



2024 Community Power Initiative Funding Opportunity Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Q: Can organizations based outside of Marin County apply to the CPI?

A: Yes, organizations outside of Marin may apply if they are serving Marin residents or collaborating with one or more Marin-based partners, and their activities or efforts directly impact Marin residents.

Q: Is there a word or character limit for narrative responses in the proposal?

A: No, there is not a maximum of words or character limit, but we encourage succinct responses.

Q: We've received funding from MCF's Buck Family Fund before. Can we apply?

A: Yes, both prior grantees and organizations new to MCF funding are eligible to apply.

Q: If we're currently funded by BFF, should we request our current grant amount?

A: Applicants are encouraged to request the funding needed to advance strategic priorities effectively.

Q: How much can we apply for?

A: For Larger Organizations (budgets of \$2 million or more), grant requests can be made for up to \$600K per year, for 1-3 years if needed.

For Smaller Organizations (budgets under \$2 million), grant requests can be made for up to \$125K per year, for 1-3 years if needed.

Final award amounts will be based on organization size, scope, Marin presence, and available funding. Please note that grant awards may differ from the applicant's requests, and not all applicants will receive the maximum amount.

Q: Can I submit multiple proposals or applications?

A: No, only one application per organization is permitted. However, organizations serving as a lead for a collaborative effort may apply both for the collaborative and for their organization individually.

Q: Who reviews the grant applications and how are funding decisions made?

A: The MCF Community Engagement team in conjunction with the program committee of the MCF Board of Directors conducts application reviews. Proposals will be assessed based on eligibility and meeting the priority requirements noted in the RFP. Final funding decisions will be made by the program committee and the president and CEO of MCF by May 30.

Q: If we have applied for or received funding under other MCF programs (e.g. Climate Justice Initiative, Affordable Housing and Homelessness Initiative), can we also apply for funding under the Community Power Initiative?

A: Yes, applications for the Community Power Initiative will be considered independent of whether an applicant receives or intends to receive funds from any other MCF program.

Q: Why is there a demographics section in the online application?

A: The demographics section helps MCF understand applicant organizations' demographic profiles. Data collected will be aggregated and used for equitable distribution of grants and to track resource flow to historically marginalized communities. Applicants are encouraged to provide thorough responses.

Q: With multi-year grants, could an organization be funded for only one year?

A: Yes, funding for one year is possible for some organizations.

Q: If my organization's fiscal sponsor is outside of Marin but our work focuses on Marin, can we still apply?

A: Yes. Demonstration of work in Marin will be necessary.

Q: For collaborative applications, whose budget should be submitted?

A: The lead organization uploads its budget, and the collaborative's budget must also be submitted.

Q: What materials are needed for the application, such as letters of support?

A: Beyond what is requested in the RFP, additional materials such as letters of support are not required.

Q: If we're not funded in this round, will we have a chance to reapply next year?

A: This has not been determined. MCF may need to adjust course after this first round based on what we learn in partnership with the organizations and residents throughout the County.

Q: What reporting requirements are associated with receiving funding?

A: A final annual report will be due July 31, 2025.

Q: Who needs to register in Grant Center?

A: Anyone within your organization who will be working on the application will need to register separately in the MCF Grant Center and have their own username and password.

Extended Questions

Q: Define General Operating Support (GOS). What are the parameters for operations expenses?

A: General operating support within the context of CPI refers to unrestricted funding that aims to support the overall operations and sustainability of nonprofit organizations. Unlike project-specific grants, which are tied to particular initiatives or programs, general operating support grants provide flexibility for organizations to allocate funds where they are needed most.

Q: Do you have a template to fill out for providing our budget?

A: The RFP notes that an organization's budget should be uploaded. We are not providing a template for this. The organization can upload the budget in the template they already use. If applying for a collaborative grant, the applicant would need to upload the applying organization's organizational budget, AND a budget for the collaborative. We are not requiring the use of an MCF template for this.

Q: How do we complete the organization profile? If our organization serves broader than Marin County, do we complete the profile for Marin only?

A: The applying organization should complete the organization profile for the organization as a whole, regardless of areas served. In the narrative questions, the organizations' Marin focus can be expanded upon.

Q: Can you provide more information around how you define a collaborative?

A: Page 3 of the RFP talks about collaboratives and describes what we consider collaboratives. The applying organization determines how it defines itself and what is best for the situation. Some examples include:

- independent entity
- independent fiscal entity
- a joint proposal from a set of organizationally independent partners
- a lead organization on behalf of and serving as the backbone for a set of partners

Q: For the collaborative grant application, would that require that more than one non-profit in the collaborative be included as line items in the budget?

A: For collaborative organizations, we request that you provide the organization budget of the lead applying organization as well as a budget for the collaborative. It may be that the lead organization is applying for funding to support its work in leading the collaborative, or the lead organization is applying on behalf of a set of collaborating organizations that will each be accounted for in the collaborative budget. This can only be determined by the applying applicant.

Q: For the combined collaborative and individual grant, since it's one submittal, would that require answering both sets of grant questions?

A: There is not a combined collaborative and individual application. They are applied for separately.

Q: We're part of a fiscal sponsorship. Can each organization submit its own application?

A: Organizations may apply as a single entity, and separately serving as a fiscal sponsor for a project.

Q. What additional information may I be required to provide?

A. If an applicant moves forward in the review process (as noted on page 5 of the Funding Announcement under Submission details), the following additional documents may be required: Financial statements, IRS Form 990, and an MCF Nondiscrimination Form. Please do not upload these documents in advance. Applicants will be notified directly if any further documents or information is needed.