



**For all questions about grants, contact:**

Marian Clowes, Program Officer

304.428.4438 or toll free 866.428.4438

E-Mail: [info@pacfwv.com](mailto:info@pacfwv.com).

Web Site: [www.pacfwv.com](http://www.pacfwv.com)

**Application Deadlines: March 1, September 1**

**Mail applications to the Central Office:**

**P.O. Box 1762, Parkersburg, WV 26102.**

## **Our Community's Foundation Community Action Grants Program Guidelines**

Our Community's Foundation is a regional community foundation serving ten West Virginia counties (Calhoun, Doddridge, Gilmer, Jackson, Mason, Pleasants, Ritchie, Roane, Wirt, and Wood) and Washington County, Ohio. The Foundation includes the Parkersburg Area Community Foundation and PACF, Inc. (PACF) and all the following related affiliate organizations:

- Doddridge County Community Foundation (DCCF)
- Jackson County Community Foundation (JCCF)
- Little Kanawha Area Community Foundation (LKACF)
- Mason County Community Foundation (MCCF)
- Ritchie County Community Foundation (RCCF)

### **Eligibility/Funds Available**

To be eligible for a grant from any of the entities that make up the Foundation, an applicant must be a private, non-profit organization tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or a public institution, such as a public school or government agency. Requests from individuals are not accepted. Specific eligibility for each entity that is part of Our Community's Foundation is as follows:

Parkersburg Area Community Foundation/PACF Inc. - The applicant must be located in any of the eleven counties described as the service area for Our Community's Foundation or the program to be funded must serve the residents of one or more of those counties. Grants from PACF/PACF, Inc. typically range from \$1,000 - \$10,000. PACF considers grants of less than \$1,000 through its mini-grant program (see page 5 and 6 of these Guidelines for details).

Doddridge County Community Foundation – The applicant must be located in Doddridge County or the program to be funded must serve Doddridge residents. DCCF grants currently are less than \$1,000.

Jackson County Community Foundation – The applicant must be located in Jackson County or the program to be funded must serve Jackson residents. JCCF grants currently range from \$500 - \$4,000.

Little Kanawha Area Community Foundation – The applicant must be located in Wirt or Calhoun Counties or the program to be funded must serve residents of these two counties. LKACF grants currently range from \$500 - \$1,000.

Mason County Community Foundation – The applicant must be located in Mason County or the program to be funded must serve Mason residents. MCCF grants currently range from \$1,000 - \$3,000.

Ritchie County Community Foundation – The applicant must be located in Ritchie County or the program to be funded must serve Ritchie residents. RCCF grants are currently less than \$1,000.

**Funding Priorities for Community Action Grants:**

Community Action Grants (CAG) are made in the fields of: Arts and Culture, Education, Health and Human Services, Recreation, Youth and Family Services, and Community and Economic Development. All entities that comprise Our Community’s Foundation provide grants in the following focus areas: Capital and Equipment Projects, Program Development, and Technical Assistance, Training, and Capacity Building. PACF also will consider requests for Operating Support. Eligibility and review criteria are very different for the type of support requested, so please review the following descriptions carefully.

**Funding Priorities for Capital and Equipment Projects, Program Development, and Technical Assistance, Training and Capacity Building Grants (Available from PACF and all Regional Affiliates) - Priority is given to projects that:**

- have significant impact on the people and communities served by the applicant organization;
- reach new audiences, expand existing programs or services, or respond to emerging needs;
- strengthen the organization’s capacity to deliver its services and meet community needs;
- are well-planned and can reasonably be achieved;
- have a matching grant opportunity or that seek a matching grant as a means of leveraging more funding for the project;
- have limited access to other sources of support;
- serve communities where PACF and its affiliates are the only community foundation in operation.

Generally, Community Action Grants will not be made for:

- annual campaigns;
- endowments;
- sectarian religious purposes;
- political purposes or lobbying activities;
- retiring existing obligations, debts or liabilities;
- student travel or student participation in meetings, seminars or study exchange programs.

**NEW 2009-2010: Funding Priorities for Operating Support Grants (available from PACF only).**

Priority is given to projects designed to:

Type 1 - Increase financial stability for organizations facing increased demand for services, unexpected reduction in sources of ongoing operating support, or a specific financial challenge for which a remediation plan has been developed.

