Battle Creek Community Foundation

GRANTEE PARTNER RESOURCE GUIDE

FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026

Table of Contents:

Welcome...Page 1
Grant Eligibility...Page 1
BCCF Funding Priorities - Overview...Page 2
Grant Opportunities & Competitive Grants...Page 2
Competitive Process & Deadlines...Page 3
Tips and Common Reasons Grants do not Receive Full Funding...Page 4
Mini Grants...Page 4
Frequently Asked Question...Pages 4-5

Funding Focus Areas...Appendix A, Pages 6-7
Competitive Grant Eligibility Matrix...Appendix B, Page 8
Grant Award Agreement Sample...Appendix C, Pages 9-11
Fiscal Sponsor Agreement Sample...Appendix D, Page 12

Grants Department: grantinfo@bccfoundation.org

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Battle Creek Community Foundation

1. Welcome!

Thank you for considering a partnership with the Battle Creek Community Foundation (BCCF). Our mission is to, "promote giving, build endowment, and provide leadership to improve quality of life." Since 1974, BCCF has created ways for people of all means to be able to give back to their community. To this end, we have created this guide to provide grant seekers with the information, resources, and tools needed to establish a successful and impactful partnership with BCCF. This guide will evolve over time. We are interested in your feedback on what would make this guide more useful, or accessible. Please feel free to send suggestions to grantinfo@bccfoundation.org.

2. Who is Eligible to Appy for Grant Funding from BCCF?

BCCF awards grants to 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations or tax-exempt public entities, like public schools/universities, churches (for secular purposes) or units of government like a municipality, public school or state agency who have programs that are operating in the greater Battle Creek area or serve the population of the greater Battle Creek area (Cities of Battle Creek, Springfield, Townships of Bedford, Emmett, and Pennfield). To see what initiatives BCCF funds on a county-wide level, please visit our website at https://www.bccfoundation.org/grant-opportunities.

Collaborative groups who are seeking to do charitable work to benefit the community who do not have their own 501(c)3 non-profit status awarded by the IRS can also be considered for grant funding. To do so, the collaborative group would need to partner with a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that has a similar mission to the work they are hoping to undertake. The 501(c)3 organization would take fiscal responsibility for the grant award through a formal Fiscal Sponsorship Agreement. In this situation, awarded funds would be paid to the 501(c)3 Fiscal Sponsor organization who would work with the collaborative group and manage the project funds.

Whether a 501(c)3 or a collaborative group, the purpose of the grant must be charitable in nature and in alignment with both BCCF mission and funding priorities, as well as the mission or purpose of the applying organization.

BCCF **does not** award grant funding:

a. to Individuals
b. to Private Non-Operating Foundations
c. Internationally

3. What Are BCCF's Funding Priorities?

The Battle Creek Community Foundation exists to improve the lives of people in and around Battle Creek. One of the ways that we do this is through grantmaking.

Battle Creek Community Foundation seeks to strategically deploy resources to address community needs while targeting opportunities that build equity and strengthen the economic base and social fabric of the city of Battle Creek and the surrounding region.

Through strategic and data-informed, trust-based philanthropic practices the Battle Creek Community Foundation will target our investments in addressing identified key community needs that are critical to the sustainability, vitality, and social equity of the community.

- We will strive to be responsive and flexible to support the many needs throughout the community.
- We will further lift the community through education and increase the individual capacity of residents to build their own wealth.

Our current community impact focus areas include Education, Livable Communities, and Health and Well-being. Funding priority will be given to programs and nonprofits that impact these areas.

Please review Appendix A of this Guide, or our website, for comprehensive details regarding our focus areas.

4. Grant Opportunities

BCCF offers General Competitive Grants, Mini-Grants, and Special Grant Opportunities. Please review our website for details www.bccfoundation.org. All requests for funding are submitted through our online grant portal (https://www.grantinterface.com/Home/Logon?urlkey=bccf).

A. Competitive Grants

Competitive Grants, also known as General Grants, support programs and projects with funding needs greater than $1,500.00. **Competitive Grants are programmatic in nature. Capital requests and Operating grant requests, including arts and culture operating grant requests, are not being considered for the FY25-26 Competitive Grant cycle. A special funding opportunity announcement may occur later this year for capital grant requests**. Please review the Competitive Grant Eligibility Matrix (Appendix B) of this Guide for eligibility details and examples of programmatic, operating and capital requests. Applications for Competitive Grants open through our grant portal approximately 1 month before the due date. Grants Team members are available to meet with you to review and provide suggestions on your proposal up until 5 business days before the due date.

