



## **2026 GRANT GUIDELINES**

### **OUR VISION**

A region where the power of collective giving dismantles barriers to opportunity, ensuring every child, youth, and worker has the resources to lead a life of dignity and purpose.

### **OUR MISSION**

To mobilize the collective influence of emerging leaders to invest in the future of our community through **bold, collaborative giving, and equity-focused philanthropy**.

### **OVERVIEW: THE POWER OF COLLECTIVE GIVING**

The **NextGen Giving Circle** is more than a fund; it is a movement of emerging leaders (ages 20–40) dedicated to the long-term vitality of our region. Founded in 2017, we operate on the belief that when we pool our resources, our collective impact is exponentially greater than what we can achieve alone.

Since our inception, we have invested **\$210,000** into local nonprofits, transforming individual monthly contributions into significant capital for community growth. Supported by the expertise of the **Princeton Area Community Foundation**, NextGen members do more than "give" - they act as strategic partners, identifying funding priorities and engaging with the organizations shaping our future.

### **OUR COMMITMENT TO INCLUSIVE IMPACT**

The Next Gen Giving Circle aligns with the Community Foundation's commitment to improving the quality of life of the most vulnerable in its regional footprint. We also believe that thriving communities are built when resources are channeled equitably and when we collaborate with organizations that embrace inclusion as a core value.

Achieving meaningful difference requires an enduring commitment that is expressed in an organization's culture, values, norms, and behaviors. We seek to partner with organizations that:

- **Reflect our Region:** Demonstrate a commitment to the diversity in our region.
- **Expand Access:** Work to lift up populations most impacted by poverty, including low-income families, seniors, children, and recent immigrants.

- **Provide Culturally Competent Care:** Increase access to community services through culturally competent and multilingual providers.
- **Foster Potential:** Embrace work that gives every resident the opportunity to succeed and reach their full potential.

## **WHAT WE FUND**

One-year grants ranging between \$5,000 and \$10,000. Funding amounts will vary based on availability of funds.

## **PARTNERING FOR TRANSFORMATION**

We seek to invest in organizations that demonstrate not only operational excellence but a shared vision for a more equitable region. Our review process prioritizes:

- **Strategic Alignment:** The initiative directly advances the NextGen Giving Circle’s focus on Children & Youth or Workforce Development through innovative or proven models.
- **Systemic Impact:** The proposal demonstrates a clear potential to create meaningful, lasting change for its intended beneficiaries, moving beyond temporary fixes to sustainable outcomes.
- **Narrative Clarity:** The rationale for the work is articulated with a compelling sense of urgency and a well-defined strategy for success.
- **Community Grounding:** The organization is authentically rooted in the expressed needs and lived experiences of the participants it serves.
- **Collaborative Synergy:** The organization actively leverages community partnerships to maximize efficiency, broaden reach, and deepen impact.

## **FOCUS OF FUNDING**

### Children & Youth Services

- Examples include proposals that address poverty, pre-school and kindergarten enrollment, foster care, child abuse and neglect and youth incarceration.

### Workforce Development

- Examples include proposals that address school district enrollment, support for reading and math competencies, high school graduation, or employment related concerns.

## APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

1. Organization name
2. Executive Director name, years of service, and contact info
3. Geographic Area
4. Mission Statement
5. Organization updates and ACH
6. Organizations operating budget
7. Most recent Form 990 (upload)
8. Fiscal Sponsor Agreement (if applicable)
9. Project name, description and dates
10. Priority Area
11. Municipalities where the project will occur
12. Amount requested
13. Use of funds
14. Rationale about the need/impact in the community
15. Target population
16. Collaborators and supporters
17. Measures of success
18. Project budget

You must file your application online by **12:00pm on the deadline date, April 10, 2026**. Applications received after the deadline will not be reviewed. You will receive confirmation that your proposal has been received. **Your application will not be reviewed if any of the required information is not received by the 12:00pm deadline.**

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Applicants must be tax-exempt and recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a public charity as described in sections 501(c)(3) and 509(a)(1), (2), or (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- Applicants also should be registered with the NJ Division of Consumer Affairs as a charity in good standing. For more info, please visit their Frequently Asked Questions webpage [here](#). To check your status, you may visit [click here](#).

Applications will be accepted from organizations that operate and provide services within the geographic region covered by the Princeton Area Community Foundation, defined as follows:

- Mercer County
- Eastern Bucks County, PA, including New Hope, Morrisville, Washington Crossing and Yardley
- Northern Burlington County, including Bordentown and Bordentown Township
- Southern Hunterdon County, including Lambertville, West Amwell, adjacent parts of East Amwell
- Southern Middlesex County, including Monroe, Cranbury, and Plainsboro
- Southern Somerset County, including Montgomery, Rocky Hill, and adjacent sections of Franklin Twp.

View a map of our region by [clicking here](#).

**WHAT WE DO NOT FUND:**

- Services outside the above stated geographic region
- Statewide organizations unless the organization maintains a physical office within the CF's geographic footprint and serves residents within same
- Scholarships for higher education
- Pre-college private or independent schools
- Organized sports teams or sports leagues
- Building renovations
- Fundraising appeals or event sponsorships
- Lobbying and other political activities
- Fraternal and religious activities
- Tax-supported and government-operated basic programs and services, such as core curricular school activities, and essential police and fire services

**Grant Information Session(s):** There will be a virtual Grant Information Session on Monday, March 23rd at 11:00am. Applicants are encouraged to attend and ask questions. This session highlights key aspects of the grant guidelines and application process. Attendance is not a prerequisite to apply for a grant; however, to attend the information session, registration is required and only granted to organizations eligible to apply. To register, please visit the [NextGen Giving Circle at PACF](#) webpage.

**Award Decisions:** Grant awards are funded by the NextGen Giving Circle at the Princeton Area Community Foundation. They are distinct from discretionary or other grants awarded by the Community Foundation. NextGen grant awards are recommended by the NextGen Giving Circle for approval to the Board of the Community Foundation. Grantees are notified of the decisions via email by Community Foundation staff. Grantees are encouraged to publicize their awards through press releases, newsletters, websites, and annual reports, and to acknowledge support of the ***NextGen Giving Circle at the Princeton Area Community Foundation***.

**Use of Grant Funds:** Grant funds must be used exclusively for the purposes and activities specified in the grant application. Grantees may be required to return grant funds not used in the manner described in their grant proposal. Grantees should notify the Community Foundation as soon as possible if their needs or circumstances change.

## **STEWARDSHIP & ACCOUNTABILITY**

The NextGen Giving Circle views reporting as a vital tool for collective learning. Sharing your progress helps our members understand the impact of their investment and the evolving needs of the region.

- **Reporting Requirements:** Grantees must submit a brief end-of-grant narrative.
- **Eligibility:** Future funding is contingent upon the timely submission of grant reporting.
- **Fund Use:** Grant funds must be used exclusively for the activities specified in your application.
- **Communication:** Please notify the Community Foundation as soon as possible if project circumstances change.

**Non-Discrimination:** The Community Foundation supports projects that promote inclusiveness and that do not discriminate based on race, gender, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, disability, or any other characteristics protected by law.