

## Western New York Grant Guidelines

Western New York Foundation is a philanthropic organization created to support activities that improve the quality of life for people who live in the seven counties of Western New York. Since 1951, the Western New York Foundation has supported exemplary nonprofit leaders and organizations meeting the community needs of the Western New York region. Our grant support is focused on building specific organizational capacities in several areas that include developing strategic communications, expanding resources, enhancing technology and the physical environment, and strengthening internal operations.

What do we hope to accomplish through capacity building investments? The Foundation believes that our focus on building a stronger nonprofit community will help to improve the quality of life in Western New York. Our goal is to help nonprofits serving Western New York populations operate more effectively and efficiently by making targeted investments in specific capacities that will meet the unique characteristics and needs of each individual nonprofit. We will ultimately impact the lives of more people in the Western New York Region if we invest in enhancements to the provision of services that serve to strengthen the nonprofit's ability to program, plan for long term sustainability, catalyze critical periods of growth, and align human and financial resources towards organizational effectiveness.

How do we do this? By helping nonprofits meet challenges and thrive in changing and challenging environments. The Foundation's approach is multi-faceted and tailored to each individual nonprofit's need. We take into consideration the agency's mission, populations served, age, budget size and geographical location. We want our decision making process to be informed and thoughtful, and seek purposeful and candid conversations with our nonprofits and funding colleagues. Simultaneously, we are looking for new answers in a new era and pursuing innovative solutions.

The Foundation provides grants to:

- 1.) Remove impediments to day-to-day operations and enhance nonprofit functioning in areas such as administration, finance, human resources, technology and facility management.
- 2.) Help our grantees implement strategic planning priorities during critical periods of growth and revitalization.
- 3.) Support communications efforts such as marketing, online presence, media relations and social media to raise awareness and attract attention and resources to the organization.
- 4.) Develop financial stability by increasing the ability of the nonprofit to develop necessary resources for efficient and effective operations.
- 5.) Support collaboration and strategic relationship efforts that will result in better and expanded services.
- 6.) Support contracted expertise to assess nonprofit needs and design a plan to increase organizational effectiveness that will help meet current challenges and healthy growth.
- 7.) Institutionalize systems that evaluate service effectiveness.
- 8.) Enhance the provision of care or services by strengthening the nonprofit's ability to program.

## **Western New York Grant Programs**

### **Western New York Foundation Small Grant Program**

The Small Grant Program is an easy-to-engage-in, competitive grant program. Applicants may apply for a grant award between \$500 and \$10,000. These grants are generally made for a 12 month period only.

The Small Grant Program supports exploration of strategic partnerships and capacity building requests that lead to greater capacity and improved productivity. Funding is for specific activities or projects designed to strengthen an organization's governance, leadership, technology, programmatic and administrative capacity. The foundation will give priority to proposals that foster collaboration and reflect a comprehensive approach to organizational development, promote community engagement, and make Western New York a better place to live and work.

It is the Foundation's desire to work with small to mid-sized organizations that have a documented track record and are experiencing a significant period of growth. Our approach is to support adaptability, nurture resilience, and support efforts towards long-term sustainability.

Priority will be given to organizations working with populations at or below the poverty line level, refugees, and vulnerable communities subjected to the full spectrum of abuse, addiction, mental illness and trauma and nonprofits working in rural communities.

### **Western New York Foundation Capacity Assessment Program**

Western New York Foundation Capacity Assessment Program is a competitive program for nonprofits that wish to build their ability to perform well. The program offers the opportunity to the nonprofit to engage in a process to assess its capacity needs in coordination with, and support of, an organizational development consultant. It is the Foundation's desire to work with small to mid-sized organizations that have a documented track record. Our approach is to support adaptability, nurture resilience, and support efforts towards long-term sustainability.

Multiple members of the organization's staff and board will participate in an organizational self-assessment of key capacity elements that has been designed to pinpoint current capacity status and opportunities for transformative growth and change. Results will be examined with the help of a consultant and culminate in a long-term capacity building plan for the organization that includes the development of action plan priorities with goals and progress measurement. Consultants will work with your organization over a period of time to achieve the following objectives:

- 1.) Review and analyze the results of the assessment (examination)
- 2.) Design a capacity matrix based on current state of the agency (benchmarking)
- 3.) Develop a capacity building plan (long-term sustainability plan)
- 4.) Develop an action plan using a format that aligns with the capacity building plan to include goal and progress measurements (accountability and evaluation)
- 5.) Consultation and technical assistance (initial action plan Implementation)
- 5.) CEO personality assessment (optional)

Understanding the nonprofits current capacity will enable it to design an improvement plan that builds on its strengths and addresses the organization's weaknesses in a manner that will build nonprofit adaptability and resilience.

Priority will be given to organizations working with populations at or below the poverty line level, refugees, and vulnerable communities subjected to the full spectrum of abuse, addiction, mental illness and trauma.

### **Western New York Foundation Capacity Building Grant Program**

The Capacity Building Grant Program is a highly competitive program. Applicants may apply for a grant award in the amount of \$10,000 or more; the average grant award range is between \$15,000 and \$50,000.

The Capacity Building Program supports exploration of strategic partnerships and capacity building requests that lead to greater capacity and improved productivity. Funding is for specific activities or projects designed to strengthen an organization's governance, leadership, technology, programmatic and administrative capacity. It is the Foundation's desire to work with small to medium-sized organization where we can realize greater impact in our approach to support adaptability, nurture resilience, and support efforts towards long-term sustainability. Initiatives rank higher if they:

- 1.) Assist in making good and positive strides during a critical period of growth.
- 2.) Strengthen the ability to program and impact more families in the WNY region.
- 3.) Strengthen the ability to work with a broader range of constituents and allies.
- 4.) Attract new financial partners, favorably affect earned revenue numbers, or enhance fee based revenue streams.
- 5.) Reflect a comprehensive approach or are a key component of your organization's strategic plan for long term sustainability
- 6.) Foster collaboration

### **ELIGIBILITY**

In order to be eligible, you must be able to answer yes to the following eligibility questions:

- Your organization must be physically located in one of the following seven counties of Western New York: Allegany, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie, Genesee, Niagara, and Wyoming
- Your organization has not received a payment in the past two (2) years for a grant approved by the Western New York Foundation. This does not include President or Trustee Discretionary grants.
- You have read the policies and instructions on the Western New York website ([www.wnyfoundation.org](http://www.wnyfoundation.org)) and are not applying as any of the types of groups or uses that the Foundation does not support.
- You have filed three (3) or more years of 990 returns.