



Stanzel Family Foundation, Inc. Grant Guidelines

Mission

The mission of the Foundation is to encourage and support an educated and healthy community.

Vision

We are active partners in community education and health, empowering generations of engaged citizen philanthropists.

The Stanzel Family Foundation makes grants that advance one or more of our three Pillars of Impact. We envision:

A **Healthy Community** where each member is engaged in a voluntary and self-motivated pursuit of a healthy life style through education, accessibility, and programs.

An **Educated Community** of life-long learners where each member is engaged in a voluntary and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge.

An engaged inclusive community that promotes and inspires **Citizen Philanthropy**, love of humanity, through recognition and celebration of people who are living the definition through their generosity, sharing and kindness.

We seek to fund efforts that increase **awareness** of opportunities and resources, improve **access** to them, and extend their reach **across** populations, ensuring that individuals at every stage of life can benefit.



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What We Fund

The Foundation awards two main types of grants:

1. Programmatic Grants

Programmatic grants support projects and initiatives that directly benefit the community through the Foundation's three pillars: Educated Community, Healthy Community, and Citizen Philanthropy. These grants align with the Foundation's six focus areas: Navigation, Access, Mental Health, Early Childhood, Career & College Exposure, and STEAM Education.

To be considered for funding, an organization's mission or program must clearly connect to at least one of these focus areas.

The Foundation's focus areas guide how we assess alignment with our mission to foster an educated and healthy community. Grant requests may fit squarely within one focus area or overlap several. They may align strongly, moderately, or indirectly with these priorities. The strength of that alignment helps determine funding levels and recommendations, ensuring balance across programs, populations, and age groups.

Applicants are encouraged to describe how their proposed project connects to these priorities and contributes to a more educated and healthy community.

Healthy Community

Navigation

This funding area supports efforts that help people understand what resources are available and how to use them. Navigation strengthens the guidance and support that help individuals move through complex systems and get connected to the right services. The Foundation funds initiatives that build knowledge, confidence, and connection that make it easier for people to find and follow through with the help they need.

Access

This funding area focuses on helping community members reach and benefit from health resources and services by removing barriers that make support hard to get. The Foundation supports efforts that make it easier for people to get the help they need. By improving access, we aim to promote the well-being of individuals, families, and the broader community. Funding within this area will prioritize organizations serving seniors.

Mental Health

This funding area focuses on improving access to mental health resources that ensure widespread availability and improved delivery of mental health services, ultimately advancing mental well-being across communities.

Educated Community

STEAM

This funding area supports programs that build awareness, interest, and participation in science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics. The goal is to inspire curiosity and build skills and confidence in STEAM learning while expanding access to quality education and fostering community participation in these important fields.



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College and Career Exposure

This funding area supports opportunities for young people to explore career and education pathways through real-world experiences, mentorship, and guidance. The goal is to expand awareness of options, build confidence, and connect students with the support they need to plan for and pursue future success.

Early Childhood

This funding area supports programs that strengthen early learning and family well-being. The goal is to foster healthy child development through family-centered approaches, responsive care, and strategies that adapt to the changing needs of young children and their caregivers.

Citizen Philanthropy

Citizen Philanthropy reflects the belief that everyone has something to give and a role to play in strengthening community life. It is not a separate grant category but a value that runs through everything the Foundation funds.

Programs that embody this spirit may:

- Inspire volunteerism, service, and leadership at every age.
- Recognize community contributions and civic partnerships.
- Encourage collaboration that sustains local progress and pride.

Citizen Philanthropy weaves through each of the Foundation's focus areas: showing up wherever generosity, shared responsibility, and community engagement are strengthened.

2. Capacity Building Grants

Capacity-building grants strengthen an organization's foundation so it can deliver on its mission more effectively and sustainably over time. These grants focus on organizational growth and development rather than direct program services.

Examples of eligible activities include:

- Strategic planning to guide organizational priorities and services over a two- to five-year period.
- Fundraising development planning to diversify and expand funding streams and strengthen long-term sustainability.
- Technology and system upgrades that improve efficiency and support daily operations.
- Program evaluation to assess delivery, outcomes, and community impact.
- Policy and procedure reviews to strengthen governance and accountability.
- Succession planning for future board or staff leadership transitions.
- Professional development for staff or board members to build specific skill



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Eligibility

To be considered for funding, organizations must meet the following criteria:

- **Eligible Use of Funds**
Grant requests for operating, programmatic, and capital support are eligible when they align with the Foundation's priorities.
- **Geographic Area**
Organizations must serve communities within the geographic area defined by the Schulenburg and/or Weimar school districts.
- **Tax Status**
Grants are made only to nonprofit organizations that are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) or 170(c) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- **Ineligible Requests**
The Foundation does not fund individuals, political campaigns or endeavors, or programs that require adherence to a particular religious belief or practice to receive services. (Faith-based organizations serving the community-at-large will be considered.)

