CORE Grants 101

Thank you for your interest in a CORE Grant from the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona. We know from experience – our own and that of other forward-looking foundations – that general operating support can quicken the arc of change, creating greater results in less time at lower cost.

CFSA developed CORE Grants in 2016 to achieve greater impact through our grantmaking. Through CORE Grants, CFSA provides nonprofits with the flexible working capital necessary to maximize their impact and improve the quality of life in our region.

In 2022, CFSA awarded a historic $1,119,500 in unrestricted CORE Grants to 55 local nonprofit organizations in Southern Arizona – the largest single grant round in CFSA’s 42-year history. Grounded in mutual trust and respect, CORE Grants provide flexible funding for organizations to use as they see fit to address emerging issues, boost salaries and benefits, invest in technology, or implement new communication and fundraising strategies, all leading to a healthier, innovative, and robust organization.

CORE Grants are scored according to a rubric representative of the following CORE characteristics:

**Community:** Nonprofits play an integral role in their local community, have a keen awareness of its needs, and are continuously evolving and growing to meet those needs.

**Organizational Sustainability:** Nonprofits have a business model that provides ongoing financial support for their organization. They have boards and staff that are skilled, diverse, and knowledgeable, and have shown longevity and a desire to move the organization forward to achieve the best results.

**Results:** Nonprofits utilize different methods of evaluation and information-gathering to inform decision-making and organizational improvement as well as develop appropriate services to the community OR expand organizational knowledge of advocacy issues (if relevant).

**Effective Programs:** Nonprofits can clearly speak to the importance of their missions and programs and strategically align their programmatic or advocacy work with the larger good of the communities who they serve.
Grant Reviewers & Process

What does the CORE application process entail?

1. **Round 1: Staff screening and eligibility review (December 2022)**
   a. After the application deadline, CFSA staff conduct an eligibility screening to ensure all applicants meet criteria and that applications are complete.
   b. You may be asked for clarifications on your application or financial documents during this round.
   c. At the end of this round, applicants who do not meet criteria or failed to respond with clarifications will be declined – all other applicants will be advanced to the next round.

2. **Round 2: Application Scoring by Committee (January - February 2023)**
   a. In this round, the applications are released to our CORE Grants Review Committee for scoring.
   b. Scores are averaged from multiple reviewers and based on CORE rubric.
   c. At the end of this round, the committee will meet to decide on finalists for Round 3.
   d. Applicants will be notified of their status by February 13, 2023.

3. **Round 3: Applicant Interviews (March 2023)**
   a. Finalists in this round will participate in 15-minute interviews with the Community Investments Team.
   b. Committee members and donors will not be present during these interviews, but they will be recorded and contribute to scoring.
   c. Round 3 finalists will have the opportunity to select from 4 available interview dates.
   d. Applicants will be asked additional questions related to the CORE rubric.
   e. These are conversations, not presentations, and PowerPoints/external materials are not allowed.
   f. This is our opportunity to get to know you and your organization beyond the application and to hear your big visions for what you envision with CORE funding.
   g. For ease of access, these interviews will be conducted virtually.

4. **Final Selections & Funding (April 2023)**
   a. At the end of the interview round, the committee will meet once again to discuss the overall results of their scoring along with considerations of geographic service area,
budget size, and focus area to ensure a diverse pool of grantees. They will then make final recommendations and assist CFSA with distributing its unrestricted funds.

b. From the list of finalists presented by the CORE Grants Review committee, donor collaborators and our field of interest funds will also make their funding selections.
c. Final notifications will be sent out on April 7, 2023 and the list of 2023 CORE Grantees will be made public on May 4, 2023.

**CORE 2023 Timeline**

Please note that dates may change throughout the process to accommodate unforeseen circumstances. The Community Investments staff at the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona will always notify applicants via email of any updates regarding the CORE Grants process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/7/2022</td>
<td>12:00 AM MST</td>
<td>CORE Application Open</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/2/2022</td>
<td>5:00 PM MST</td>
<td>CORE Application Closes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12/21/2022</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>1st Round Finalists Notified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2023</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Committee Begins Application Scoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/13/2023</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>2nd Round Finalists Notified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/15/2023</td>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td>Calendly Scheduling Opens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/7/2023</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>CORE Grantees Notified/Final Notifications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/4/2023</td>
<td>9:00 AM – 11:00 AM MST</td>
<td>CORE Grants Celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5/4/2023</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>CORE Grantee List Publicized</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Application Guidelines & Criteria

Organizations applying for these grants must meet all criteria listed below. To better explain criteria, this guide will provide some answers to frequently asked CORE grant questions.

