

## INTRODUCTION

The Women's Fund of Central Ohio is a transformational grantmaker committed to creating social change to advance economic empowerment and leadership opportunities for women and girls. Since our first demonstration grant in 2002, we have invested in equitable solutions that address root cause issues and systemic barriers. Through research and data, The Women's Fund identifies best practices and focuses impact. We have engaged over 1,000 community members as grant readers to inform what the community needs, including investing in programs others wouldn't fund. Grant partner programs have sparked social change with a ripple effect impacting tens of thousands of people across central Ohio.

**Our mission** is to transform the lives of women and girls by mobilizing the collective power and passion of all people working together.

**Our vision** is a future where gender equality is the norm in life and work.

## ANNUAL GRANTMAKING PROCESS

We no longer require Letters of Intent (LOI) prior to submitting full applications.

As you consider applying for a grant, read through this document in its entirety for detailed information on what types of proposals we will accept.

The Women's Fund will support new or established programs focused on social change for women and girls. Programs may include single day or multi-day programming, in-person or virtual programming, or initiatives that may not directly serve individuals when focused on outreach or advocacy. We will support operating costs for your program including costs related to childcare needs, transportation, or stipends.

Grants will be made in amounts up to \$20,000 for programs that will take place between January 1, 2022 and December 31, 2022. Funds will be announced in February 2022 and will be retroactively applicable to any expenses after January 1, 2022. Funds will be released within thirty days of the award announcement assuming all required documents have been signed and submitted.

The Women's Fund reviews grant applications through a participatory grant reading process that welcomes a diverse group of trained community members who review the grant applications using our selection criteria. Grant readers make valuable suggestions to ensure that The Women's Fund's work in the community is equitable and impactful.

Grant reader recommendations are then sent to The Women's Fund Grants Committee that is comprised of board members and veteran grant readers who review the recommendations and create a recommended funding slate within the available budget dollars. The Grants Committee may request additional information about a grant proposal prior to deciding. The recommended funding slate is then presented to the Women's Fund Board of Directors who approves the final funding decision.

All applicants will receive email confirmation of their grant submission. Additionally, all applicants who submit a full application will be provided written feedback from the grant application readers about their application.

## OUR GRANTMAKING PHILOSOPHY

### Our grantmaking philosophy is to create social change.

We seek to fund efforts that address the root causes of social problems or explore new approaches to solving systemic issues. We are interested in funding efforts that go beyond providing direct service and that create change in the larger system of how we live, work, and learn. Social change programs create a ripple effect to the larger community, meaning that the outcomes of the program go beyond those directly served and create an additional layer of those who are indirectly impacted by the program.

The Women's Fund also supports organizations conducting social change advocacy efforts within our priority areas. Advocacy is defined as working to affect the actions of community systems, any level of government administrative practices, regulations, executive actions, or judicial actions. Advocacy activities may include but are not limited to public education, policy development, community organizing, research, and leadership development of women and girls.

### Our grantmaking theory of change is that gender inequities are driven by rigid gender norms that intersect with other biases related to race, age, and class, among others.

Gender norms are the implicit or explicit rules, expectations, and standards placed on both sexes regarding how they should behave and be treated by society. Gender norms often intersect with implicit bias to create gender bias.

Implicit biases are the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. These biases, which encompass both favorable and unfavorable assessments, are activated involuntarily and often without awareness based on any number of identities we perceive in others such as gender, age, or race.

### Our grantmaking priorities are based on the strategic priorities of The Women's Fund.

The strategic priorities are focused on creating economic empowerment and leadership for women and girls. Programs must align with one or more of the focus areas outlined below.

#### Economic Empowerment:

- **Childcare and the benefits cliff:** Accessibility and affordability of childcare is the best opportunity to influence the cliff effect – when a minimal increase in hourly wages results in the complete termination of a benefit and a dramatic net loss of resources.
- **Access to contraception:** Enabling women to control when to have children allows them to shape their financial, educational, and professional futures. To continue the progress we have made in the reduction of teen pregnancies, unplanned pregnancies, and infant mortality, it is critical to remove barriers to accessing all contraceptive methods.
- **Reduction of teen pregnancy via comprehensive, medically accurate sex education:** Access to contraception and comprehensive, medically accurate sex education have been significant factors in the reduction in teen pregnancy and unintended pregnancies over the last decade.
- **Paid leave:** Current policies do not adequately support women striving to meet the obligations of work and family. Extending access to paid family leave strengthens women and families, reduces gender and economic disparities, and has a positive impact on local economies.

