



**COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION**  
OF GREATER FORT WAYNE

# AGILE GRANT PROGRAM

Guidelines and Instructions

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### Agile Grants

Agile Grants provide up to \$20,000 in funding to support innovative programs. These grants are specifically for program-related funding and cannot be used for operational expenses. If your organization has received a Rising Together grant this year and you apply for an Agile Grant, your application will only be considered if it is for a new program or a significant enhancement to an existing program. Organizations not receiving a Rising Together grant this year may apply for funding to support either a new or existing program. Applications are accepted from March through October. Agile Grants are made possible by donors who have established funds to support specific interest areas within our community. For more details, including application questions and the evaluation rubric, please review the Grant Guidelines.

#### 1. The Community Foundation believes that its grantmaking will demonstrate and live out the values of the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne:

- **Connectedness:** We're driven to foster strong, meaningful relationships with each person we work alongside.
- **Equity:** We strive to honor the unique needs of each individual and organization, providing equitable access to resources and opportunities.
- **Impact:** Each decision should move us toward positive and lasting change, encouraging growth and propelling our community forward.
- **Integrity:** Our stakeholders trust us with their resources in perpetuity. We honor donor intent and act with our community's needs in mind.
- **Passion:** We pursue our work with enthusiasm and dedication because we love our community.

#### 2. The Community Foundation seeks to eliminate barriers for its grantees and to create stronger relationships.

The Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne looks forward to working alongside Allen County's nonprofit organizations and community leaders to overcome systemic challenges and uplift our entire community.

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## Agile Grant Funding and Areas of Support

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**The following Field of Interest and Unrestricted Funds have been established to promote a legacy of support for our community:**

- 431 Foundation Fund
- Business Education Fund
- Children's Learning and Development Fund
- Christine Meek Memorial Fund
- Fort Wayne Woman's Club Fund
- Four D Endowment Fund
- Hildegard Brandenburg Fund
- Isaac Campbell Kidd Fund
- James & Sandra Ladd Fund
- James Davis Fund
- Joyce Schlatter Fund
- Lakeside Elder Project Endowment Fund
- Loren J. Drummond Fund
- Opportunities Fund
- Rev. Vernon R. Graham Legacy Fund
- Richard D. Waterfield Charitable Fund
- Robert & Nancy Brooks Charitable Fund
- Rothberg, Logan, & Warsco Unrestricted Fund
- Schenkel Family Foundation Fund
- Steel Dynamics Fund
- Stephan Family Community Needs Fund

**Agile Grants provide support for the following issue areas:**

- Adults & Children with Disabilities
- Animal Welfare
- Arts
- At-Risk Youth
- Basic Needs
- Business Education & Training
- Camperships
- Civics Education
- Education
- Elderly
- Environment and Sustainability
- Historic Preservation Projects (Small-Scale)
- Homeless Youth
- Immigrant or Refugee Support
- Infant Mortality
- Outdoor Activities
- Parental Support
- Prevention of Child Abuse & Neglect
- Skilled Trades
- Sports
- Substance Use Services for Women & Families
- Support for Foster Families or Social Workers
- Support for Teachers
- Veterans
- Vulnerable Children
- Other

**Please note that applications are accepted on a rolling basis, and requests are funded on a first-come, first-served basis.** These categories may not all be available throughout the year as funds are granted. Please check the online grants portal for the most up-to-date list of issue areas accepting applications.

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## Agile Grant Application and Evaluation Process

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The Agile Grant program is open March through October. Please be thorough in your answers and include the necessary information for all questions. These requests are reviewed monthly.

**Eligibility Quiz**

The Community Foundation requires an Eligibility Quiz to ensure that applicants to the Agile Grant program meet the basic criteria for the application process before proceeding. The Eligibility Quiz for the Agile Grant program requires an organization to check each item before proceeding:

- You are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization
- You have not received an Agile Grant in the last calendar year
- At least 50% of people served are in Allen County and/or you provide a unique service to the county
- Your request is for program-related funding, not general operating support
- You are not requesting funds for an event sponsorship
- You do not require participation in religious programming for people to receive services
- You do not require a statement of faith from your employees

## Agile Grant Questions

### General Information

1. Program/Project Name
2. Website/Main Online Presence
3. Program/Project Focus Area (drop down)
4. Amount Requested

### Project/Program

1. Project/Program Description – Please describe the project/program for which you are seeking funding and how the requested funds will be used.
2. Qualifications – What makes your organization unique and effective, as compared to other organizations, in offering this project/program?
3. Impact – What does success look like due to this project/program?

### Budget and Timeline

1. Program/Project Budget – Please provide your program/project-specific budget, including all income and expenses, as an Excel document.
2. Timeline – Outline the anticipated timeline for this project/program.
3. Sustainability – What is the long-term strategy for funding this project/program beyond the grant period?
4. Feasibility – If the Community Foundation can only partially support this program/project or cannot support it at all, will the program/project still be able to happen? Please elaborate.

## Agile Grant Evaluation Rubric

A grant evaluation rubric is a detailed outline that helps evaluators consistently score proposals. The rubric helps minimize personal bias.