How much can I request and how long will the grant period be?
We accept grant requests between $10,000 and $30,000 from qualified nonprofit organizations. We do not give recommendations on how much you should request. No one knows what your organization needs better than you, so we recommend that you ask for what you need within the grant range. Nonprofits are not penalized for asking for “too much” in this grant round. Remember: CORE grants are unrestricted grants. CORE grant periods are for one year in duration.

Can a statewide organization apply?
We welcome applicants from all counties south of the Gila River including Cochise, Graham, Greenlee, Pima, Santa Cruz, Yuma and some of Pinal County (statewide organizations should have headquarter/location/charter conducting charitable work in one of the counties listed above).

Can I reapply even though I applied last year?
Organizations may receive (be awarded) a CORE grant for up to 3 consecutive years. Any organization that receives 3 consecutive CORE grants must wait for at least 1 year before reapplying and must meet all other eligibility requirements at the time of reapplication. If you have not been awarded 3 consecutive grants, you may reapply as many times as you’d like to.

Awards made by the foundation’s various grant panels support organizations that do not discriminate in their employment practices, volunteer opportunities or delivery of programs and services on the basis of Race, Religion, Gender or Gender Identity (including gender nonconformity and status as a transgender individual), Gender Expression, Sexual orientation, Age, Ancestry, Citizenship, Ethnicity, Familial Status, Socioeconomic Status (economic circumstances), Color, Creed, Sex (including pregnancy), Phases of Parenthood, National Origin, Marital Status, Veteran Status (past, current or prospective service in the armed forces), Genetic Information, Physical Characteristics or Appearance, Mental or Physical Disability, Any other status prohibited by applicable law.
If your organization is or operates out of a religious entity, your programming must be open to the public and cannot require statements of faith or membership within the religious organization or entity.

**What makes my organization eligible to apply?**

In Round 1, our staff will make sure that your organization meets the following criteria to advance to the next round:

1. Applicant must be a 501(c)3 in good standing and have been operating for at least 2 years.
   - You will be asked to provide your EIN which will be used to verify this information.
   - In the application, organizations who were in operation before the acquisition of a 501(c)3 will have the opportunity to provide context on the nature of that work.

2. The applicant must be current in all reporting to CFSA.
   - We ask that applicants not have any outstanding reports due in any previous/current grant cycles with CFSA.

3. Organization must have a current annual budget between $100K - $2M.
   - This number should be reflected in your current year-to-date profit and loss statement compared to approved operating budget as your total income expected for the year.
   - If your organization has in-kind income, this can be reflected in your budget and calculated in the total. In-kind income should be demonstrated in the current year-to-date financials.

4. Grants are generally not made to individuals, for-profit organizations, government entities, capital fund drives, agency endowments, debt reduction, individual schools, religious organizations for sectarian purposes, or pure sports teams.

5. Please note: schools with 501(c)3 status and individual colleges within universities using their Foundation as the agent may apply.

6. Organizations may apply utilizing a fiscal agent but must be able to provide required documents relevant to the applicant organization.
a. If you are applying under a fiscal agent, we still ask that you provide us the financial documents for the organization or program that is applying.

7. Must be able to demonstrate and clearly articulate CORE values.

8. Have a clear commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity, and access and encourage board and staff to reflect the communities they serve.

What documents will I have to submit?
The documents listed below are requirements for a complete CORE Grant application. If possible, please convert all documents to separate PDFs before uploading. PLEASE NOTE: we do not accept full financial audit documents in place of CORE financials.

1. Balance Sheets (Assets and Liabilities) – FOR MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED FISCAL YEAR
   a. Please submit a balance sheet, sometimes called a statement of financial position. This will show the assets and liabilities for your organization. Please make note on the balance sheet when your accounting year ends for the most recently completed fiscal year.
   b. Example: If your fiscal year ends on June 30th, we’d like to see a balance sheet reflecting assets and liabilities from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022.

2. Profit And Loss Statement (Income and Expense) - FOR MOST RECENTLY COMPLETED FISCAL YEAR
   a. Please submit a profit and loss statement, sometimes called a statement of financial activities or income statement. This will show the income and expenses for your organization. Please make note on the statement when your accounting year ends for the most recently completed fiscal year.
   b. Example: If your fiscal year ends on June 30th, we’d like to see a profit and loss statement reflecting income and expenses from July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022.

