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515.883.2626

2023 Strategic Alignment Grants

The Community Foundation Strategic Alignment grant program invests in the exploration of strategic alignment strategies between two or more nonprofit organizations in coming together to enhance systemic support around a community issue/priority, align operations/programming, or deepen partnerships. Strategic alignment could be defined as coordination (formal relationships around specific efforts or programs that leverage efficiency and effectiveness for individual organizations) or collaboration (pooled or jointly secured resources with defined and measured outcomes that have social impact beyond one organization).

Examples of well-aligned projects:

- Exploration of shared staffing between organizations
- Facilitated dialog between multiple boards considering a merger
- Collective planning/assessment among multiple partners seeking to address a community issue

Projects that may be a better fit for the Capacity Building grant program:

- Strategic planning and visioning for the nonprofit
- Succession and talent pipeline planning to ensure organizational leadership
- Financial scenario/business planning for stability
- Fund development/marketing strategy development (excluding feasibility studies)

Projects **not** eligible or competitive for the Strategic Alignment grant program may be a better fit for our [GIVEdsm](#) platform. Examples might include:

- Ongoing annual operating and program expenses
- Capital infrastructure projects (bricks and mortar)
- Sectarian religious programs promoting a particular faith
- Tactical items such as hardware/equipment, collateral materials, donor management software or website development

Grant amounts: Applicants may apply for up to \$25,000.

Interested in applying? We recognize the time to explore alignment potential does not happen on a prescribed timeline. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis; decisions are communicated in approximately 10 business days. Please reach out to Ellie burns, burns@desmoinesfoundation.org, to schedule a meeting with a member of the Community Impact team to explore whether this grant program might be a fit for your needs.

How to apply. Applicants are encouraged to draft responses to the questions below as the Community Impact team is available to provide reflections prior to submission. Final applications are accepted through an online form located in our Manage My Grants portal; contact Sarah Cahill, cahill@desmoinesfoundation.org to obtain login credentials.

Strategic Alignment Grant application questions:

- Project title
- Organization information (EIN, address, website)
- Contact information for Executive Director/CEO and Grant Contact

Budget information:

- Funding request amount
- Total project budget
- Organizations' total annual budget
- If the request is partially funded with a Strategic Alignment grant, will the project continue?

Project information:

- Provide an overview of the organizations exploring collaboration or strategic alignment, including mission statements and future goals.
- State the need for alignment exploration and how it will be addressed with the grant funds.
- Please identify and describe how your project will focus on **coordination** (formal relationships around specific efforts or programs that leverage efficiency and effectiveness for individual organizations) or **collaboration** (pooled or jointly secured resources that have defined and measured outcomes that have social impact beyond one organization).
- Share the anticipated timeline for the project.
- Please share any additional stakeholders you anticipate will engage in the project.
- Do the organizations plan to work with a consultant? If yes, please upload a detailed work plan submitted by the consultant after this application is submitted that includes the hourly rate for the consultant, estimated hours for the project and deliverables.

Required documents:

- Project budget detailing other sources of funding including your organization's and/or board's financial commitment and the amount requested from the Community Foundation.
- List of each organization's Board of Directors.
- Consultant work plan (if applicable).

Grant requirements:

- Grantees must complete an online grant agreement to release funding.
- An evaluation is due within one year of the grant award, including project deliverables and budgetary documentation.

For more information on the Strategic Alignment Grant process, please contact:

- Ellie Burns, Director of Nonprofit Relations | burns@desmoinesfoundation.org or (515) 883-2629