Type 2 - Help a strong organization increase its capacity, by moving the organization forward in its life cycle (to expand services, offer new programs, reach new audiences, etc.).

Please note that organizations **cannot apply for both** a Community Action Grant and an Operating Support Grant.

For all operating support requests, the applicant must:

- Be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization (operating support is not available to governmental entities, schools, or entities that do not have 501(c)(3) status).
- Provide essential community services or offer programs that meet basic human needs;
- Have been in continuous operation for at least five years
- Have a proven track record;
- Have an overall sound financial history (at least prior to the present need);
- Be able to demonstrate strong management.
- Have previously received support from the Foundation

Applicants seeking Type 1 operating support (to increase financial stability), must:

- Document either increased demand for services; unexpected reduction in sources of ongoing operating support; or a specific current financial challenge for which a plan is in place to mitigate;
- Show evidence that it has gone through an internal process of cost-reduction and/or realistic revenue-enhancement analysis focused on core service preservation prior to the request.
- Demonstrate that it has completed an organizational assessment and developed a realistic plan for financial stabilization.
- Show how the operating support grant will increase its overall financial stability and/or help the organization make significant progress toward addressing a financial challenge by the completion of the grant.

Applicants seeking Type 2 operating support (to increase organizational capacity), must:

- Present a realistic plan for organizational growth, outlining how operating support is critical to the organization's growth plan;
- Include a plan for the organization to have adequate funding sources at the completion of the grant period.

Organizations may request renewal of an operating support grant for up to three years (total) of support. However, grants will be awarded one year at a time and **renewal is not automatic**. The organization must submit a renewal application annually, outlining adequate and continuous progress made toward attaining financial stability or increased organizational capacity. During the period in which an organization receives operating support, the organization is not eligible to request grants from PACF or any affiliate for other purposes (with the exception of emergency grants). Operating Support Grant applicants also should note that after receiving a request for operating support, the Foundation may schedule a site visit for an in-person discussion of the need for operating support. **The Foundation expects to award only a limited number of operating support grants.**

### **Application Forms**

Applications must be submitted on Our Community's Foundation Community Action Grants Application Form. Before submitting your application, be sure that you are using the most current

application form (dated 6/10 in the lower right-hand corner of each page). Online submissions are not accepted. Applications must be one sided, typewritten and legible. **Applications are limited to five pages.** You may adjust spacing for particular questions on the form but must keep the overall application to five pages. Type size must be at least 11 pt, with document margins of one inch.

Submit only **one copy** of your application and only one copy of the following attachments (**new for 2009-2010 – we now require only one copy of all materials**):

- List of officers and board members and their titles and contact information;
- Copy of IRS 501 (c)(3) tax-exempt designation letter (not required for government agencies and public schools);
- Financial report for most recently completed fiscal year, showing income and expenses (preferably audited);
- For 501(c)(3) organizations, copy of most recent 990 tax return or 990-N postcard;
- Current annual organization operating budget, showing income and expenses.

Please do not put your application in any type of binding or folder, as we must remove those materials when applications arrive. Please paper clip your application. Do not staple any application materials.

### **Important Information for Grant Seekers**

- Applicants may submit an application for only one project per cycle but can request support for projects (other than operating support) from one or more of the foundations listed on page 1 and 2 for which they meet eligibility criteria (operating support requests are considered by PACF only). To apply to multiple entities, complete only **one application**; simply put a check by the names for all entities that you want to consider the application on the form's cover page.
- Organizations located in communities served by affiliates should apply to both the appropriate affiliate and to PACF, regardless of the request size as grant funds currently available from affiliates are limited and some affiliates make grants only in the fall cycle. By applying to both PACF and an affiliate at the same time, a project receives additional funding consideration. The only exception to this statement is for operating support; PACF is the only entity that considers operating support grants at this time.
- While applicants may apply to more than one entity (e.g., both PACF and an affiliate) in any given grant cycle, they **may not apply for more than one project in the same grant cycle**. The total amount of funds requested generally may not exceed \$10,000. Requests for more than \$10,000 may be considered for projects that are highly collaborative or have regional impact but you must contact the Foundation's Program Officer in the Central Office concerning the request prior to submitting a request in excess of \$10,000.
- Organizations that have more than one physical site, with each site having its own board or governance structure, may be able to submit one application per physical site per grant cycle. Organizations who believe they meet this criterion must contact the Foundation's Program Officer in the Central Office before submitting an application to discuss eligibility to submit more than one application.
- Organizations receiving a Community Action Grant in any grant cycle from an entity that is a part of Our Community's Foundation are not eligible for funding in the immediate next cycle from that same entity but may apply to another entity if they are also eligible for the other entity's consideration (for example, if an organization receives a grant from Mason County Community Foundation in the fall, it may apply to PACF in the spring, or vice versa). For affiliates that are only

able to consider grant requests once per year, organizations located in those areas may apply each year for support.

