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## Special Project Challenge Grant Guidelines \*(Revised for 9/2009-3/2011)

To help local charities respond to challenges associated with the current economic environment, the Community Foundation will relax our customary restriction against requests for operating support for existing programs now through March 1, 2011. This change applies to Special Project Challenge Grants only. We trust that over two years, as the economy recovers, the fundraising environment will improve and demand for certain services will moderate.

Charities may request operating support for existing programs based on substantiated claims that recent economic events have had a significant impact on revenue (e.g. fewer major gifts, less corporate underwriting, declining event revenue) and/or demand for services.

The Community Foundation will do its best to discern the most appropriate use of limited dollars and, as always, will focus on the ability of the organization to move forward and sustain the programs as the economy improves. Previous track record will be considered.

Please read the following directions carefully.

Application Deadlines: March 1 & October 1. E-mail submission required to [grants@cfsjc.org](mailto:grants@cfsjc.org).

### What is the Special Project Challenge Grant?

The Community Foundation of St. Joseph County offers the Special Project Challenge Grant to assist public and other 501(c)(3) agencies in their efforts to serve community needs. For every \$1 raised by the chosen agency, the Community Foundation will match \$1.

### Why a Challenge Grant?

Challenge grants work. Donors are more willing to give and often willing to give more if their contributions are matched by other funds. Used wisely, not-for-profit agencies will find challenge grants an excellent tool to raise the funds necessary to complete projects.

The following guidelines apply:

- The project should benefit a significant constituency within the community.
- The agency must exhibit the ability to raise the required matching funds.
- Only cash gifts will be matched.

### Areas of Interest

The Community Foundation encourages projects in the following areas (listed alphabetically):

- Community Development & Urban Affairs
- Health & Human Services
- Parks, Recreation, & Environment
- Youth & Education

\*\*\*An important note regarding Arts & Culture requests:

The majority of arts & culture related proposals should be submitted to the ArtsEverywhere Grants process (Separate guidelines available). Only requests that are primarily health and human service oriented in nature, but that utilize the arts as a tool or method, should be submitted through this Special Project Challenge Grant process.

## How does an organization apply for the Special Project Challenge Grant?

The Special Project Challenge Grant proposal deadlines are **March 1 and October 1**. Application materials must be submitted via e-mail to [grants@cfsjc.org](mailto:grants@cfsjc.org) in word processing format (narrative or budget) or Microsoft Excel (budget). Hard copy applications will no longer be accepted.

Agencies with a special project consistent with the guidelines and priorities described herein must submit the **Special Project Challenge Grant Cover Sheet** and other attachments described below.

The **Special Project Challenge Grant Cover Sheet** briefly addresses the following points:

Brief Program/Project Description

Description of changes in demand for services

Specific goals/objectives of the project

Evaluation of the outcomes of the project

Raising of the required matching funds

Sustainability of project after grant funding is expended

The Cover Sheet is available for download on the Foundation's website at the following URL:

[http://www.cfsjc.org/grants/sproj/special\\_project\\_grants.html](http://www.cfsjc.org/grants/sproj/special_project_grants.html). The document is a Microsoft Word Form in which the fields expand to accommodate multiple lines of text. Please contact Foundation Program Officer if you experience problems with the documents or you need them in another format.

**Required Application Attachments:** The following are required attachments to the cover sheet:

- Agency Budget Performance Report for most recently completed Fiscal Year and Fiscal Year-to-Date (including Budget and Actuals). Include brief narrative about key variances. See the Special Project Challenge Grant page on the Community Foundation website for a sample and template for this information. ([http://www.cfsjc.org/grants/sproj/special\\_project\\_grants.html](http://www.cfsjc.org/grants/sproj/special_project_grants.html))
- Up to 2-page proposal narrative (Word processing format, no PDF documents.)
- Detailed Project Budget (Include revenue & expenses sources for proposed project only.)
- Current Board Roster with officers identified
- IRS Determination Letter (Only required if not yet on file. Hard copy can be mailed to Foundation if scanned document not available for e-mail.)

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NOTE: It is the responsibility of the grant-seeking organization to submit a complete request. Incomplete requests run the risk of being declined without consideration. The letters of request will be reviewed by the Grants Committee and outstanding requests will be identified for further consideration. Site visits will be conducted at the Grants Committee's discretion. Agencies may be asked to submit additional information.

## Notification and Announcement

The Grants Committee's recommendations are submitted to the Community Foundation's board of directors at the April and November meetings. Applicants are informed immediately thereafter regarding the status of their request. Announcement of the special project and grant award will be made by the Community Foundation. The chosen agency will have 12 months to meet pre-negotiated matching requirements.

## Will Grants be Evaluated?

Yes. Grants will be evaluated to verify successful completion of the project as defined in the grant proposal and compliance with any conditions made at the time of the grant. Excellent evaluations will enhance the credibility of the recipient organization and their subsequent grant requests. The reverse is also true. Failure to carry out

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successfully the objectives detailed in your grant proposal may compromise your chances for additional funding.

### **Capital Campaigns**

Capital campaigns are considered eligible projects for the Special Project Challenge Grant process. If you are interested in submitting an application for a capital campaign, please contact Program staff prior to submission to discuss your project.

### **What will the Community Foundation Generally Not Fund?**

While the Community Foundation remains flexible in trying to meet community needs, in general, grants are not made to fund:

- Operating support for established programs (Restriction waived through March 1, 2011)
- Endowment campaigns
- Religious organizations for religious purposes
- Individuals directly
- Development or public relations activities (e.g. literature, videos, etc.)
- Retirement of debts
- Camperships
- Annual appeals or membership contributions
- Travel for bands, sports teams, classes, etc.
- Computers (unless presented as a necessary component of larger program or objective)
- Post-event or after-the-fact situations

### **What are the Priorities of the Community Foundation?**

The Board has defined as the role and priorities of the Community Foundation:

- To promote organizations whose programs benefit the residents of St. Joseph County
- To assist existing agencies to better respond to the needs of the community
- To encourage and reward excellence in the not-for-profit field
- To maintain both a proactive focus for grants dollars and the ability to respond to creative ideas from grant seekers
- To promote innovative, collaborative efforts to improve the health and well being of St. Joseph County residents
- To encourage programs that enhance cooperation and collaboration among institutions within the area

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