If your group or organization does not have your own 501(c)3 charitable designation from the IRS you will be required to upload a copy of the completed BCCF Fiscal Sponsor Acknowledgement when you submit your application. **Please note: Currently, BCCF is not accepting applications through the Competitive Grant Cyle from for-profit entities, even with a fiscal sponsor.**

Funding decisions for Competitive Grants are made after careful and thorough review by BCCF's Grant Review Committees. These committees are made up of dedicated and trained community volunteers.

1. **Competitive Grant Process Overview – Once your proposal is submitted by the due date:**
   a. Staff performs due diligence to confirm the applying organization and the request is eligible to receive grant funding.
   b. Once eligibility has been confirmed, the proposal and all uploaded documents will be reviewed to ensure application requirements are met.
   c. Electronic, phone, or in-person follow-up may be scheduled with the applicant regarding outstanding questions related to the application.
   d. The application, attachments and any supplemental information is shared with Grant Review Committee members.
   e. The committee then meets to discuss all submitted proposals and make funding decisions.
   f. All decisions, award or denial, will be shared with applicants through the grant portal. In some cases, the applicant may be contacted by phone to discuss the decision.
   g. If an award is made, the applicant will download, sign, and re-upload the Grant Agreement through the grant portal. Once uploaded, staff will schedule payment with the next available BCCF grant payout date.
   h. If awarded funding, staff will assign a follow-up report for completion when the grant project is finished, or when the 12-month award period ends.

2. **FY25-26 Competitive Grant Deadlines & Timeline**

Battle Creek Community Foundation
Competitive Grant Rounds
Fiscal Year 2025-26

2 Competitive Grant Rounds will be held in FY2025-2026.
Deadlines are the second Wednesday of April and October by noon.

Key Steps	Grant Round 1 (Spring FY25-26)	Grant Round 2 (Winter FY25-26)
Application Opens	3/5/25	9/3/25
Application Deadline (*2nd Wednesday of April & October by noon*)	4/9/25 by noon (12:00 pm)	10/8/25 by noon (12:00 pm)
Follow Up Questions/Site visit meetings with applicants	Week of 4/21/25	Week of 10/20/25
Grant Review Committee Meetings	Mid-May	Mid-November
Upon receipt of signed Grant Contract Potential Payout	By end of May 2025	By end of November 2025

3. **Tips for Success:**
    a. Be clear in how your proposal aligns with at least 1 BCCF focus area.
    b. Requests are typically programmatic in nature, not capital or operating requests.
    c. Be collaborative with others doing similar work in the community; explain how your work is complementary, not duplicative.
    d. Make the case as to why your proposal is important to the community and provide data as to how it addresses an important community need.
    e. Be realistic in your timeline, anticipated outcomes, and anticipated reach
    f. Be ready to launch your program or project – Provide enough detail so that the Grant Review Committee understands that your proposal is ready to go.
    g. Letters of Support should be included if you are conducting your program or project on behalf of, or to the benefit of another organization.
    h. Grant Review Committee members are community volunteers who may not be aware of the work your organization or group does, so detailed information is key.

4. **Common reasons grant requests do not get funded or receive partial or minimal funding:**

    a. The impact of the request and how it will benefit the community/target population is not clear in the application.
    b. The community need for the project is not demonstrated in the application; data supporting how the project will meet/solve a community issue is not strong in the application.
    c. The project has the potential to be duplicative of work already occurring in the community; Lack of demonstrated partnerships/collaboration in the community with organizations doing similar work.

The BCCF Grants Team is available to assist you and your organization navigate our grant opportunities and a possible application. We are happy to meet as you begin planning your proposal, or to review a draft before you submit it. Please feel free to reach out to us at 269-962-2181 or grantinfo@bccfoundation.org.

B. Mini-Grants

Mini-Grants are programmatic in nature and for requests up to $1,500.00. Mini-Grants are intended to be fast, flexible sources of funding for small, but important community needs. Mini-Grant applications are accepted on a rolling basis until funding is exhausted. It is recommended that your organization applies at least 60 days in advance of your project starting date to allow time for decision making and payment before the program begins. *Note: BCCF grant funds can only be used to support the future expenses of a program and cannot be used for reimbursement of costs already incurred.* Organizations are eligible to apply for more than one Mini-Grant per year, but they must be for different projects or needs.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **When should I approach the foundation with a grant request?**

    Your grant request should be well developed and ready for implementation when you submit your application for funding. Please know that we are here to help discuss ideas and concepts during your planning process if desired.

2. How much funding can I request?

Mini-Grants: up to $1,500.00; General Competitive Grants: 75% of successful grant requests last year received $15,000 or less. If you are considering a request greater than $20,000, we recommend you contact the BCCF Grants Team to further discuss your program and the availability of grant funding.