- Organizations that do not receive a grant in any grant cycle may submit one more application for the same project to receive consideration but they must contact the Program Officer in the Central Office to discuss their proposal prior to re-submitting it. Once the Foundation declines to support a project twice, then the organization is not eligible to submit another request for this specific project.
- Submitting an application does not guarantee funding; the Foundation's resources for grants are limited and the process is highly competitive. Operating Support Grants are likely to be especially competitive.

## **Deadlines**

PACF and JCCF consider grant requests twice each year. Applications for these entities must be postmarked by March 1 or September 1 and sent to the Central Office address. If the deadline falls on a Sunday or holiday when there is no postal service, applications must be postmarked by the next most immediate day that has postal service. Late applications are not accepted. DCCF, LKACF, MCCF, and RCCF typically only consider grants once each year. Applications for these entities must be postmarked by September 1. Grants are not considered at other times with the exception of mini-grants and emergency grants through PACF (see description below). It is important to note that the deadline is a postmark deadline; there is no need to incur cost by purchasing "special" or "rush" delivery services; it is essential to meet the postmark deadline.

All applications regardless of which entity they will ultimately be reviewed by are processed at Our Community Foundation's Central Office and must be mailed by the postmark deadline to the Central Office: Our Community's Foundation, Post Office Box 1762, Parkersburg, WV 26102-1762.

**Applications will not be accepted at affiliate field offices.** Application forms are available on the foundation's web site ([www.pacfwv.com](http://www.pacfwv.com)) or by contacting the Foundation staff directly at 304-428-4438 or 1-866-428-4438 (toll free).

## **Review and Notification Process**

Once received, your application is reviewed thoroughly by the Foundation staff and then forwarded to various grants committees comprised of PACF and affiliate foundation board members and community volunteers. Grants Committee members are selected for their community knowledge and receive training from the Foundation. Conflict of interest policies and stringent review processes guide their work; they thoughtfully review all applications. Foundation staff may contact you for clarification related to any questions about your proposal during the review process. We appreciate your prompt response to any staff inquiries. After reviewing all proposals, Committees meet to discuss all applications and to recommend some to be funded to Our Community's Foundation Board of Directors. Final decisions on all grants are made by the Board of Directors. For the March 1 deadline, applicants are notified about the status of their proposal by late May. For the September 1 deadline, applicants are notified by late November.

## **Grants Outside of the Regular Grant Cycles**

PACF is the only entity that presently considers grants outside of regular grant cycles, if a request is made that fits one of the two circumstances below (these grants are considered at any time of year):

Emergency Grants – “Emergency” is defined as an unforeseen event or situation that requires immediate action to ensure that an organization or one of its programs or services can continue to operate and for which the organization does not have adequate resources to address the emergency in any other way. Such grants may only be awarded to organizations that meet the general eligibility criteria established for the Community Action Grants Program and will not exceed \$2,500. Contact the Program Officer at the Foundation’s Central Office directly to discuss an emergency grant prior to submitting a request. Organizations that receive an emergency grant are eligible to apply for a Community Action Grant in the next regularly scheduled grant cycle.

Mini-Grants: Mini-grants are defined as grant requests of up to \$1,000 for small projects that are time-sensitive, in that funds are needed prior to the next regularly scheduled grant cycle, but are not emergency in nature. Such grants may be awarded only to organizations that meet the eligibility criteria established for the Community Action Grants Program. Organizations seeking mini-grants should complete Our Community Foundation’s Community Action Grant Application Form and submit it at any time to the Program Officer at the Foundation’s Central Office. Organizations that receive a mini-grant are not eligible to apply for a Community Action Grant in the next regularly scheduled cycle but may apply in subsequent cycles.