Charlotte Mecklenburg Community Foundation
Frequently Asked Questions

Eligibility

My organization received a grant from the Charlotte Mecklenburg Community Foundation in 2025. Am I eligible to apply for another grant in 2026?
Yes. Organizations that have previously received funding from the Charlotte Mecklenburg Community Foundation may apply, provided they meet the eligibility requirements for the opportunity.

My organization did not receive a grant from the Charlotte Mecklenburg Community Foundation in 2025. Am I eligible to apply for this grant in 2026?
Yes. This grant opportunity is open to eligible organizations serving Mecklenburg County, N.C. who meet the eligibility requirements for the opportunity.

What else do I need to know about eligibility to receive a grant from the Charlotte Mecklenburg Community Foundation?
For an overview of additional eligibility criteria, please review the information available at www.fftc.org/grants.

Can my organization apply for more than one grant during a grant cycle offered by the Charlotte Mecklenburg Community Foundation?
No. The Charlotte Mecklenburg Community Foundation will only consider one application per organization.

Application Process

What is the focus of the 2026 CMCF Groundwork Grant opportunity?
This Groundwork Grants opportunity is designed to support organizations working to strengthen neighborhood and community ecosystems through resident-driven, place-based approaches. The Foundation seeks to invest in organizations that help communities adapt, respond and thrive by building local capacity and addressing resident-defined priorities.

Why is the Charlotte Mecklenburg Community Foundation focusing on neighborhood-based organizations through the Groundwork Grants program?
Groundwork Grants reflect the Foundation's belief that strong neighborhoods are built through local leadership, resident engagement and coordinated community action. By investing in organizations that strengthen neighborhood ecosystems and respond to resident-defined priorities, the Foundation aims to support long-term community vitality, resilience and economic opportunity across Mecklenburg County.

How many grant opportunities will the Charlotte Mecklenburg Community Foundation have in 2026? What are the deadlines?
This is the only grant cycle Charlotte Mecklenburg Community Foundation will offer in 2026. The grant cycle is open from Monday, October 5 to Friday, October 30.

What types of funding requests will be considered?
The Foundation's preferred approach is to provide general operating support that allows organizations the flexibility to respond to evolving community needs and opportunities.

What is the grant term?
Groundwork Grants are designed as **two-year grant commitments**, with grant payments distributed annually over the two-year period.

How much funding may my organization request?
Funding amounts will be determined through the review process based on organizational capacity, impact and alignment with the goals of the Groundwork Grants initiative. Organizations can request up to $200,000, which will be awarded annually over a two-year period.

Can I upload additional materials to support my application?
No. Applicants should use the application responses to provide the most relevant information about their organization, community impact, and alignment with the Groundwork Grants goals.

An account is required to complete an application in FFTC's Online Grants Center. How do I create one?
First, verify whether your organization already has an account. If you are unsure or need assistance updating account information, please contact competitivegrants@fftc.org. Organizations without an existing account may create one through FFTC's Online Grants Center.

Review Process

Will my organization be contacted during the review process? If so, how will we be contacted?
FFTC staff will follow up with applicant organizations during the review process only if a question or clarifying information is needed about the submitted application. FFTC staff will reach out to the contact email address or phone number listed under the “Applicant Contact Information” fields within the application.

Award Decisions

When will my organization receive a decision on our grant application? How will we be notified?
Award decisions are announced via an e-mail sent to the e-mail address under the User Account that submitted the application. Award notifications for the grant cycle will be made by **December 31, 2026.**

If my organization receives funding, when will grant payments be distributed?
The first grant payment is expected to be distributed by **January 8, 2027**. The second payment is expected to be distributed by **January 8, 2028**.

Grant Terms

If my organization receives a grant award, how long will I have to expend grant dollars?
This is a two-year grant award period beginning January 2027 through December 2028. Organizations must expend all awarded grant funds within this timeframe.

If my organization receives a grant award, are there any reporting requirements for this grant?
Yes. All grant recipients will be required to submit an evaluation report. The evaluation report due date will be available in FFTC's Online Grants Center.

Is funding automatically renewable after two years?
No. Groundwork Grants are time-bound commitments. Any future funding opportunities will be evaluated separately and are not guaranteed.

Additional Details

Can I meet with Foundation staff before I start an application?

Organizations are encouraged to attend one of the following opportunities to learn more about the Groundwork Grants program and application process:

- **Nonprofit Office Hours:** Thursday, September 24, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Higher Grounds by Manolo's (1501 Queens Road). Click here to RSVP.
- **Virtual Information Session:** Wednesday, September 30 at 11:00 a.m. Click here to RSVP. A recording of the webinar will be available following the session.

Questions during the application window may be directed to **Nicole Fote (nfote@fftc.org) or Nia Scarboro (nscarboro@fftc.org).**

What other grant opportunities are available from FFTC in addition to the Charlotte Mecklenburg Community Foundation?
Grant opportunities will be posted throughout the year on FFTC's Online Grants Center. We encourage all applicants to check this site throughout the year. A comprehensive list of all grant programs is available at www.fftc.org/grants.

What other resources are available to help me complete my application?
Applicants will have access to:

- Grant Guidance
- Application Toolkit
- Sample Application (PDF)
- FOCUS Story – 2026 CMCF Grant Changes
- Recorded Information Session

These resources will be available through FFTC's website and Online Grants Center.

