

FY2017 MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL NONPROFIT GRANTS PROCESS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the Purpose of the Council's Grants Process?

The Montgomery County Council believes that strong partnerships with nonprofit organizations are critical to meeting County objectives. Accordingly, the Council will consider funding programs and projects that advance the County's services, goals, and objectives in areas including, but not limited to, the following: health and human services, education, recreation, and economic development.

Given the difficult economic times for many of our residents, the Council continues to be particularly interested in proposals that provide emergency and other assistance to the neediest members of our community.

Organizations interested in applying for arts and humanities grants should contact the Arts and Humanities Council at 301-565-3805 or visit their web site for information on grants at: www.creativemoco.com/grants

Organizations interested in applying for adult literacy or ESOL grants, please contact Ms. Kathy Stevens, Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy at 301-881-3177 or program@mcael.org. Their web site address is www.mcael.org.

Please note that nonprofit organizations may also apply for funding to the County Executive's Community Collaboration Grants through a separate application. Most of the narrative questions on both the County Council and County Executive grant applications are identical, and the deadline for both applications is January 13, 2016. Information about both the County Council and County Executive Grants can be found at the County's One Stop Grants Portal found at: www.MCMDgrants.fluidreview.com

Who is Eligible to Apply?

Any organization, institution or association incorporated as a private, not-for-profit organization designated under 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Service that provides services or activities in Montgomery County is eligible to apply.

Grants will be awarded for projects in Montgomery County and for Montgomery County residents only. Organization headquarters can be outside of Montgomery County as long as the organization demonstrates that the activities and services supported by grant funds provide services in the County and to Montgomery County residents.

How Do I Apply?

Organizations interested in applying for a FY2017 Council grant may access the application at www.MCMDgrants.fluidreview.com.

Please note: Applications may only be submitted via the County Grants Portal www.MCMDgrants.fluidreview.com. Please contact the County Grants Manager at County.Council@MontgomeryCountyMD.com or 240 777-7935 if you have any challenges with online submittal.

May we apply if we have already submitted the same project for a Community Development Block Grant or a Community Service Grant?

If you have already applied for a FY2017 Community Development Block Grant or Community Service Grant, you may also apply for a Council grant in the event the Executive does not recommend your organization for funding. However, **you MUST submit a Council application** through the Grants Portal, located at the website listed above. Please note that this is a change from prior years.

What is the Deadline for Applications?

January 13, 2016 4 p.m. is the deadline for receipt of applications. **No applications will be accepted after January 13, 2016. Upon submission, you will receive an acknowledgement that your application has been received.**

Is the online application a joint application for both the County Council and County Executive grant programs?

While both applications are similar and use the same online application process, it is not a joint application. Applicant organizations will identify the grant programs they are applying for on the first page of the online application. NOTE: This is a change from last year.

Should you wish to apply to both programs (County Council and County Executive), you are still required to complete two applications. Answers may be 'cut and pasted' from one application to another.

Can a non-profit submit multiple grant requests in one application for a Council Grant?

Only funds for a single program can be requested in each application. However, an organization can submit additional applications for different program requests.

What is the Review Process?

The Council has appointed a community Grants Advisory Group to review and evaluate applications. Applicants may be asked to respond to questions from the Grants Advisory Group in a brief question and answer session. These sessions are tentatively planned to occur in late February and March. Applicants will be contacted with additional information on the Question and Answer sessions.

The Grants Advisory Group will base their evaluations on the following criteria established by the County Council: cost-benefit; public benefit; strength of organization and strength of proposal. Additional detail on the evaluation criteria is contained in the attachment to this document. They are also available as Appendix I of the Council Grant Application Instructions. The Instructions and evaluation criteria can be accessed by clicking on the 'Resources' tab on the County's Grants Portal www.MCMDgrants.fluidreview.com.

The Grants Advisory Group is scheduled to issue a written report to the County Council by April 29, 2016. The report will be available on the Council's web site and will contain one-page evaluations of each grant application reviewed by the Grants Advisory Group. This written report will not contain scorings or rankings of applications.

In mid-May, the Council's Grants Manager will provide recommendations regarding funding of grant applications. Further detail will be provided later in the spring. In late May, the County Council will make funding decisions as part of the FY 2017 budget.

Funding for any selected proposals will only become available approximately 60-120 days after July 1, 2016, after execution of a required contract with Montgomery County Government that includes reporting and other requirements, including insurance. Organizations should not deliver any services or purchase any goods prior to the execution of the contract with the County, and receipt of a valid Purchase Order. The grant application provides further details.

Is There a Maximum Grant Amount?

The Council has not set a limit on the amount of funding an applicant can request. However, for the last several years, approximately 75%-80% of the proposals funded by the Council through its grants review process were \$55,000 or less.

Is There a Limit on the Number of Grant Proposals from an Organization?

The Council has not set a limit on the number of proposals from a single organization.

Is There a Restriction on the Types of Activities or Requests That Can Be Funded?

Generally not. However, grants requests for Arts and Humanities are handled by the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County (<http://creativemoco.com/grants>), and grants for English as a Second Language are handled by the Montgomery County Coalition for Adult English Literacy (MCAEL) (<http://www.mcael.org/grants>). In addition to program-related requests, the Council has funded capital equipment purchases, administrative support, staff training, and other “overhead” type requests. They must be specifically described and identified for a specific purpose. It is important to keep in mind that funds are for one year only.

Is There an Overall Amount of Funding Available for Grants?

For FY2017, the Council has not yet made a decision whether to set an overall funding target for grants. Last year, the Council ultimately funded nearly \$2.7 million in Council grants, as part of the Council’s actions on the FY2016 operating budget.

What Changes/Additional Information are Required in This Year’s Application?

Once again, the County is using an online application process. There are a few changes in this year’s process. For example, the program budget will be submitted by attaching a separate Excel spread sheet. Instructions are contained within the process, but more information on changes will be provided at the three workshops being held jointly to discuss County Council and County Executive grants Applications submitted using prior year’s applications forms will not be accepted.

Who Do I Contact if I Have Questions?

Questions concerning grant applications should be directed to Joan Schaffer, Council Grants Manager, at 240-777-7935 or council.grants@montgomerycountymd.gov.

General information about the Council Grants Process can also be found on the County Council’s web page at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/grants/council_grants.html. You may also access the page by going to the Council’s home page, www.montgomerycountymd.gov/Council, and clicking the link on at the bottom right side of the main page, **Council Grant Information.**