3. Does BCCF award partial funding?

Yes, annually BCCF receives requests for funding that exceed our ability to fully fund them all. As such, partial funding may be awarded to help stretch resources to support many important projects.

4. Does BCCF provide retroactive funding?

No. Funding for any type of grant proposal must be used to support program/project costs incurred after funds are received by the applicant organization.

5. Can a group or organization apply for more than one grant per year?

Organizations are welcome to apply for more than one grant per year as long as the requests are for different purposes. In other words, an organization cannot receive more than one grant for the same program/project within a 12-month period.

6. Can we request funding for the same project in consecutive years?

Yes, however 2 general competitive requests for the same project cannot run concurrently. This means that the original grant must be completed with the final grant reports submitted before a second can be submitted.

It is important to note that if you are applying for the same program in consecutive years, the proposal should evolve from year to year based upon lessons learned.

7. What if something changes with my project once I have received my award?

Reach out to the Grant Making Team as soon as possible. We understand that the best laid plans can change.

8. What happens if funding remains at the end of the grant award period?

Any unused funding remaining at the end of the award period should be returned to BCCF within 60 days. If you believe you can utilize funding, but need more time, please reach out to the Grant Making Team to discuss a possible extension – before the end of the grant period if possible.

9. Can I use grant funds to pay myself?

For eligible requests, grant funding can be used to support reasonable costs of qualified staff to conduct the program.

10. Can Indirect Costs can be included in my grant request?

BCCF recognizes the importance of supporting indirect expenses and has established an indirect cost rate for all programmatic grants. Up to 15% of your organization's grant request can be used to support indirect expenses. The indirect cost rate should be calculated as a percentage of the sum of the direct program cost included in the request. For example: $4,000 (program supplies) + $2,000 (space rental) + $2,000 (program coordinator) + $2,000 (marketing) = $10,000 direct cost x 15% = $1,500 indirect cost: total grant request = $11,500. Indirect costs are necessary for an organization to operate, but are not directly tied to a specific project.

Appendix A: Funding Focus Areas

Battle Creek Community Foundation seeks to strategically deploy resources to address community need while targeting opportunities that build equity and strengthen the economic base and social fabric of the city of Battle Creek and surrounding region.

Through strategic and data informed, trust-based philanthropic practices the Battle Creek Community Foundation will target our investments in addressing identified key community needs that are critical to the sustainability, vitality and social equity of the community.

- We will strive to be responsive and flexible to support the many needs throughout the community.
- We will further lift the community through education and increase individual capacity of residents to build their own wealth.

Our current community impact focus areas include Education, Livable Communities, and Health and Well-being. Funding priority will be given to programs and nonprofits which impact these areas.

Education

We envision a community where every resident has access to post-secondary education and training.

We encourage programs that are expanding resident opportunities such as:

- Adult education,
- Workforce development programming
- Access to Education/ on-the-job training
- We welcome initiatives that support resident-led efforts to create environments conducive to student success.

We encourage the active engagement of community-based organizations and neighborhood groups in efforts that support student success.

- We encourage programs and activities that promote a college going culture at all age levels.

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Livable Communities

We envision a community where programs, policies, and practices increase collaboration, connection, and reciprocity between people of different generations, and where services are provided that allow for individuals of all ages to live and thrive.

We welcome community-driven engagement that empowers individuals within their community to establish initiatives or programs to create impact that benefits Battle Creek at large.We support investments in community programs and assets (arts, cultural, recreational, etc.) that enhance quality of life, making Battle Creek an amazing place to live, work, and play.

Livable communities provide opportunities for all residents to live in safe, stable, and affordable housing.

Transportation and Safe Neighborhoods: In communities across the nation, transportation is a critical service that all generations need now and in the future.

We encourage programs and activities that promote resident engagement and build community positivity.

*Community Livability refers to the environmental and social quality of an area as perceived by residents, employees, customers and visitors. This includes safety and health (traffic safety, personal security, public health), local environmental conditions (cleanliness, noise, dust, air quality, water quality), the quality of social interactions (neighborliness, fairness, respect, community identity and pride), opportunities for recreation and entertainment, aesthetics, and existence of unique cultural and environmental resources (e.g., historic structures, mature trees, traditional architectural styles) (Shaheen, et al. 2016; Steuteville 2016).

Health

We envision a community where all residents are engaged in their own health and well-being and barriers to care are eliminated.

