



COMMUNITY GRANTS PROGRAM



Guidance for Applicants - FY 2026

Overview

The Granite United Way (GUW) Community Grants Program provides short-term, flexible funding to nonprofit organizations that strengthen community well-being and respond to emerging needs. Through these grants, GUW supports vital programs that create opportunities, reinforce support systems, and enhance the quality of life for individuals, families, and communities across our footprint in New Hampshire and Windsor County, Vermont.

This funding is designed to support:

- General Operations
- Organizational stabilization & service continuity
- Rapid response to community needs

By investing in organizations that are deeply connected to their communities, GUW helps strengthen the protective factors that keep communities strong, resilient, and able to support both ongoing work and new or evolving needs.

Eligibility

To be eligible for GUW Community Grants, organizations must:

- Be a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit or a fiscally sponsored program of a 501(c)(3) organization.
- Serve communities within GUW's service area (New Hampshire and Windsor County, Vermont).
- Complete organizational registration in the GUW grant portal.
- Submit all required documentation during the application process.

G UW Impact Framework

G UW's Impact Priorities reflect key factors that contribute to strong, thriving communities. Prospective applicants should identify how their work connects to one or more of these priority areas.



Impact Priorities

The five core Impact Priorities outlined below are aligned with G UW's pillars of impact and guide how G UW invests in and strengthens community well-being and resilience. Through these focus areas, we support programs and partnerships that are creating opportunities, strengthening support systems, and enhancing quality of life for individuals, families, and communities throughout our footprint.

Family & Youth Supports

Initiatives that strengthen children, youth and families through supportive services, education, skill-building, and connections to community resources.

Healthy Communities

Community-based outreach, prevention, and wellness initiatives that support whole-person health and strengthen conditions for healthy living and thriving communities.

Financial Stability

Community-based efforts that strengthen financial skills, increase access to resources, and help people prevent or navigate economic challenges.

Housing Security

Community-based outreach & stabilization efforts that address and/or mitigate risk of housing instability.

Community Collaboration

Collaborative initiatives that strengthen systems, coordination, and collective response.

** Applicants should identify which of these areas their work most closely aligns with to help contextualize their request within this framework.*

Registration & Application Process



Step 1: Register Your Organization

All applicants must register to access G UW’s online grant portal before submitting an application. The information collected during registration is used to create a basic organization profile.

During registration, you will provide:

- Organization name and address
- EIN (or fiscal sponsor EIN)
- Brief organization description
- Primary contact information

Once your profile is created, this information will automatically populate if you apply again in the future. You can review and make updates to your profile as needed.

Step 2: Submit Grant Application

As part of the application, you will be asked to provide the following organizational information and documentation:

- Organization type (must be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit or a fiscally sponsored program of a 501(c)(3))
- Mission statement
- IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter (PDF required)
- Certificate of Good Standing, issued within the last 18 months (PDF required)
- Most recent financial document available (audit, financial review, or compilation) (PDF required)
- Size of operating budget
- G UW region in which you are applying

This information helps G UW verify eligibility and ensures we understand the scope, structure, and reach of your organization before your application moves forward for review.

Section 1: Project Overview

In this section, you will provide key summary information about your request, including:

- Project or initiative title (or your organization's name if requesting general operating support)
- The GUW region you are applying to (you can only apply to one region per grant cycle)
- The amount requested (\$1,000 to \$10,000)
- Whether your request is for project support or general operating support
- Whether this request is for a new or an existing initiative
- Which GUW Impact Priority areas your work aligns with

This section helps reviewers quickly understand what you are requesting and how it fits within GUW's community impact framework.

Section 2: Project Description

In this section, you will describe your program or organization in more detail, including the population you serve, the geographic area you reach, and how your work aligns with GUW's impact priorities.

Strong responses clearly explain:

- What you do and who you serve;
- Why this funding is important right now;
- How this funding will help support or strengthen your work.

Section 3: Goals and Outcomes

This section focuses on how you define and measure success during the grant period. You will be asked to identify 2–3 measurable goals and explain:

- What you plan to accomplish with this funding
- Your specific goals and desired outcomes
- How you will measure progress and success
- What indicators or outcomes you will track

Strong responses focus on outcomes and impact, not just activities.

Section 4: Budget & Budget Narrative

In this section, you will complete the budget template embedded in the application to show how grant funds will be used and how those expenses support your project or organization. Budget proposals should be realistic and appropriate for the scope of your request, and directly connected to your proposed activities and goals.

What Happens After You Apply



Here's What Happens Once Your Proposal Is Submitted



**Note: A brief final report is required from all funded partners at the end of the grant period.*

How Proposals Are Evaluated

G UW's regional **Community Impact Committees (CIC)** use the 30-point scoring rubric below to evaluate each proposal. The CICs are teams of community volunteers who represent the regions they serve. Their insight helps ensure funding decisions reflect local priorities and lived experience--helping to ensure that resources are directed where they will make the greatest community difference.

Purpose & Alignment (5pts)

Clear description of project & alignment with Impact Priorities.

Relevance & Need (5pts)

Well-defined community need supported by data, trends, or context.

Goals & Impact (5pts)

Specific and realistic goals that describe the intended community impact.

Outcomes & Measurement (5pts)

Clear outcomes & a practical plan for tracking progress/success.

Budget (10pts)

Clear, reasonable, and aligned with the proposed activities and funding request.

Contacts & Support



Regional Contacts

If you have any questions about this funding opportunity or need support with your application, our Community Engagement Team is here to help. Please reach out to the team member serving your region.

Central – Scoop Welch scoop.welch@graniteuw.org

Greater Seacoast – Kerry Folkins kerry.folkins@graniteuw.org

Merrimack County – Christina Huntress christina.huntress@graniteuw.org

North Country – Nanci Carney nanci.carney@graniteuw.org

Northern NH – Laura Boucher laura.boucher@graniteuw.org

Southern – KR Epstein kr.epstein@graniteuw.org

Upper Valley – Katie Berndsen katie.berndsen@graniteuw.org

Accessibility Note

Granite United Way is committed to making this application process accessible to all organizations across our footprint. If you need this information in an alternative format or require accommodations to complete the application, please contact us using the information above. We are happy to support your participation.

Thank You

Thank you for the work you do to strengthen communities across our regions. GUW is proud to support the organizations and leaders who show up every day to meet local needs with care, dedication, and resilience.

We look forward to learning more about your work through the Community Grants process.

<https://www.graniteuw.org>

