

Evanston Community Rapid Response Fund FAQ

Evanston Community Foundation has launched the Evanston Community Rapid Response (ECRR) Fund to foster a unified philanthropic response to address the impact of the novel coronavirus COVID-19 in the Evanston community. Several initial funders have already partnered in helping seed the fund, including the Finnegan Family Foundation, Hagerty Consulting, and Northwestern Dance Marathon 2020.



I am an individual affected by COVID-19. Can this Fund help me?

We understand many individuals and families have been affected by the outbreak already, and more will continue to be affected. On behalf of the Fund's partners, ECF is working to move resources to community-based organizations that are directly supporting local residents and families who are most affected by emerging health, economic, and social impacts. While the Fund is not able to provide grants to individuals, we will be funding community-based nonprofit organizations that have experience and history of providing people and families with services and support. The City of Evanston has also compiled a list of resources with information and links for City programs and services that may be helpful.

My organization is interested in resources from this Fund. Can we be considered?

We understand the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting nonprofits in many ways, including increased demand for their services, lost revenue due to closures and cancellations, as well as other challenges. We are working closely to ensure that the grants awarded meet the greatest needs in communities disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. In order to move resources quickly, we are not hosting a formal application process for the Fund at this time. Instead, we ask that you complete the survey to share information about your current needs so that we can determine the most optimal deployment of the funds.

How is ECF working with Evanston's extensive nonprofit community to better understand their immediate needs? Are there certain areas of emergency services being considered?

Evanston Community Foundation has been a bellwether for the nonprofit community for more than 30 years and we are uniquely positioned to support our nonprofit community with the endowment we have built.

Our staff is in daily communication with nonprofit and city leadership to identify emerging needs and opportunities for service alignment. In addition, we have gathered data through online surveys of nonprofits as well as community volunteers, to gauge the current and potential effects of the outbreak and to understand the implications on nonprofits and those served. While the pandemic's issues are continually evolving, we are consistently hearing that nonprofit organizations are in need of general operating funds to provide essential human services to residents that may be disproportionately impacted by COVID-19. These priority areas include, but are not limited to, emergency services that strengthen the social safety net:

- Interim Housing/Emergency Shelter
- Food and Supplies
- Rental Assistance
- Services to Seniors
- Supports for Children Impacted by School Closings and Their Families
- Childcare for first responders and essential service providers

Emergency Operational Supports

Many organizations are strained due to increased demand for services while simultaneously navigating decreased revenue due to cancelled fundraising events and revenue generating programming.

When will you share which organizations you will fund?

We anticipate making a first round of investments in the coming weeks and will publish the list of selected grantees on the evanstonforever.org website, along with short descriptions of the services and support they are providing. We hope that this will help the community navigate available resources.

I want to donate. Can I restrict my funding to a prioritized grantee?

To ensure we move resources as efficiently as possible and respond to needs of those organizations most impacted, we are unable to accept restricted or designated donations at this time. The ECRR Fund was created to build and coordinate the use of significant resources as quickly as possible. If you wish to support a specific nonprofit organization, we recommend you make a direct contribution to that organization.

Should I give to this Fund instead of making other donations?

This Fund was not created to be the only vehicle resourcing critical community activities during this outbreak. Rather it is working to facilitate getting more targeted resources into the community where it is needed most. If the ECRR Fund priorities align with your values, please consider making a donation. However, this is a critical time for so many, including the nonprofit organizations who have benefited from your giving in the past, as well as those who've had to cancel their annual fundraising events or depend heavily on public gatherings. Please continue to give to organizations you regularly support, and those that need your help at this crucial time. Now is the time to double down for our community as we gain greater awareness of the depth and scale of the long-term ramifications of the outbreak.

Based upon the charitable structure of ECRR Fund, our grants are limited to 501c3 nonprofit organizations, groups fiscally sponsored by a 501c3 nonprofit organization, or other charitable organizations able to receive a tax-deductible contribution.

Is there a fee to contribute?

The only fee to contribute to the ECRR Fund is the 2.4% credit card processing fee. There are no fees associated with contributions made by check. In addition, with a focus on moving resources into the community in this critical time, ECF is not charging any fees to administer the ECRR Fund. One hundred percent of the donations (after credit card fees) will go to nonprofits serving our community.

How will the Fund shift gears if needed?

The ECRR Fund's priorities may evolve as our community adapts to the COVID-19 outbreak. We will continue to prioritize those most affected, recognizing deep and historic inequities that are likely to be magnified in times of crisis. Crisis philanthropy recognizes the need to provide immediate resources for triage, as well as the importance of recovery resources to ensure community resilience.

Contact Us

General questions & inquiries about the Fund can be directed to er@evanstonforever.org.

Interested donors and/or fund partners can contact Monique Jones, CEO and President, at jones@evanstonforever.org, or Joi Russell, Vice President, Philanthropy and Communications, at russell@evanstonforever.org.