Better Together

2026 Capacity Building Grant Program

The Capacity Building Grant Program invests in initiatives that enable nonprofit organizations to strengthen their boards and governance, enhance internal management, and strategically plan for the future, all while focusing on fulfilling their mission. Our community thrives when our nonprofit sector thrives. Our goal is to support the building of resilient organizations that leverage opportunities to move their missions forward to the betterment of our community. We focus our grantmaking on organizations serving Greater Des Moines.

Examples of well-aligned capacity building projects:

- 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).

Grant Amount:
Organizations may apply for up to $7,500.

Timeline:
Applications are accepted on a rolling basis; decisions are communicated in approximately 10 business days

Steps to Apply

Our goal is to help facilitate strong applications. For this reason, we encourage potential applicants to explore project alignment with a member of the Community Impact Team prior to submitting a grant application.

Step 1: Schedule Contact La-Tica Paige, Executive Assistant, paige@desmoinesfoundation.org, to schedule a Capacity Building Grant conversation with a member of our team.

Step 2: Meet During the meeting, discuss alignment of your project, potential consultants and work plans, and the budget for the work.

Step 3: Share Send a draft of your application to our team prior to submission - we will provide feedback to help you submit the best possible request.

Step 4: Submit Complete the Capacity Building Grant Application form and upload your supporting documents at bit.ly/CapacityBuildingGrant

Capacity Building Grant Application Questions

Organization Information
- Contact information for Executive Director/CEO and Grant Contact
- Project Title
- Employer Identification Number / Tax ID, Address, Website
- Fiscal Sponsor EIN, if applicable

Budget Information
- Funding request amount
- Total project budget
- Organization's total annual budget
- If the request is partially funded with a Capacity Building grant, will the project continue?

Project Information
- Provide an overview of your organization, including mission statement and future goals including those that reflect inclusive strategies.
- State the organizational need and how it will be addressed with a Capacity Building Grant.
- Share the anticipated timeline for this project.
- Please share the stakeholders that you anticipate will be engaged in the project.
- Does your organization plan to work with a consultant?

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 the organization's Board of Directors.
- Consultant Work Plan (if applicable), including the hourly rate for the consultant, estimated number of hours for the project, and deliverables

Keep in Mind:

Projects not eligible or competitive for Capacity Building Grants may be a better fit for GIVEdsm.

Ineligible projects 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

Projects focused on exploring and implementing strategic alignment strategies between two or more organizations in order to address a community issue/opportunity, align operations/programming or deepen partnerships should consider applying for a Strategic Alignment Grant.

For questions about the Capacity Building Grant Program, please contact:
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