

Rural Health Small Grants

MARCH 2025

In 2025 we created a grant opportunity for organizations located in and serving rural Montana. Through a simplified application, rural Montana organizations can apply for grants of up to \$10,000 to help address a health issue in their community.

The rural grant opportunity is open only to organizations that are located in the rural community they serve. We define rural Montana as any community outside of the seven urban hubs (Billings, Missoula, Bozeman, Great Falls, Kalispell, Helena, and Butte).

Communities face many challenges that impact health. We encourage projects that support work addressing a broad range of issues. Projects may focus on any health-related issue, for example mental health, housing, food, child or elder care, public health, or cultural connection.

The strongest applications are for projects that will build relationships, fill unmet needs, and have impacts that last beyond the grant. Please refer to the selection criteria for more information about what we look for in applications.

This grant initiative is intended to be a low-barrier opportunity for organizations in rural Montana that may have fewer staff and resources, making it difficult to compete for larger grants. Therefore, we may prefer projects from organizations that are not under the umbrella or network of a larger entity.

Grant Size

Requests may be up to \$10,000 for projects up to one year (12 months).

Timeline

- Opportunity Opens: March 3
- First Review Funding Decisions: June 15
- Opportunity Closes: September 1
- Second Review Funding Decisions: September 15



Application Process

This grant opportunity is a two-step process. Applicants will first email info@mthf.org with the following information about the organization and the project:

1. Organization name and tax ID number (or your fiscal sponsor's tax ID number if applicable).
2. Physical location of your organization (street, city, state, zip code) and the geographic communities it serves (towns or counties).
3. Brief, two-to-four sentence description of the project.
4. If applicable: links to your website, social media, or any existing materials about the organization or project (brochure, flyer, one-pager, etc.).

Foundation staff will review this information, generally within 30 days. If your organization is eligible for funding and the project aligns with the foundation's funding goals, we will email an invitation to complete the full application in our grant management system.

Full applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. Applications received by June 1 will be reviewed in the first round with decisions sent on June 15, and applications received after June 1 will be reviewed in the second round, with decisions sent September 15. Applications not funded in the first round will remain in consideration in the second round.

Eligibility Criteria

The Rural Health Small Grant opportunity is open only to organizations that are located in the rural community they serve. We define rural Montana as any community outside of the seven urban hubs (Billings, Missoula, Bozeman, Great Falls, Kalispell, Helena, and Butte).

Rural Montana-based organizations that are eligible to apply for funding include:

- Tax-exempt organizations described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (excluding those classified as private foundations or any type III non-functionally integrated supporting organization under Section 509(a) of the code).
- Tax-exempt educational institutions.
- State, tribal, or local government agencies.

Organizations with a fiscal sponsor are eligible for funding, providing the fiscal sponsor is one of the above eligible organization types.



NOTE: Eligible applicants may use a portion of the budget to fund consultants who may not meet these eligibility criteria.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is an independent rural Montana nonprofit still eligible if it is part of a chain or network of nonprofits that operate outside of rural Montana?

Yes, if the rural Montana nonprofit is governed by a board based in the community where it's located, and the funding is restricted to that organization.

The Rural Health Small Grants are intended to be a low-barrier opportunity for organizations in rural Montana that may have fewer staff and resources, making it difficult to compete for larger grants. We may, therefore, give preference to projects from organizations that are not under the umbrella or network of a larger entity.

Is an organization with a satellite location in rural Montana eligible?

No. The organization's primary location and service area must be a rural Montana community.

Is an organization that primarily serves a rural Montana community but is physically located in an urban hub eligible?

No. The organization must be physically located in a rural Montana community.

Are organizations that have 501(c)(3) IRS applications submitted and pending approval eligible?

Yes. However, the application will be rejected if IRS approval has not been received by the time that we are due to make a funding decision.

Selection Criteria

We recognize that each application reflects a unique set of needs and challenges. Proposal reviewers apply our selection criteria holistically as a lens to understand each application's strengths, weaknesses, and potential challenges. The quality of the writing in the application is not a factor in our consideration.

The MTHF Board of Trustees reserves the discretion to consider factors not explicitly described when approving or rejecting grants.

- **Importance:** The project addresses an issue that is important to health and wellbeing in your community.
- **Need:** The grant will fill a need that other available resources in the community have not met.



- **Partnerships:** The project is planned with and will be carried out with partners that are important to long-term success.
- **Sustaining Impacts:** Benefits of the project will continue beyond the grant term.
- **Community Involvement:** The project meets a need identified by the community it will serve, and the community will be involved in planning and implementation.

What We Do Not Fund

- Individuals
- Capital campaigns
- Operating deficits or retirement of debt
- Fundraising events
- Organizations that discriminate because of race, religion, gender, national origin, sexual orientation, age, or political orientation
- Lobbying as defined by the U.S. Internal Revenue Code, section 4945(d)(1)
- Activities supporting political candidates or voter registration drives as defined in U.S. Internal Revenue Code, section 4945(d)(2)
- Medical research or research lacking a direct, targeted, and practical benefit to Montanans' health
- Organizations or foundations for redistribution of funds via sub-grants

Please note that our funds may not be used in any way that might supplant government funding of existing programs. All applicants must read our [Guidelines on Supplanting](#).