



2022 Wells County

Community Needs Assessment

Grant Qualifications, Guidelines and Application Procedure

Four Critical Areas: Affordable Housing, Child Care and Early Childhood Education, Substance Abuse Disorder and Workforce Development

The Wells County Foundation, Inc. is pleased to announce the **continuation** of a proactive grant opportunity for 2026.

The Foundation embarked on conducting a Comprehensive Community Needs Assessment in 2022. The Foundation embarked on this project to help guide its grantmaking and scholarship programs.

The process for developing the assessment included a variety of sources to identify the most compelling needs in the community including the following: community members were invited to participate in input sessions at the Foundation where issues were raised and discussed; interviews with key leaders and review of important research documents for Wells County.

Based on extensive community discussions, four areas have been identified that will be critical to the future of Wells County: **Affordable Housing (particularly for low-income families), Child Care and Early Childhood Education, Substance Abuse Disorder and Workforce Development.**

Throughout 2023 and 2024 and 2025, the Foundation awarded \$338,142 through special grant cycles to address these four critical areas.

The Wells County Foundation, Inc. has received a grant of \$725,000 from Lilly Endowment Inc. through the Community Support Grant component of the ninth phase of its Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT IX) initiative. Believing the critical areas identified through the Needs Assessment remain relevant, The Foundation Board has approved utilizing these grant funds to continue to award grants

within the four critical areas to organizations seeking to develop or enhance projects/programming which propose to have positive community impact within an identified critical area.

Please refer to the 2022 Wells County Community Needs Assessment www.wellscountyfound.org to review the critical areas in more depth.

In general, the Foundation does not award multi-year grants. With the exception of the scholarship funds administered by the Foundation, grants are not made to individuals. Awards are made with the understanding that the Foundation has no obligation or commitment to provide any additional support. Awards to make up operating deficits, post-event or after-the-fact situations will not be made.

The Foundation operates without discrimination as to race, national origin, religion, gender, gender preference, age, or disability or that perceived as a disability in the consideration of grant requests. Likewise, grants will be awarded only to those organizations operating without the aforementioned discriminations.

Requests for support of projects presented by religious groups will be considered if a general community need (within one of the four critical areas) is being met and the project/program does not require that the teachings or doctrine of a particular church or religious organization be accepted to participate. No grants will be made to any political organization or to support attempts to influence the legislation of any governing body other than through making available to the community at large the results of non-partisan analysis, study and/or research.

In evaluating proposals, the Foundation may consider, among other criteria, the extent to which:

- The proposed project/program addresses one of the four critical areas identified within the 2022 Wells County Community Needs Assessment (available online at www.wellscountyfound.org or at the Foundation office).
- The proposed project/program is feasible and is derived from a convincing rationale accompanied by a compelling narrative describing community collaboration and intended impact.
- The proposal clearly describes compelling and feasible outcomes that will be achieved for the critical area and the community as a whole if the project/program is successful.
- The proposal should include metrics that will be used to determine whether the outcomes are achieved.

Application Procedure

Grant proposals for programs or projects should include the following, if applicable:

1. Title page

Organization's name, address, and telephone number

Contact person and title

Project/program title

Critical Area addressed

Amount requested

Date of application

2. Proposal narrative

Critical Area project/program will address

Expectations of project/program

How many will benefit from project/program

Role for volunteers in project/program

Plan for evaluation of project/program

Signed endorsement of the proposal by the organization's Board of Directors

3. Financial information

Budget for proposed project / program, including income and expense data

Minimum of two pricing quotes for equipment requested

Listing of other funding sources applied to and / or received for project / program

If applicable, how project / program will be funded in future

4. Organizational information

Brief history of organization, including mission and purpose*

List of officers and members of governing board, including addresses and telephone numbers

Year-end financial statement or audit; if more than six months since statement or audit, also include most recent financial statement

Copy of tax exemption from Internal Revenue Service*

Letters of Support: If you are collaborating with another organization to implement the proposed project/program, please include a letter of support from a leader of the organization.

*If the organization has previously applied to the Foundation for a grant, it is not necessary to resubmit this information unless a fundamental change has occurred within the document(s).

If, after reviewing the “Grant Qualifications and Guidelines,” you have any questions in the preparation of your proposal, please call the Foundation office at 260-824-8620.

Submission deadlines for the 2026 Needs Assessment proposals are March 20, June 15 and October 15.

The completed proposal and supporting materials may be mailed or delivered to the Foundation Office, 222 West Market Street, Bluffton, IN 46714.