We believe that access to comprehensive, quality health care services is important for promoting and maintaining health, preventing and managing disease, reducing disability and premature death, decreasing health disparities, and achieving health equity for all. To that end we support programs and organizations that work to increase access to health services for the residents of our community,
with an emphasis on:

- Resident/ neighborhood outreach
- Medical Translation Services
- K-12 Wellness Programming

We envision a community that values and promotes behavioral health and wellness and is free from discrimination. We encourage innovative programs and services that support behavioral health and substance use prevention for all ages.

We support initiatives that address the impact of health disparities on the overall health and well-being of individuals in our community and encourage multifaceted, multi-sector approaches.

We support community wellness initiatives that take health education, information and related services directly to community members in need, focusing on preventable health care and empowering residents to become proactive in successfully managing existing health conditions and preventing or managing chronic disease.

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Appendix B: Competitive Grant Eligibility Matrix

FY 25-26 Competitive Grant Eligibility Matrix

Eligible	Not Eligible	Potential to be considered in a separate grant round this fiscal year
Programmatic Request Costs directly tied to program delivery. Up to 15% of a programmatic requested costs may be to support an organization's indirect costs such as administrative salaries, rent, technology, etc.	**Operating Support** A request to solely support an organization's operating budget are not being considered this fiscal year. *However, up to 15% of a programmatic requested costs may be to support an organization's indirect costs such as administrative salaries, rent, technology, etc.*	**Capital Requests** A request for funding to support major physical or infrastructure investments that benefit the organization long-term.
• Program staff salaries • Program materials and supplies • Participant stipends (if applicable) • Training and development costs • Rental space for the program • Costs for contracted services (e.g., facilitators, consultants) • Equipment or technology specific to the program • Marketing for program	• Administrative salaries • Rent • Utilities • Office supplies • Technology • Insurance • Other overhead expenses necessary for the organization to function	• New construction • Building repairs or renovations • Furniture • Major equipment purchases • Technology upgrades • Vehicles • Major investments often requiring detailed plans, budgets, and sustainability considerations.

What is the difference between a programmatic, operating, and capital grant request?

Programmatic Grant Request

A request for funding to support a specific program or initiative. This type of grant covers costs directly tied to program delivery, such as staff salaries (if program-specific), materials, participant stipends, training, and contracted services. The focus is on achieving measurable outcomes within a defined scope.

Operating Grant Request

A request for unrestricted funding to support the organization's general operations. This may include administrative salaries, rent, utilities, office supplies, technology, insurance, and other overhead expenses necessary for the organization to function effectively. These grants provide flexibility to sustain the organization's mission.

Capital Grant Request

A request for funding to support major physical or infrastructure investments that benefit the organization long-term. This can include new construction, building renovations, major equipment purchases, technology upgrades, or vehicles. Capital grants often require detailed plans, budgets, and sustainability considerations.

Grant Award Agreement

This agreement outlines the terms of your grant award from the Battle Creek Community Foundation (BCCF). Please review, sign, and return this document in the grant portal under the "Follow Up Forms" to facilitate the payment of the grant award. If you have questions regarding this agreement, please contact the Grant Making Team at BCCF for assistance.

Award Information:

Grant Award #:

Grantee:

Fiscal Sponsor (or Fiscal Sponsor Organization), if applicable:

Project/Program Name:

Grant Total Amount:

From the Following Fund(s):

-

Decision Date:

Grant Period: 12 months (1 year), beginning on

Terms:
This grant is awarded by the Battle Creek Community Foundation subject to the following terms and conditions:

1. **Tax Status:** Grantee/Fiscal Sponsor confirms that it is an organization that is currently recognized by the Internal Revenue Service (the "IRS") as a public charity under sections 501(c)(3) and 509(a)(I), (2), or (3) of the Internal Revenue Code (the "Code"), and Grantee/Fiscal Sponsor will inform the Foundation immediately of any change in, or IRS proposed or actual revocation (whether or not appealed) of its tax status described above.

2. **Purpose, Limitations, Return of Funds:** This grant may be used only for Grantee/Fiscal Sponsor's charitable activities. This grant must be used for the project identified above, as described in the Grantee/Fiscal Sponsor's proposal, hereby incorporated by reference as Exhibit A, and related correspondence, and may not be expended for any other purposes without the Foundation's prior written approval. Grantee/Fiscal Sponsor accepts responsibility for complying with this agreement's terms and conditions and will exercise full control over the grant and the expenditure of grant funds. The Foundation requests that Grantee/Fiscal Sponsor return any unexpended grant funds remaining within 30 days of the end of the project period. While the Foundation understands that the

Grantee/Fiscal Sponsor may participate in the public policy process, consistent with its tax-exempt status, Grantee/Fiscal Sponsor may not use any BCCF grant funds to lobby or otherwise attempt to influence legislation, to influence the outcome of any public election, or to carry on any voter registration drive. Funds provided by the Foundation cannot be used to purchase alcohol, marketing materials that include/promote alcohol, or to purchase food that is not prepared by a licensed caterer. No part of this award may be used to pay, or benefit any Foundation employee or official for any purpose.

