

FY2015 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.

In these very difficult economic times for many of our residents, the Council is 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. Heather Ritchie, 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 process. 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 15, 2014. To learn more about the County Executive's grant application process, go to <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/mcgtmpl.asp?url=/content/pio/grants.asp>.

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 FY2015 Council grant may access the application on the Council's web site at: www.montgomerycountymd.gov/council. The application can be accessed by clicking the "Featured Topics" tab on the bottom right side of the main Council page.

If you do not have access to the Internet, you may call 240-777-7935 and an application will be sent to you in the mail. You may also pick up an application at Legislative Information Services at the Council Office Building, 5th floor, 100 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, MD 20850.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THERE ARE TWO OPTIONS FOR SUBMITTING A COUNCIL GRANT APPLICATION:

- 1. PAPER COPIES** (6 copies of application and 6 sets of all required attachments hand-delivered or sent by postal mail to the Legislative Information Services Office of the Montgomery County Council, 100 Maryland Avenue, 5th floor, Rockville, Maryland 20850).

OR

- 2. ELECTRONIC FORMAT:** Applicants may submit applications and required attachments electronically by following the instructions on Pages 3-5 of the Council Grant Application. If you choose this submission option, we strongly urge you to submit your application well in advance of the deadline. In that way, if you encounter any technical difficulties, you will have time to address them or submit your application in hard copy prior to the deadline.

If you have already applied for a FY2015 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. You do not need to complete a separate Council grant application, although you must complete page 9 of the Council grant application and respond to any of the questions on page 10 that are not included in your CDBG/CSG application.

What is the Deadline for Applications?

January 15, 2014, 4 p.m. is the deadline for receipt of applications. They must be received in Council offices by that time in order to be considered for funding. **Please note that no applications will be accepted after January 15, 2014.**

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 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 Appendix I of the Council Grant Application.

The Grants Advisory Group is scheduled to issue a written report to the County Council by April 25, 2014. 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 early 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 2015 budget.

Funding for any selected proposals will only become available approximately 60-120 days after July 1, 2014, 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 \$50,000 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. 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 FY2015, the Council has not yet made a decision whether to set an overall funding target for grants. Last year, the Council ultimately funded \$2.25 million in Council grants, as part of the Council’s actions on the FY2014 operating budget.

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

There have been several small changes made to the application over the past few years. Please be sure to use the FY2015 application. Specific changes this year include:

- Organizations submitting ‘paper’ applications are asked to submit six, rather than five copies.
- Some of the text in the Application introduction has been edited to add clarity.
- Clarifying language has been added to the question about applications submitted to both the County Executive and the County Council.
- In question 3, we have asked about collaboration/coordination with groups who provide *similar*, in addition to complementary services.
- A question has been added asking organizations to indicate the percentage of Board Members who make financial contributions to the organization.
- Small changes have been made to the naming conventions for electronically submitted attachments. We have also asked for you to include the name of your organization on each attachment.

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. See the link on the left column of the main page, **Council Grant Information**.