyskillshub@philafound.org

How often do you recommend sending the one-pager for DAFs? Once a year; every other year or less frequently?

Once-a-year updates are helpful.

Are programs located in Southern Chester County less likely to be considered due to their distance from Philadelphia?

Not at all.

Is it required to speak with someone on the grantmaking services team prior to applying?

Unless the grant specifically says to do so, it is not required. Conversations with the grantmaking services team are helpful for organizations trying to determine which category of grants to pursue.

Will we receive communication if our application is declined?

Yes. All organizations will be notified of their application status (approvals or denials).

Do you share a list of some of the organizations that have received a grant in these areas that we can use as a guide for who might qualify?

Recipients of grants from Philadelphia Foundation can be found on our most recent Form 990. Please note this this list includes discretionary, special initiative as well as donor-advised grants.

Key Contacts

ANGELINES PABON (ANGIE)

Program Officer

215-863-8123

Contact for Fund For Children, YOUTHadelphia

KADRISSE McINTOSH

Grants Associate

Contact for Donor Advised Funds, Grants Operations Support

KASEY THOMPSON

Program Officer

Contact for Direct Service, DAs Office Funds, Special Initiatives

KIM GILMORE

Program Officer

215-863-8117

Contact for Scholarships

LEANN AYERS

Exec. Dir. of Grantmaking (Acting); Sr. Program Officer 215-863-8124

Contact for Special Initiatives, Leadership and Advocacy, Brook J. Lenfest Foundation

MAGGI KIRK

Development and Donor Services Officer

215-863-8105

Contact for Donor Advised Funds

SHERESSA GORDON

Program Officer, Grantmaking Operations

215-863-8122

Contact for Donor Advised Funds, Special Initiatives, Henrietta Tower Wurts, GSK Impact

TED QUALLI

Marketing & Communications Director

215-863-8126

Contact for publicity questions.

Descriptions and Links to Applications

Advocacy Unrestricted Grants

Unrestricted grants available to organizations addressing policy changes in relation to racial and social justice. Emphasis on utilizing advocacy and community organizing best practices towards policy change on behalf of marginalized and low-income communities in Greater Philadelphia. [2023 Advocacy Unrestricted Application](#)

Direct Service/General Operating Grants

Unrestricted grants available on a competitive basis for well-run nonprofits serving communities with high poverty rates while operationalizing equity at all levels of their work. [2023 Direct Service Application](#)

Fund for Children Strategic Investment in Youth Grants

Unrestricted grants for Philadelphia-based youth organizations whose missions prioritize youth leadership, civic engagement and youth organizing activities and outcomes. [2023 Fund For Children Strategic Investment in Youth Application](#)

Impact Program Grants

Program grants available to nonprofits demonstrating programmatic impact. [2023 Impact Grant Application](#)

Leadership Grants

Project grants available on a competitive basis to increase measurable skills and racial diversity of pipelines for senior staff and board of nonprofits; and to strengthen organizational capacity and nonprofit leaders in the areas of governance, planning, civic engagement, board and staff development and diversity, equity and inclusion. [2023 Leadership Grants Application](#)

YOUTHadelphia Grants

Program or Project grants to youth organizations that include social and political themes and content, and help young people develop skills and capacity to be decision makers and action-oriented problem solvers. Emphasis on youth-led work.