### Project/Program Description – 20 points

*Evaluator Review Criteria: How clearly does the organization describe the project/program and how the funds will be used?*

#### **1-5 Response does *not* meet criteria**

The description of the project/program is unclear *and* there is no real explanation for how the funds will be used.

#### **6-10 Response *somewhat* meets criteria**

The description of the project/program is unclear *or* there is no real explanation for how the funds will be used.

**11-15 Response *strongly* meets criteria**

The project/program's description is clear, the use of the funds is clear, and it seems aligned with the organization's mission.

**16-20 Response meets criteria in an *exemplary* way**

The description of the project/program is exceptionally defined (clear *and* compelling), with clear mission alignment and impact.

**Qualifications – 20 points**

*Evaluator Review Criteria: How well does the organization describe its uniqueness in offering this project/program?*

**1-5 Response does *not* meet criteria**

The project/program is not unique; various groups or organizations offer identical programs throughout the community.

**6-10 Response *somewhat* meets criteria**

This project/program is not unique in the type of service offered but may be unique to the individuals it is serving (e.g., homeless shelter that serves a population not currently being served).

**11-15 Response *strongly* meets criteria**

This project/program is unique in the community but may be overlapping with similar projects/programs and may not be addressing a clear community need.

**16-20 Response meets criteria in an *exemplary* way**

This project/program is unique to our community. No one else is doing this work, and it is filling a very clear gap/need within the community.

**Impact – 20 points**

*Evaluator Review Criteria: How well does the organization define and describe success due to this project/program?*

**1-5 Response does *not* meet criteria**

There is no clear description or definition of success due to this project/program.

**6-10 Response *somewhat* meets criteria**

The organization describes success, but it is vague and may be unrelated to the actions of this project/program.

**11-15 Response *strongly* meets criteria**

The description and definition of success are clear, and the project/program's impact is clearly described.

**16-20 Response meets criteria in an *exemplary* way**

The description and definition of success are exceptionally defined (clear *and* compelling), with a clearly defined impact.

**Program/Project Budget – 10 points**

*Evaluator Review Criteria: Is there a clear budget that includes all income and expenses with a clear explanation for how these funds will be used?*

**1-5 Response does *not* meet criteria**

The budget includes income *or* expenses; the complete funding picture is unclear.

**6-10 Response *somewhat* meets criteria**

The budget includes income *and* expenses, but these are incomplete, and the total funding picture is unclear.

**11-15 Response *strongly* meets criteria**

The budget includes income and expenses, and a clear explanation of how funds will be used, but the Community Foundation may be the only contributor, and/or expenses may be somewhat unreasonable for the project.

**16-20 Response meets criteria in an *exemplary* way**

The budget includes income and expenses, clearly explaining how funds will be used, including other contributors to the project/program, and demonstrating reasonable expenses.

**Timeline – 10 points**

*Evaluator Review Criteria: Is the timeline reasonable?*

**1-5 Response does *not* meet criteria**

There is no timeline included.

**6-10 Response *somewhat* meets criteria**

The timeline is included but is not reasonable for the project/program.

**11-15 Response *strongly* meets criteria**

The timeline for the project/program is reasonable.

**16-20 Response meets criteria in an *exemplary* way**

The timeline is clear and concise, and demonstrates this project/program will have a clear start and end.

**Sustainability – 20 points**

*Evaluator Review Criteria: How well does the organization outline the long-term strategy for funding this project/program beyond the granting period? Is it clear the Community Foundation will not be continually asked to fund this program in perpetuity? Is there a path to sustainability?*

**1-5 Response does *not* meet criteria**

There is no long-term strategy for this project/program or mention of sustainability.

**6-10 Response *somewhat* meets criteria**

The organization describes a vague long-term strategy, but it is clear this has not been thought through, and the Community Foundation will likely be asked to continue to fund this project/program in subsequent years.

**11-15 Response *strongly* meets criteria**

There is a clear description of a long-term strategy for funding and sustainability.

**16-20 Response meets criteria in an *exemplary* way**

The long-term strategy for funding is exceptionally defined (clear and compelling), with a very clear path for sustainability. It is clear Community Foundation funding will be phased out over time.

After each section, the evaluators must describe how they arrived at their scores in written detail.

For scores **1-13** – Are there actions the applicant can take to improve in this area? Were any portions of this response unclear?

For scores **14-20** – What made this a strong or exemplary response? Can you offer any constructive feedback to help further enhance this area?

### Important things to note:

- Applications are accepted and evaluated on a first-come, first-served basis until funds available for the calendar year are gone.
- The requested amount may be adjusted at any time during the review process.
- Requests above \$20,000 will not be considered. The average grant size of Agile Grant funding is \$6,000.