Charlotte Mecklenburg Community Foundation
Groundwork Grant Application

The Charlotte Mecklenburg Community Foundation, an affiliate of Foundation for the Carolinas, will offer one Groundwork Grant cycle in 2026. The sample application below is intended as a guide to help you gather information you will need for the grant opportunity. Applications must be submitted through the Online Grants Center and may not be submitted via e-mail. You will need the following information to complete the application:

- A copy of your organization's IRS Determination Letter
- Your EIN
- A list of your organization's Board of Directors
- A copy of your organization's prior fiscal year budget including income and expenses
- A copy of your organization's current fiscal year budget including income and expenses

Applicants are encouraged to pay particular attention to all prequalification questions listed below to ensure your organization is eligible for this grant opportunity prior to completing the application.

Additional information about grant opportunities offered by Foundation for the Carolinas is available at www.fftc.org/grants.

Applicant Prequalification and Eligibility

If your response to any of the questions listed below is "No," your organization is not currently a candidate for this grant opportunity.

- *Is your organization a 501(c)3 publicly supported charity?
- *Has your organization been in operation for at least three (3) years?
- *Does your organization employ at least one (1) full-time staff member?
- *Is your organization's work grounded in a specific neighborhood, corridor, or community within Mecklenburg County, North Carolina?
- *Does your organization's mission encompass a comprehensive focus on community well-being?
- *Is your organization able to provide a copy of both your current and prior year budget that includes income and expenses?

Required questions are noted with an asterisk.

SAMPLE

Section 1: Applicant Summary

Primary Contact

- [DROPDOWN] *Salutation
- [FREE TEXT] *Contact First Name
- [FREE TEXT] *Contact Last Name
- [FREE TEXT] *Contact Title
- [FREE TEXT] *Contact Telephone Number
- [FREE TEXT] *Contact E-mail Address
- [RADIO BOX] *Is this contact person listed above also the executive director of the organization?
    - Yes
    - No
        - [DROPDOWN] *Executive Director Salutation
        - [FREE TEXT] *Executive Director First Name
        - [FREE TEXT] *Executive Director Last Name
        - [FREE TEXT] *Executive Director E-mail

Organization Information

- [FREE TEXT] *Organization Legal Name
- [FREE TEXT] Organization DBA name, if applicable
- [FREE TEXT] *Mailing Address
- [FREE TEXT] *Mailing City
- [DROPDOWN] *Mailing State
- [DROPDOWN] *Mailing County (*if located in North Carolina or South Carolina*)
- [FREE TEXT] *Mailing Zip
- [FREE TEXT] *Organization Phone
- [FREE TEXT] Organization Web Address
- [DROPDOWN] *Is your organization a 501(c)3 publicly supported charity?
    - No
        - *Your organization is not currently eligible for this grant opportunity.*
    - Yes
        - [FREE TEXT] EIN
        - [UPLOAD] Upload a list of your organization's current Board of Directors
        - [UPLOAD] Upload a copy of your organization's IRS Determination Letter

Required questions are noted with an asterisk.

SAMPLE

Section 2: Organization Overview

- [FREE TEXT] *Mission ***(100 word max.)***
- [FREE TEXT] *Describe your organization's core services or programs ***(200 word max.)***
- [FREE TEXT] *Geographic Focus Area ***(100 word max.)***
- [NUMBER] *How many volunteers support your organization?
- [FREE TEXT] *Please describe what roles volunteers fill within your organization. ***(100 word max.)***
- [NUMBER] *How many individuals are employed full-time and part-time by your organization?
- [FREE TEXT] *Describe your organization's role in your community. How do you ensure services offered to residents are coordinated and comprehensive? ***(200 word max.)***
- [FREE TEXT] *How does your organization leverage resident expertise to inform your work or guide your organization's priorities? ***(200 word max.)***
- [FREE TEXT] *Detail the partnerships or collaborations your organization has developed and the strategies behind them. In what ways do these relationships serve your community's priorities? ***(200 word max.)***
- [FREE TEXT] *Describe how this grant award would help further your organization's mission. How would you leverage this funding to enhance your operations, respond to current challenges, or act on opportunities? ***(300 word max.)***
- [FREE TEXT] *What do you hope will be different in your organization and in your community because of this grant? ***(200 word max.)***

Organization Financials

- [CURRENCY] *Grant Request:
- [CURRENCY] *Annual Operating Budget:
- [UPLOAD] *Upload a copy of your organization's annual budget for your current fiscal year, including income and expenses:
    - *The uploaded budget document should provide details of funding sources.*
- [UPLOAD] *Upload a copy of your organization's annual budget for your prior fiscal year, including income and expenses:
    - *The uploaded budget document should provide details of funding sources.*
- [FREE TEXT] If you would like to provide additional information on your organization's financials, you may do so here***. (100 word max.)***
- [CURRENCY]*Net assets of organization, as reported on 990:
- [RADIO BOX] *Does your organization conduct an audit?

Required questions are noted with an asterisk.

SAMPLE

- Yes
  - [DATE] Last audit date
- No
  - [FREE TEXT] Please clarify why your organization has not recently completed an audit.

Section 3: Submittal Page

Certification

- *Do you certify that the executive director and board of directors have approved the submission of this grant request?
- *Do you certify that all information provided is accurate to the best of your knowledge and the proposed activities and schedule as presented will be adhered to?
- *Title of Representative Requesting Grant
- *Electronic signature

SAMPLE

Required questions are noted with an asterisk.