

2018 Guidelines



Civic Engagement Fund

ABOUT THE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FOR GREATER ATLANTA

Since 1951, the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta has been connecting donors, nonprofits and community leaders to strengthen the 23-county Atlanta region through philanthropy. As a top 20 community foundation of approximately 750 nationally, with approximately \$955 million in current assets, Georgia's second largest foundation exists to connect the passions of donors with the purposes nonprofits strive to improve. Through its quality services and innovative leadership on community issues, the Foundation received more than \$135 million from donors in 2016 (unaudited) and distributed more than \$125 million that same year to support nonprofits throughout the region and beyond. For more information, visit: cfgreateratlanta.org or connect with the Foundation via [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

At the Community Foundation, we believe in the power and potential of individuals and organizations to change communities, whether those communities are physical neighborhoods, a group of individuals with a common interest or a cohort of organizations focused on similar issues. We play a variety of roles, but our key goal is to be the connecting point for the various partners, nonprofit organizations and community leaders working together toward the common vision of stronger greater Atlanta region.

IMPACT AREAS

The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta fulfills the passions of donors by investing in our region through grantmaking, partnerships and advocacy. To create meaningful, lasting change, our efforts align via measurable objectives through focused "Impact Areas." We practice what we preach – evolving beyond grantmaking strategies and industry jargon to real, tangible impact.

These five impact areas are our promise to the 23-county region - that in partnership with our donors, nonprofits and collaborators, we vow to make Atlanta a better place for all residents to live and thrive.



Arts



Community Development



Education



Nonprofit Effectiveness



Well-being

Arts >> Build a dynamic arts ecology to ensure all residents in our region will have access to high-quality cultural experiences and diverse artistic programs

Community Development >> Advocate for equitable economic growth, strong civic health and safe, sustainable communities

Education >> Improve outcomes and expand opportunities for all learners across the education spectrum

Nonprofit Effectiveness >> Invest in the region's nonprofits with management and financial resources to equip these organizations to effectively manage operations and high-performing programs

Well-being >> Ensure a healthy, safe and engaged region, where all residents have access to quality health care and nutritious food

All of these impact areas are complex and multi-dimensional and require cross sector, regional collaboration: these are opportunities with solutions that cannot be achieved by any one entity. The Foundation has an extensive base of knowledge and relationships across the region, spanning diverse communities, populations and issues, making us uniquely poised to serve as a hub for impact.

THE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FUND

Since 2013, the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta has offered the Civic Engagement Fund in order to further one of its key goals: advance public will. We firmly believe that a critical component of a healthy community is a strong civic voice. The more informed and engaged individuals are, the greater their ability is to advocate for a better quality of life and solutions to critical problems in their communities.

Civic engagement is a cornerstone of American society and democracy, but people must be ready, willing and able to actively participate and contribute to civic life. Civic Engagement Fund seeks to strengthen the civic potential of Metro Atlanta residents by supporting nonprofit organizations implementing strategies that draw people into public decision-making processes within the 23-county region.

Civic engagement can encompass a broad range of activities including political involvement, voting, advocacy, voluntarism and active discussion of public affairs. However, the Community Foundation is particularly interested in projects that involve one or more of the following:

- Multi- or non-partisan candidate forums or engagement opportunities for the public
- Eliminating voter registration barriers and furthering access for all
- Increasing civic participation of underrepresented groups (e.g. young adults, minorities, low-income, etc.)
- Inspiring and educating residents to become active, knowledgeable voters
- Inventive, creative solutions that expand civic participation (e.g. tech platforms, arts-based communications, etc.)
- Other forms of advancing public will and civic life, such as:
 - Strengthening the capacity of civic groups, such as neighborhood associations, PTOs/PTAs, rotary clubs, etc.
 - Educating and empowering people to understand their rights and duties as citizens through effective civic education programs
 - Fostering awareness, discussion and debate around issues of public concern

Civic Engagement Fund grants are directly aligned with the Community Foundation's goal of increasing civic engagement in the Metro Atlanta region.

Available funding for the Civic Engagement Fund:

Grants will range from \$10,000 to \$25,000 over a six or 12-month period.

Desired Outcomes

Progress toward success for the Foundation's learning and the grantees' projects will be determined by the ability of nonprofits to effectively design, implement and/or evaluate collective impact and/or program outcomes during the grant period. Strategies, activities and results that the Foundation will look to as indications of progress may include one or more of the following:

1. Measurable, increased civic engagement regarding public policy issue(s)
2. Measurable development of consensus around a common issue of civic concern/public policy
3. Development of a measurement system or process to assess impact
4. Development of a communications strategy among partners to address internal and external impact or achievement of a common agenda
5. Measureable progress towards a legislative/regulatory/ordinance goal
6. Measureable evidence of productive collaboration

Applicants are expected to propose measures for collective impact and/or program outcomes. Outcomes are changes in people or operations as a result of the project: knowledge, behavior, skills, performance (such as efficiencies), attitude and status; outcomes are not activities or numbers of people served.