3. **Fund Accounting:** Funds provided by the Foundation (including grant interest earned) will be accounted for separately by your organization and will be used only for the purpose specified in your grant application to which this award applies.

4. **Reporting:** The Grantee/Fiscal Sponsor agrees to provide the Foundation with a final report within 1-month of the end of the grant period. Grant reporting should be submitted digitally through the Foundation's online application portal. For your convenience, a follow-up grant report has been assigned to the Grantee's organization for completion. If you have questions regarding the final report, please contact the Foundation. In general, reporting will require the following domains:

    a. *Use of Funds* – Explain how funds were used in alignment with the grant proposal. Include amount spent per proposal budget line items. State the total amount of funds utilized. If there are funds remaining at the end of the grant period, please describe why and the amount remaining in the report.
    b. *Organizational* Impact – What was the impact of this project/program/award on the Grantee/Fiscal Sponsor Organization?
    c. *Community Impact* – what was the impact of this project/program/award on the Community?
    d. *Key Learnings* – What key learnings occurred in the course of this project/program/award?
    e. *Other Reporting Requirements*: If there are other reporting requirements requested by the Foundation, they are listed below and should be included in your final report along with the above items.

5. **Supplemental Reporting:** Grantee/Fiscal Sponsor will provide promptly such additional information, reports and documents as the Foundation may request and will allow the Foundation and its representatives to have reasonable access during regular business hours to files, records, accounts or personnel that are associated with this grant, for the purpose of making such financial reviews, verifications or program evaluations as may be deemed necessary by the Foundation.

6. **Anti-Terrorism Statement:** The Grantee/Fiscal Sponsor organization hereby certifies and warrants that it is in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations related to anti-terrorism measures, including but not limited to the USA PATRIOT Act and any other relevant legislation or executive orders. The Recipient further certifies that it is not currently designated as a prohibited party on any government list of known or suspected terrorists or terrorist organizations, including lists maintained by the United States Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) or other relevant authorities.

7. **Publicity:** As you speak about your grant with media and the larger community, please use the following language: "This program/project was made possible in part by a grant from the Battle Creek Community Foundation." Review of press releases regarding your grant and use of our logo is not required; if you desire assistance or clarification in this area, please contact BCCF.

8. **Indemnification:** The Grantee/Fiscal Sponsor agrees that The Battle Creek Community Foundation, its officers, Board, successors, assigns, representatives and designees are hereby released and discharged from any and all liability relating to these funds and/or the related program or project.

9. **Termination:** The Foundation reserves the right to discontinue, modify or withhold any payments to be made under this grant award or to require a total or partial refund of any grant funds, if it, in the Foundation's sole discretion, such action is necessary:
    a. because Grantee/Fiscal Sponsor has not fully complied with the terms and conditions of this grant;
    b. to protect the purpose and objectives of the grant or any other charitable activities of the Foundation; or
    c. to comply with any law or regulation applicable to the Grantee/Fiscal Sponsor, to the Foundation, or this grant.

10. Signatures: On behalf of the Grantee/Fiscal Sponsor organization, I understand and agree to the foregoing terms and conditions of the Foundation's grant, and hereby certify my authority to execute this agreement on the Grantee/Fiscal Sponsor Organization's behalf.

Grantee Signature: _____

Grantee Printed Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Email: _____ **Phone:** _____

Fiscal Sponsor Signature (if applicable):_____

Fiscal Sponsor Printed Name: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Email: _____ **Phone:** _____

Appendix D: Fiscal Sponsor Acknowledgement

FISCAL SPONSORSHIP ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Battle Creek Community Foundation (BCCF) requires the submission of an acknowledgement of support from Sponsoring entities for any group submitting a grant application under the umbrella of a fiscal sponsor.

This signed acknowledgement form or alternatively a letter of support should be submitted alongside any request for grant funding.

Name of Applying Group_____

The Fiscal Sponsor has reviewed the grant application and supports the submission of a grant for the _____ (insert name of project), and agrees to serve as fiscal sponsor for said grant funded project, should funding be received.

Fiscal Sponsor:

_____
Organizational Name of Sponsor

_____
Authorized Representative Name & Title

_____ _____
Signature of Sponsor Date