

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF MIDDLESEX COUNTY COMPETITIVE GRANTS COMMITTEE GUIDELINES

INTRODUCTION: Nothing in these Guidelines shall be construed to supersede the By-Laws or Certificate of Incorporation of the Community Foundation. Every effort has been made to align the three documents, but should any conflicts occur, the By-Laws and Certificate of Incorporation shall prevail. As stated in the By-Laws of December 17, 2013, which may be further cited below, “all provisions in the Certificate of Incorporation, [the] By-Laws or the Act that govern meetings, action without meetings, notice and waiver of notice, and quorum and voting requirements ... shall apply to committees of the Board and their members.”

I. PURPOSE

The Competitive Grants Committee shall develop and oversee the competitive grant distribution process and recommend grant awards consistent with donors’ wishes, community needs and available resources.

The Grants Committee oversees the development and implementation of the Community Foundation of Middlesex County’s competitive grants funding program in accordance with the CFMC’s policies and guidelines. The Committee shall review, research and recommend all competitive grants made by CFMC. The ultimate decision to fund competitive grants rests with the Board of Directors (the “Board”). The Committee is responsible for evaluating the grantee performance on an annual basis.

II. MEMBERSHIP

Committee members are appointed by the Chair of the Board with approval by the Board of Directors for a one year term running from January 1 to December 31. The Board Chair shall serve as an ex- officio member of the Committee. The Board Chair appoints the Chair of the Committee. The Chair shall be a member of the Board of Directors.

Whenever feasible, there shall be approximately ten to fifteen (10 - 15) members, including the President/CEO. No more than two of the members should be past directors, and no more than four shall be current directors. At least 50% of the members shall be community volunteers. The President/CEO is excluded from these allocations. Expectations are that no individual shall serve more than ten consecutive years on the Committee except as may be recommended on a person-by-person basis by the Committee Chair and assigned staff to the Board Chair.

Failure to attend, either in person or by phone, at least 50% of meetings during any 12 month period other than for medical reasons shall be considered a resignation from the committee unless, as determined by the Committee Chair, Chair of the Board, and/or assigned staff that individual makes significant contributions to the work of the committee outside of the meeting structure.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES

The Committee or its members shall develop and oversee the competitive grant distribution process and recommend grant awards consistent with donor's wishes, community needs and available resources. Grants Committee members are responsible for the review process for competitive grants using the CFMC criteria. Members review grant applications and make recommendations to the full Board regarding funding.

The Committee shall:

1. Implement a comprehensive competitive grant funding program and process with reporting and monitoring requirements as necessary for CFMC accountability.
2. Develop grant review guidelines.
3. Honor the confidentiality inherent in the granting process. All discussion conducted at meetings, and the information distributed by and about nonprofit agencies, is confidential.
4. Read and score assigned grant applications, participate in Committee meetings.
5. Inform the Committee Chair of any grant review where participation has the potential for a conflict of interest. Prevention of actual or perceived conflicts of interest is an important responsibility for all participants in the grant making process. Protecting this aspect of the grant making process is critical to promoting and preserving the integrity of the decision-making of CFMC. Members should not vote on a grant application from an organization in which they, or a family member, have any direct financial or personal benefit. Reviewers should not vote on a grant application from an organization where they participate as a board member or in any other capacity that could create reasonable doubt as to their impartiality. In these instances, Committee members should disclose such relationships and recuse themselves from voting on that grant application.
6. Make funding recommendations to the Board of Directors, adhering to the grant making policy, budget and granting schedule.
7. Attend site visits of current and prospective grantees.

Since the responsibilities of staff are an integral part of the work of the Grants Committee, the staff responsibilities are outlined in an attachment to this document.

IV. SUBCOMMITTEES

The Committee may appoint subcommittees, but no subcommittee will have final decision making authority on behalf of the Committee of the Board. The Chair of the Committee shall designate the Chair of any subcommittee.

V. MEETINGS AND QUORUM

The Committee will meet with such frequency and such time as its Chair or a majority of the Committee determines. For each competitive funding cycle, the committee shall meet as needed: to plan for the funding cycle, to review applications, to make funding recommendations, and to review the funding process just completed. Additional meetings of the Committee may be called by the Chair.

A majority of the current members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting thereof, and the act of a majority of the members of the Committee present at any meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Committee.

VI. MINUTES

The Committee shall maintain minutes of meetings and regularly report to the Board on Committee findings, recommendations, and actions, and any other matters the Committee deems appropriate of the Board requests. Minutes are to include list of members present, absent, and/or excused.

COMPETITIVE GRANTS COMMITTEE
GUIDELINES
Attachment 1. Staff Responsibilities and
Duties

1. Conduct a thorough review and research of nonprofit agencies in the Middlesex County area that focus on the Mission of CFMC.
2. Develop a grant application form to be approved by the Grants Committee and Board.
3. Work with the Grants Committee to develop and implement a grant review process that is approved by the Grants Committee and Board.
4. Enhance and conduct appropriate grant application/submission training for potential grantees.
5. Review the application and review process on an annual basis for opportunities to improve efficiency and effectiveness;
6. Follow up with grantees on a semi-annual basis to review impact of funds disbursed by CFMC.
7. Monitor grants awards and projects for completion, use of funds and results/outcomes of the project.
8. Identify and track internal and external trends and developments and determine what effect they may have on the Community Foundation's future program(s).
9. Stay current with changing community needs, trends in delivering programs, and the response of the nonprofit community to these needs.
10. Ensure the review, research and recommendation process is mindful that CFMC is funded by donors committed to making an impact in the Middlesex County communities and will expect staff and the Grants Committee to
 - A. Identify a means to measure the impact of the grant(s);
 - B. Ensure that the dollar amount and number of grants recommended to the Board support the Mission of CFMC and follow grant making policies
11. Ensure grant recipients understand current funding does not guarantee availability of future funds.
12. Ensure that donor intent for each fund is honored.