- **Pay equity:** Closing the wage gap between women and men and establishing pay equity is critical to ensuring women maximize their economic potential.

#### **Leadership for Women and Girls:**

- **Women running for elected office:** The positive impacts of women in office are abundant and widespread. Promoting more women to run for public office will maximize the policies that positively impact women and families.
- **Advocacy training on voting rights and informed voting:** All voices have the power to create change, and one of the most powerful ways to do so is through civic engagement. Voting is still one of the best ways for women to ensure that our elected leaders support policies that will expand opportunity and empower women.
- **Women's leadership and influence on policy:** When women are in leadership positions they tend to introduce or create policies that are family-friendly and more equitable for women.
- **Girls' leadership:** Building girls' leadership is a fundamental element to them becoming economically empowered women leaders.
- **Women's philanthropy:** Growing the number of women who are bold in their philanthropy will not only grow the funding stream to accomplish social change, but also create a generative and growing community of women leaders.

#### **ELIGIBILITY**

- All funds must be distributed through nonprofit organizations that have been recognized as 501(c)(3) entities by the federal government. Applicants without 501(c)(3) status must engage a fiscal agent to administer their grant funds.
- All programs must serve women and girls in one or more of the central Ohio counties of Delaware, Fairfield, Franklin, Licking, Madison, Pickaway, or Union.
- All programs must align with at least one of our strategic priorities.
- All programs must clearly articulate and address at least one of the five shifts of social change.
- All programs must apply a gender lens and address gender norms.
- Funds may not be used for:
  - Organizations that do not provide a respectful atmosphere for people who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, questioning, transgender, intersex, or asexual.
  - Organizations that seek to restrict reproductive rights.
  - Programs that promote religious activities and/or beliefs.
  - Political campaigns or promotion of candidates for public office.
  - Advancement of capital or endowment campaigns.
  - Event sponsorship.
  - Scholarships that fund individual students.
  - Co-educational programs that do not clearly communicate a specific and unique focus on women and girls.

## YOUR COMMITMENT

The Women’s Fund of Central Ohio works in partnership with its grantees to transform the lives of women and girls across central Ohio. We expect that the investment of our grant funds will be matched by the recipients’ investment of time, wisdom, and other resources. We expect that grant partners will:

- Submit required evaluation reports (one at the mid-year point and one at the end of the grant period)
- Participate in our learning community
- Periodically provide stories of impact and/or pictures of the program to be used in Women’s Fund materials and marketing
- Participate in grant partner training activities

## DATES AND DEADLINES

Online Application Opens	Monday, September 20
Grant Workshop via Zoom	Wednesday, September 29, 12:00 - 1:00 PM
Technical Assistance	September 20 through October 29
Grant Application Due	Friday, October 29, 5:00 PM
Grants Announced	February 2022
Funds Released	Within 30 days of funding announcement
Mid-Year Evaluation Survey Due	August 1, 2022
Final Evaluation Report Due	February 1, 2023

## GRANT WORKSHOP

The Women’s Fund will hold a grant workshop which is not mandatory but is recommended to understand The Women’s Fund’s grantmaking goals, objectives, and process. This workshop will be held on Wednesday, September 29<sup>th</sup> from 12:00-1:00 PM. [Click here to register.](#)

For those unable to attend during this time, a recording of the workshop will promptly be posted on our website for applicants to view at their convenience.

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

To aid in the online grant application process and to answer general questions, The Women’s Fund team will also provide technical assistance to grant applicants. If you need assistance, please email [grants@womensfundcentralohio.org](mailto:grants@womensfundcentralohio.org) and a team member will get back to you as soon as possible.