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## Funding Eligibility, Guidelines, and Reporting

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- **501(c)(3) Status:** You must be classified as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
- **Location:** At least 50% of the people you serve must be in Allen County, and/or you provide a unique service to the county.
- **Multi-Year Funding:** Agile Grants are given in one-time-only funding amounts and will not entertain multi-year requests.
- **No Medical or Academic Research:** The Agile Grant program will not fund medical or academic research due to specific IRB requirements.
- **No Operational Support:** The Agile Grant program is designed to fund specific projects or programs of a nonprofit organization. It will **not** fund operational support. If you seek operational funding, please see our Rising Together Grant Program, which funds nonprofit operations. The Community Foundation will not fund operational deficits.
- **No Sponsorships, Fundraising Events, Annual Funds:** The Agile Grant program is designed to fund specific projects or programs. However, it does not include traditional sponsorships or support for events that raise money for the organization, nor does it support any other fundraising activities such as annual funds or drives.
- **Previous Funding:** Grantees can only receive **one** Agile Grant per calendar year.
- **Religious Requests:** The Community Foundation will not provide funding for organizations requiring religious participation from their constituents/clients or requiring a statement of faith signed by their employees. See FAQs for the types of religious organizations or programs that the Community Foundation will fund.
- **Reporting:** Agile Grants require a final report six months after receiving a grant. The Community Foundation welcomes the opportunity to brag about its grantees and the outstanding work you are doing in the community! We want to know how things are going and would love any photos or videos you're willing to share about your important work. All final reporting will happen through the online grants management system/grants portal.
- **Restrictions:** As required by IRS rules, grant funds may not be used: a) to carry on lobbying activities as defined under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; b) for partisan political activities that are prohibited under Section 501(c)(3); c) to make a grant to any individual for travel, study, or other similar purposes or to make a sub-grant to any other organization unless the grant complies with Section 4945(d)(3) or (4) of the Internal Revenue Code and the grant is part of the approved purpose; or d) to undertake any activity for any purpose other than the charitable and educational purposes specified in Section 170(c)(2)(B) of the Internal Revenue Code.

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## Frequently Asked Questions

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### 1. Does the Community Foundation fund religious organizations?

The Fort Wayne community is home to various faiths. We are fortunate to have many faith-based agencies that serve our community, some located in houses of worship and some at separate locations. As part of the Community Foundation's mission to "serve all the people of Allen County," we fund faith-based groups that meet specific guidelines. The Community Foundation will allow funding to religious organizations for charitable purposes but will not provide funding for religious purposes. If you require religious participation from your clients or those you serve, your organization cannot receive funding.

Characteristics of eligible programs may include, but are not limited to:

- May be located in a house of worship
- Separate nonreligious programs from religious programs
- May use the same room, but not at the same time, for religious and nonreligious programs
- Are open to all, regardless of religious affiliation
- Abstain from religious worship, instruction, or proselytization (recruitment)
- Eliminate required statements of belief from participants

Descriptions of previously funded programs:

- A soup kitchen operated out of a church
- Transitional housing for homeless families run by a faith-based organization
- Case management for families in need at a faith-based social service agency
- Emergency housing located in various churches
- A food bank serving the unemployed out of a faith-based ministry

### 2. Why doesn't the Community Foundation fund organizations that require their employees to sign statements of faith? Is this a new policy?

This is not a new policy. The Community Foundation does not fund organizations that require employees to sign a statement of faith because doing so limits the pool of potential employees. Such a requirement excludes certain individuals, which goes against our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. We believe in creating an inclusive environment that welcomes people from all backgrounds and perspectives. You can read more about this in our DEI Statement and Strategy [here](#)

### 3. What is the review and selection process for Agile Grants?

Proposals are evaluated monthly by the Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne's Supervisor's Leadership Group using the rubric provided in the Agile Grant Application and Evaluation Process section of the Agile Grant Guidelines.

### 4. Is an audit required to receive Agile Grant funding?

No.

### 5. Can we receive more than one Agile Grant per calendar year?

No.

**6. What qualifies as a “new” program for this grant?**

A “new” program is either (1) an upcoming initiative that has not yet started, or (2) a program that began within the last 12 months. Programs older than 12 months would not be considered new for this grant cycle.

**7. If my organization receives an Agile Grant, can we receive other grants from the Community Foundation in the same calendar year?**

Yes! Agile Grants are program/project-specific grants. However, if this is your first time applying for a grant from us, you may consider applying for an Engage Grant. If you are looking for operational funding and have been in existence for more than three years, we encourage you to apply for a Rising Together Grant in the pillar that best aligns with your mission.

**8. Who can I talk to at the Community Foundation about grants?**

As part of its mission, the Community Foundation strives to serve as a community leader and convener to help create a brighter future for Allen County’s residents. We welcome opportunities for our board and staff to learn more about the community’s needs. If you have questions, please contact us.

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**Contact Us**

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We understand that you may occasionally have questions about the application process. Please direct those questions to the contacts below.

The Community Foundation is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., however, most of the grants team is unavailable after noon on Friday and will respond to inquiries the following week.

Contact: Stephanie Carlson Plimpton, Senior Impact Advisor, [scarlson@cfgfw.org](mailto:scarlson@cfgfw.org)  
Angela Stanley, Director of Impact, [astanley@cfgfw.org](mailto:astanley@cfgfw.org)  
Alison Gerardot, Chief Impact Officer, [agerardot@cfgfw.org](mailto:agerardot@cfgfw.org)

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