



**City of Fairfax, Virginia**

Human Services

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**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: October 7, 2025

RE: FY26 Nonprofit Grant Program (NPG) FAQ Sheet

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**1. What are the common mistakes that applicants make?**

A common mistake is NOT submitting a complete application by the deadline. A complete application submission includes providing all required supplemental documentation and a proposed budget. It is critical that applicants thoroughly review the nonprofit grant program guidelines, including the eligibility requirements and the application scoring criteria sections. Not providing an answer to a specific question included in the application is a non-response. An applicant's application should reflect how their organization meets the eligibility criteria and meets the minimal standards for the nonprofit grant.

Additional tips include:

- Assume that the reviewers are not familiar with your organization; therefore, scores are based on application content only.
- Ensure that costs in the requested budget are reasonable, well- explained, and within industry standards (if applicable).
- Be sure that responses to questions:
  - ✓ Directly answer the question
  - ✓ Are concise, specific, and thorough
  - ✓ Are specific to the City of Fairfax
- Be sure that all required documents have been uploaded or explain why you cannot provide them.

**2. Are the names of previous grantees publicly available? If not, do you have any non-identifiable examples of projects that previously used grant funds?**

We are going into our second year of the City of Fairfax's Nonprofit Grant Program. FY25 NPG recipients included the following organizations: A Place to Stand, Brite Paths, Court Appointed Special Advocates, GMU Foundation, Heart Leaf Center, Lamb Center, Pathway Homes and Salvation Army.

**3. Is there an opportunity for feedback if my NPG application is unsuccessful?**

An organization not awarded funding during the FY26 Nonprofit Grant Program process can request feedback from city staff. The request should be submitted in writing within two (2) weeks of the award announcement by the city.

**4. How does an organization measure success for the projects they support?**

During a grant application process, the city seeks a clearly defined program or service description that includes measurable goals. When organizational data is provided to demonstrate the program or service impacts, there should be an alignment between the defined goals and reported outcomes. Organizations awarded city funding for a specific project normally receive project parameters and anticipated deliverables for the project; an organization's success will be measured by completing the project within those parameters.

The Nonprofit Grant Program defines four (4) areas of need for which an eligible organization may submit an application. Applicants are required to submit requests for programs and/or services that fall within these categories and programs and/or services currently established within the city. Because the city has defined the areas of need broadly, it is up to the applicant to provide performance metrics.

**5. Are there any networking opportunities for grantees?**

The city will not offer networking opportunities as part of the Nonprofit Grant Program.

**6. Can two organizations collaborate together to submit a grant proposal?**

The Nonprofit Grant Program allows for two (2) organizations to submit a joint application; however, both organizations must meet the eligibility and financial requirements for the program. If submitting a joint application, each organization's roles within the program or service for which grant funding is being sought should be clearly defined in the proposal.

**7. Can grant funds be requested to support start up costs for new program and/or initiate a needs assessment of what is needed in the city?**

The Nonprofit Grant Program provides two types of funding opportunities:

- 1) A mini grant
- 2) A standard nonprofit grant

To be eligible for a grant, an organization applying must demonstrate *an existing service presence within the City of Fairfax at time of application*. Grant funding is not available for organizations who are not currently serving City of Fairfax residents but seek to establish a new presence within the city.

For eligible nonprofits, grant funds can be utilized to “*develop, expand or enhance*” the organization's existing city services or programs. For mini grant recipients, grant funds may be

utilized for “*capacity building or for small-scale innovation ideas or projects.*” Grant funds must be used exclusively for services and programs to serve City of Fairfax residents.

**8. Can the funds be utilized to pilot a service concept to determine if it should be pursued?**

A nonprofit organization could potentially utilize Nonprofit Grant Program funding to initiate a pilot program as long as the pilot meets all of the NPG requirements.