

Nonprofit Growth & Sustainability Grants

One of Evanston Community Foundation's goals is to support a thriving nonprofit sector in Evanston. There are several types of grants that fall under this category including **General Operating** and **Capacity Building** Grants.

General Operating Grants

We provide **unrestricted, flexible general operating funding** to current or previous ECF grantees with a demonstrated commitment to racial equity in mission, vision, and practice.

This grant is open to Evanston-based nonprofits with IRS 501(c)3 or 501(c)6 tax status or fiscal sponsor that serve the Evanston community.

Please visit our online [Grant Cycle Calendar](#) to view all upcoming grant cycle important dates.

General Operating Grants

ECF provides **unrestricted, flexible general operating funding** to current or previous ECF grantees with a demonstrated commitment to racial equity in mission, vision, and practice.

Important Dates and Deadlines

January 22, 2024: Applications Open

February 20, 2024 at 11:59PM (CST): Applications Due

Week of May 13th: Grant Recipients Notified

Please view the full grants [Calendar](#) for all important application dates and deadlines.

Eligibility

This checklist will help you evaluate if you are eligible for a general operating grant. If your organization does not meet the eligibility requirements for the General Operating grant opportunity, we suggest you check out our Capacity-Building or E-Town Innovation Opportunities.

Please review the following information carefully before beginning an application:

For general operating grants, organizations must:

- ☐ Have IRS 501(c)3 or 501(c)6 tax status or fiscal sponsor
- ☐ Have an Evanston address AND serve the Evanston community
- ☐ Have been in existence for at least three years (or be the result of merging organizations with at least a three-year history)
- ☐ Have received and successfully completed at least two ECF grants in the last four years
- ☐ Demonstrate strong commitment to racial equity through the organization's mission, vision, values, and work
- ☐ Applicants must have at least one paid staff member
- ☐ Have a current strategic plan and/or [strategic framework](#) as well as a method for measuring progress and community impact
- ☐ Demonstrate effective [board governance](#)

This grant opportunity will not support the following:

- Specific Programs or Projects requests
- Specific Capacity Building requests

Funding Parameters

Organizations can apply for:

- One-year grants up to \$25,000
- Up to one Nonprofit Growth and Sustainability Grant (either capacity building OR general operating support grant) during a 12-month period – you may apply for other grants, such as E-Town Innovation grants, or other ECF grants cycles
- If your organization is awarded a general operating grant, your organization will not be eligible to apply for a Capacity Building grant within a 12-month period.

Evaluation Criteria

Please keep in mind that grants are reviewed by community members who may or may not be familiar with the applicant organization. Therefore, be sure to communicate clearly and concisely about the work and the difference it makes for the Evanston community. Do not worry about phrasing things just right.

Applications will be evaluated using the following core criteria that reflects ECF mission, vision, values, and commitment to racial equity:

- ☐ Racial Equity and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Practices
- ☐ Evanston Impact
- ☐ Organizational Vision and Plan
- ☐ General Operating Support Impact

Application Materials

Applicants can find all applications and their respective questions and materials — through our **GLM** online grants system. For the General Operating grant application will need to submit the following materials:

- ☐ Current fiscal year operating budget including revenue sources (if you have it)
- ☐ Prior fiscal year operating budget including revenue sources (if you have it)
- ☐ Prior fiscal year budget-to-actuals
- ☐ A brief budget narrative to address any significant variances in the annual operating budget or actuals (if needed only)
- ☐ Demographics of executive staff leadership, full time staff, and board members
- ☐ Diversity/Equal Opportunity/Racial Equity Policy

How to Apply

Applicants must submit all application materials through ECF's [online grant system \(GLM\)](#). Applicants can submit application materials at any time while the grant period is open.

Please view the [Calendar](#) for all important application dates and deadlines.

We invite applicants to attend an upcoming Community Information Session or schedule a 1:1 consultation for this grant opportunity with an ECF Program Officer. You can register for a Community Information Session or schedule a 1:1 consultation using the following links:

2024 Nonprofit Growth and Sustainability (General Operating)
Community Information Session #1 - January 31, 2024 6PM-7PM

- ☐ Registration Link:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZEld-ytpz8pHdd1y6ffj3aiCJE5rAh7DyIR>

2024 Nonprofit Growth and Sustainability (General Operating)
Community Information Session #2 - February 7, 2024 12PM-1PM

❑ Registration Link:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMsde2hqDovE93VmWSUu6P7OyNjB2UPNtYN](https://us02web.zoom.us/join/https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMsde2hqDovE93VmWSUu6P7OyNjB2UPNtYN)

2024 Nonprofit Growth and Sustainability (General Operating) 1:1
Consultation - Various Dates/Times (Calendly)

❑ Scheduling Link: <https://calendly.com/beltrano/2024-ngs-general-operating-1-1-consultation>

If you would like to request access to a computer or assistance at any point throughout the application process, please reach out to ECF Program Officer – Thriving Nonprofits, Jenna Beltrano at beltrano@evanstonforever.org