

## **Martin County Area Foundation Grants**

Through the generosity of our community donors, the Martin County Area Foundation (initially the Fairmont Area Foundation) has been able to commit more than one million dollars since 1994 for programs and projects that enhance the quality of life in Martin County. A list of those grants can be seen on our website.

Annually, between March 1 and May 31, we accept applications from eligible organizations during a competitive grant cycle. We also accept inquiries year-round for emergencies or high need. Please refer to our grant guidelines and application form for further information.

If you have questions or ideas, please contact our administrative staff at the Fairmont Area Chamber of Commerce at 507-235-5547 or any member of our board of directors.

## **Martin County Area Foundation Grant Guidelines**

### **Guidelines for all grants:**

#### **Eligible applicants**

Tax-exempt public charities approved by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) as a 501(c)(3). Non-profits without 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status may apply, but must use an eligible applicant as a fiscal agent

#### **Preferred projects and programs**

1. Projects/programs must serve Martin County and the surrounding area.
2. The foundation focuses on Arts and Humanities, Community and Civic Affairs, Social and Economic Growth, Environment, and Youth.
3. MCAF makes grants for innovative and creative projects/programs that deal with changing community needs.
4. We prefer to fund projects that
  - Hold the greatest potential for long-term community benefits
  - Hold the best potential to succeed
  - Fulfill unmet community needs
  - Encourage more efficient use of community resources and services, and involve other citizens, community groups, and funding sources.
5. Projects must be able to be completed in a timely manner. For annual competitive grants, the project must be completed within two years of the grant award date. If the project is not completed within the two-year period, the award is withdrawn. The applicant may re-apply, but is not guaranteed funding. For emergency/high-need grants, the project must be completed within two months of the award or the award will be withdrawn.

#### **Grants not considered by MCAF**

- Annual operating expenses
- Annual fund drives for sustaining support
- Direct grant to an organization's endowment fund
- Religious organizations for non-community purposes
- Grants to individuals
- Grants for political activity

## **Application form, attachments and submission**

The application form is available on our website. It can be completed online, but must be printed and submitted to Martin County Area Foundation, P.O. Box 1055, Fairmont, MN 56031, or dropped off at the Fairmont Area Chamber of Commerce located at 323 East Blue Earth Avenue. The packet must include:

- ✓ A complete application signed by an authorized person
- ✓ The attachments listed in Section F of the application form

## **Additional information for the application, review and award process for annual competitive grants**

- Applications accepted between March 1 and May 31
- Applications must be received no later than the close of business on May 31
- Applications are reviewed by the board during the June board meeting. Applicants should expect to participate in a phone call or site visit from a board member prior to that June board meeting. Applicants may also receive communication from Saint Paul & Minnesota Community Foundations for additional documentation during the due diligence process
- Letters confirming or denying funding are sent in early July. Approved grantees receive a grant agreement letter that sets out the terms of the grant

The project must be completed by June 1<sup>st</sup>, two years following the grant request deadline. After the grant is awarded, but prior to receiving the grant check, MCAF requires a signed award letter. MCAF would also be honored to attend a board meeting or event to present you with the grant award. Upon completion of the project, we

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require that you fill out the [Grant Completion form](#) and return it with pictures of the project. This form will accompany the grant confirmation letter and can be found on our website. *The foundation also provides signage that can be displayed to acknowledge the grant.*

## **Additional information for the application, review and award process for emergency and high-need grants**

These grants are not intended to circumvent the annual competitive process. These funds are intended for situations where timeliness is of the essence; projects must be completed within two months of the award date. The board invites these requests for emergencies (natural disasters, structural failures, etc.) or where timely commitment of resources is critical or can help leverage other funds.

Initial inquiries can be made to the Fairmont Area Chamber of Commerce or to board members. Potential applicants should first review the grant guidelines and application to be sure they can meet the criteria if invited to apply. Applications should only be submitted upon the board's invitation to apply. The applicant should use the same application and guidelines used for all foundation grants.

Once an application is invited and received, the board will make every effort for a timely turnaround. The invitation to apply does not guarantee funding. If funding is awarded, the grant acceptance letter will require the same type of documentation as that for the competitive grants.