Outcomes should follow the SMART guidelines:

Specific

- Well-defined
- Clear to anyone with basic knowledge of the partnership/project
- Answers who, what, where, when, which and why

Measurable

- Quantifiable
- Defines how much, how many and how will I know when it is achieved?

Achievable

- Refers to the partnership's capacity
- Demonstrates requisite human, material, financial and institutional resources necessary to achieve the outcome

Realistic

- Represents an objective toward which partnering organizations are willing and able to work
- Within the availability of resources, knowledge and time

Time-bound

- Has an end date
- Allows partnering organizations enough time to achieve the goal

TIMELINE

In 2018, there will be one grant cycle; however, applications for the Civic Engagement Fund will be accepted by invitation only. For nonprofit organizations that are invited to apply, the grantmaking process will follow the schedule below:

CYCLE 1 SCHEDULE

January 24, 2018	Online Orientation via ReadyTalk
January 24, 2018	Instructions to submit proposals made available on website
February 9, 2018	Organizational Profile, Common Grant Application, and Proposals due
By March 2, 2018	Supplements are sent to invited organizations
March 23, 2018 at Noon	Supplements due
By May 18, 2018	Grantees notified of award

APPLICATION PROCESS

What is the application process?

Applicants must submit a proposal in order to apply for Civic Engagement Fund. The Grant Application Supplement will be provided via email to invited organizations.

- 1]** Organizations interested in applying for Civic Engagement Fund must complete and submit an Organizational Profile, Common Grant Application and a proposal by the appropriate deadline. You can find a link to the Organizational Profile and Common Grant Application at cfgreateratlanta.org.
- 2]** Organizations invited to apply must complete and submit a Civic Engagement Fund Grant Application Supplement and required attachments by the appropriate deadline.
- 3]** The Civic Engagement Fund staff reviews all completed application materials and determines which applications will be recommended for funding.
- 4]** Funding recommendations are made to the Foundation's board of directors and grants are awarded.

Eligible Organizations

Applications will be accepted from nonprofit organizations within the Foundation's 23-county service area. Organizations must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Must be located and providing services within the Foundation's 23-county service area;
- Must be classified by the U.S. Internal Revenue Service under Section 501(c)(3) of the I.R.S. code as a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization, donations to which are deductible as charitable contributions under Section 170 (c)(2) and the I.R.S. determination must be current;
- Must be registered with the Georgia Secretary of State as a nonprofit (click here to verify: <http://corp.sos.state.ga.us/corp/soskb/csearch.asp>);
- Must have a minimum one-year operating history after the date of receipt of its 501(c)(3) classification;
- Must have annual operating expenses greater than \$25,000 as reflected in the most recently filed I.R.S. Form 990 (click here for more information on Form 990: <http://www.irs.gov/charities/article/0,,id=214269,00.html>);
- Must have at least one full-time or equivalent paid employee (paid minimum wage or more, working 2,080 hours or more) for at least 12 months prior to submitting an application.
- Must have a current written strategic or business plan for the whole organization that covers at least 24 months which includes the organization's entire current fiscal year and includes the following:
 - Mission statement
 - Evidence of an environmental scan (an assessment of stakeholder and community needs)
 - Stakeholder participation (staff, board, consumers/clients, volunteers, etc.)
 - Strategic goals and measurable objectives
 - Implementation plan showing action steps, a timeline and assigned staff and board responsibilities
 - On-going evaluation to keep plan current
 - Quarterly, semi-annual or annual written assessment by staff and board to measure organizational progress towards goals
- Must have **audited** or **reviewed** financial statements that follow Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) or Government Auditing Standards (GAS) for the past two completed fiscal years as required by budget size. Organizations with annual budgets over \$250,000 must have audited financial statements; organizations with annual budgets between \$25,000 and \$249,999 must have reviewed financial statements;

All grantee organizations will be required to collect and report data on selected outcomes to measure impact of the grant and resulting work. The Community Foundation will provide a reporting template and may require an interim and end-of-grant report.

How are applications evaluated?

The following criteria will be used to assess applications:

- Demonstrated alignment of purpose among the partners, when applicable
- Demonstrated success in implementing and sustaining programming
- Evidence of pre-planning and research
- Scope and intent of proposed work
- Realistic budget with accompanying narrative explanation
- Proposed evaluation summaries and measures
- Opportunities for collective and community-wide impact
- Opportunities and potential for sector-wide learning regarding civic engagement practices that may be shared, informally and formally, with other funding institutions

What are the Community Foundation's objectives?

- Enhanced understanding of principal factors leading to success
- Enhanced understanding of principal impediments blocking success
- Measurable occasions to share findings with other philanthropic organizations or individuals
- Informed process and principles for future funding of civic engagement projects
- Increased opportunities for collaborative funding projects with other philanthropic organizations or individuals
- Increased opportunities to strengthen grantee organizations' capacity to achieve success
- Provide opportunities to "strengthen the norm of the common good by promoting civic engagement"

Questions about the Civic Engagement Fund?

For further information, please contact us at 404.688.5525 or grants@cfgreateratlanta.org.