

Resolution No.: 18-1298
Introduced: October 31, 2018
Adopted: November 15, 2018

**COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

Lead Sponsor: County Council

SUBJECT: County Council's FY 2020 Process for Grant Proposals from Non-Profit Organizations

Background

1. For the past fourteen years, the Council has adopted resolutions to guide the Council's internal process for reviewing applications and awarding funds to non-profit organizations. In each year, the Council publicized the Council Grant application; held at least one community grants workshop; required all organizations to submit a Council Grant application form by a stated deadline; convened a Grants Advisory Group to provide non-binding comments on grant proposals; received recommendations from the Council Grants Manager; and made final funding decisions.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland approves the following resolution:

1. The Council affirms that partnerships with the non-profit community are critical to meeting community needs. These partnerships may come through competitive contracts and non-competitive contracts, and from proposals made directly from non-profit agencies to the County Executive or Council.
2. For FY 2020, the Council will continue to have a Council Grants process that will require non-profit agencies seeking funds to submit an online application. The Council will engage in discussions with the incoming Executive about potential changes to the Community Grants process. The Council requests the Executive agree to the use of a common application and procedures that require non-profit agencies to submit one application to the both the Executive and Council. If the Executive and Council agree to any changes, updates will be posted on the Council Grants website and be broadly disseminated by press release and e-mail. The application will be posted on the Council's website by December 5, 2018. The deadline for applications will be January 15, 2019. No applications will be accepted beyond this date. While the Council is not interested in a burdensome application process, a common requirement for information enhances the Council's decision process and improves the County's accountability to taxpayers.

3. For FY 2020, the Council is interested in proposals for programs and services that assist disadvantaged County residents. The Council seeks proposals from organizations that exhibit cultural proficiency, use a racial equity lens in delivering services, and demonstrate commitment to organizational sustainability with diverse funding sources. The Council is also interested in proposals for specific programs, including: before and after-school programs for youth (especially programs that serve disconnected youth who do not qualify for extracurricular activities requiring academic eligibility at Montgomery County Public Schools); innovative programs that provide linkages between education and workforce; and programs addressing social isolation among senior populations. In addition, the Council is interested in proposals for programs that accelerate the County's greenhouse gas reduction goals.
4. The Council will reach out to non-profit agencies through existing contact lists, grant application workshops, regional Citizens Advisory Boards, and other communications to facilitate an open and fair process. These efforts will inform non-profit agencies about what they may seek funds for and what the requirements are to receive County funds through a non-competitive contract.
5. The Council is not placing limits on the amount that non-profit agencies may request or the number of applications submitted. Applications may be submitted for capital or operating funds. The Council encourages coordination and collaboration that results in a single application by a lead agency for a group of organizations. While this is encouraged, it does not prohibit any organization from individually applying for a Council Grant.
6. The Council will convene a Grants Advisory Group as a part of the FY 2020 process. The Grants Advisory Group will be asked to review and evaluate the applications. The Council will provide information on the evaluation criteria in the Council Grant application. Grants Advisory Group members will be informed that their recommendations are advisory and final decisions are made by the Council. The Grants Advisory Group will be asked to report to the Council by the end of April 2019. The Council will request panels from organizations with related expertise to review grant applications in areas such as workforce development, homelessness and housing programs, safety-net clinics, and food programs. Non-profit organization funding requests for County matching funds for State Bond Bills will be reviewed by Council Committees. The Council may modify the review process based on the number and type of grant applications received. For FY 2020, members of the Grants Advisory Group may serve on the board of an organization applying for a grant. Board membership will be disclosed and the Grants Manager will assign grant reviews in a manner that avoids conflicts.
7. As a part of the FY 2020 process, the Council will require non-profit organizations awarded funding as an Executive or Council Community Grant to submit a brief year-end report describing the results achieved with the funding. These Final Outcomes Reports are due to be received by the Council by September 12, 2019. The Council will continue to seek ways for the County to better evaluate outcomes, including outcomes from programs and services provided by the non-profit sector. The Council requests the Grants Advisory Group review the FY 2018 Outcomes Reports for any programs that seek continued funding for FY 2020.

8. Non-profit agencies seeking funds for arts and humanities should apply directly to the Arts and Humanities Council, and those seeking funds for literacy, including ESOL, should apply directly to MCAEL, the Montgomery Coalition for Adult English Literacy. If any Council Grant applications fall into these categories, the organization will be referred to the appropriate organization; such applications will not be reviewed by the Grants Advisory Group. The Council will make final funding decisions for the Arts and Humanities Council and MCAEL as a part of its overall budget process. For FY 2020, the Council intends that grant awards to community-based non-profits for arts and humanities or literacy and ESOL programs will be made through grant programs administered by the Arts and Humanities Council and MCAEL, respectively.
9. The Grants Advisory Group, Arts and Humanities Council, MCAEL, the Council Grants Manager, Council Committees, and the Council will make interim recommendations at various stages of the application review process. However, funding decisions are not final until the Council has completed its deliberations, reconciled expenditures and revenues, and acted on the County Government FY 2020 operating budget in May 2019.
10. The Council will engage the incoming Executive and Executive staff on option for substantially reforming the Community Grants process starting in FY 2021, focusing on options that would move the awarding of individual grants out of the January to May budget cycle and would align Executive and Council priorities and look at options for two-year grant awards.

This is a correct copy of Council action.



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Clerk of the Council