What We Look For

The Foundation evaluates all grant requests through both programmatic and organizational lenses. Our goal is to invest in work that is responsive to community needs, rooted in strong leadership, and designed to last. To evaluate requests, we look for:

- **Mission Fit**
The organization's work must align with at least one of the Foundation's three pillars: Educated Community, Healthy Community, or Citizen Philanthropy, and one or more of the six focus areas described above.
- **Community Need**
The request addresses a demonstrated gap rather than duplicating existing work and shows a clear understanding of local challenges, with meaningful participation from partners and those served.
- **Organizational Readiness & Durability**
The request demonstrates strong leadership, sound governance, prudent financial planning with diversified revenue, and effective partnerships that position the organization to deliver sustainable results and adapt to change.
- **Community Buy-In**
Strong requests demonstrate volunteer participation, local investment, and collaboration with other organizations.
- **Impact**
The request demonstrates measurable benefits to individuals and the community, both in scale and depth of effect.



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- **Equity and Access:** The program is open to all and intentionally designed to reduce barriers that prevent participation or limit opportunity.

How We Fund

The following principles guide how the Foundation approaches funding decisions and helps grantees plan for sustainability over time.

Seed Funding

Startup organizations are encouraged to apply for seed funding. Seed support may also be considered at key points in a nonprofit's life cycle, for example, when launching a new initiative, expanding into a new area, or adapting to changing community needs. Seed funding is typically time-limited (one to three years) and intended to help organizations build momentum, credibility, and long-term durability.

Avoiding Dependency

Organizations may apply for funding year after year, but grants are not intended to serve as ongoing operating support. As organizations mature, they should move toward self-sufficiency through strategic planning, fundraising, and partnership development. Exceptions may be made when critical community services would otherwise be lost or during times of emergency.

Enhancements Over Operations

Requests should generally support enhancements or improvements to a program or organization, not cover routine operating expenses that should be budgeted for annually or are typically covered by built in revenue. Enhancements may include new curriculum, technology upgrades, professional development, or program expansion.

Funding Range

Requests should not exceed 10% of an organization's annual operating budget, except in cases of seed or emergency funding. This ensures that Foundation support remains catalytic and supplemental rather than sustaining.



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Grant Cycle and Review Process

The Foundation operates on two primary grant cycles each year:

- **Fall Fiscal-Year Organizations:** For schools and education-based nonprofits whose fiscal years begin in the fall. Applications are due June 1, reviewed in July, and awarded in August.
- **Calendar-Year Organizations:** For most other nonprofits operating on a January–December fiscal year. Applications are due August 15, reviewed in October, and awarded in November.

A third, smaller cycle is available for capacity-building requests, with a December 1 deadline. These are reviewed and awarded in January.

The Foundation reserves the right to consider off-cycle applications in cases of urgent or time-sensitive need, such as emergency stabilization, matching opportunities, or collaborative projects requiring timely decisions. These exceptions are made at the discretion of staff and board, and are expected to be documented and time-limited.

All applications are reviewed by staff and presented to the board for final approval.

Application

The Foundation uses an online application process designed to make submission and review as straightforward as possible.

- To apply, contact Melanie Ramirez, Program Director, at melanie@stanzelmuseum.org or (979) 743-9119 to receive the online application link.
- All applications and required attachments must be submitted through the online system by the posted deadline.
- Organizations may contact staff with questions prior to and after submission; we encourage open communication throughout the process.

Reporting

Transparency and reflection help strengthen our shared impact. Funded organizations are required to submit a Year-End Report within 12 months of receiving funds.

- Reports may be submitted online or mailed to the Foundation.
- The Foundation will not consider new applications from organizations that have not submitted required reports for previous grants.
- Standard report components include:
 - A brief narrative on activities and outcomes
 - An expenditure report showing how grant funds were used
 - Demographics of individuals served
 - A summary of funding sources and fundraising efforts
 - Examples of community engagement or “buy-in”