3. Year-To-Date P&L (Profit and Loss) Against Operating Budget – CURRENT YEAR
   a. In this document, we’d like to see your current profit and loss statement presented against your organization’s operational budget for the year. This is sometimes called a
budget to actual. This document allows us to see how your organization is doing in the current year in relationship to your full annual budget.

b. Example: If your fiscal year ends on June 30, we’d like to see your year-to-date profit and loss from July 1, 2022 to your last closed month against your approved annual operating budget for the entire current fiscal year.

Tips on Financials:

1. Most organizations will only show a partial year or year-to-date against operating budget since some fiscal years begin in the summer - this is OK.

2. The current operating budget line in this document is also important for us to verify your eligibility and should match the current operating budget stated in the application.

3. Please make sure to clearly mark fiscal year dates on your reports.

4. On the next page, we’ve added examples of each of the financial documents for which we’re asking. We don't expect yours to be identical, but we ask that they contain as much similar information as possible (example: your balance sheet must show us your assets and liabilities).

If you have any questions about financials, please give our team a call at 520-770-0800 or email community@cfsaz.org.
## Balance Sheet (Assets and Liabilities)

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### (Not a template, please use your own form)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization Name</th>
<th>Balance Sheet</th>
<th>(also known as)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td></td>
<td>2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Assets

- **Current Assets:**
  - Cash in Checking
  - Money Market
  - Petty Cash
  - Interest Receivable
  - Grants Receivable
  - Accounts Receivable
  - Prepaid Expenses
    - Total Current Assets: 0

- **Investments:**
  - Accounts Receivable
  - Property and Equipment, net
  - Security Deposits

- **Total Assets:** 50

### Liabilities and Net Assets

- **Current Liabilities:**
  - Accounts Payable
    - Grants and Distributions Payable
    - Deferred Revenue
    - Notes Payable, Current Portion
    - Payroll and Payroll Taxes Payable
      - Total Current Liabilities: 0

- **Total Liabilities:** 0

- **Net Assets:**
  - Without Donor Restrictions
  - With Donor Restrictions
    - Total Net Assets: 0

- **Total Liabilities and Net Assets:** 50

### Liabilities

- **Current Liabilities:**
  - Other Current Liabilities
    - Income Tax Liabilities
    - Payroll tax liability
      - Total Current Liability

- **Other Current Liabilities:**
  - Accounts Payable

### Equity

- **Net assets:**
  - Unrestricted net assets
    - permanently restricted net assets
      - Total Net Assets
        - Unrestricted Net Assets
        - Net Income
          - Total Equity

### Total Liabilities and Equity
**CORE Grant Financials – PROFIT & LOSS (INCOME AND EXPENSE)**

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(Not a template, please use your own form)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income Statement (also known as Statement of Activities)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue and Support:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Revenue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest and Dividends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment Income (Loss), Net</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising Revenue, Net</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts In Kind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue and Support</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenses:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct Program Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants Expense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary Expense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Payroll Taxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consulting Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing, Advertising &amp; PR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dues and Subscriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bank Fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT Expense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent Expense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Supplies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage and Shipping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print and Copy Expense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telephone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation Expense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>License Fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In Kind Expense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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# CORE Grant Financials - YEAR TO DATE P&L AGAINST OPERATING BUDGET

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## Current Financials (Not a template, please use your own form)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dec 21 MTD</th>
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</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actual</td>
<td>Budget</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue and Support:</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grant Revenue</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Interest and Dividends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investment Income (Loss), Net</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising Revenue, Net</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts In Kind</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue and Support</strong></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Expenses:

- Direct Program Services
- Grants Expense
- Salary Expense
- Payroll Taxes
- Employee Benefits
- Consulting Services
- Marketing, Advertising & PR
- Dues and Subscriptions
- Meetings
- Conferences
- Travel
- Bank Fees
- IT Expense
- Rent Expense
- Insurance
- Office Supplies
- Postage and Shipping
- Print and Copy Expense
- Telephone
- Depreciation Expense
- License Fees
- In Kind Expense

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dec 21 MTD</th>
<th>Annual</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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</table>
**Funding & Selections:**

**Who decides on grantees?**

**CORE Grants Review Committee:** To ensure that CORE funding reflects community priorities and the annual pool of applicants, CFSA grants committees are structured to reflect the region they serve. We seek volunteers from many different backgrounds including nonprofit, for-profit, government, and nontraditional backgrounds who show a clear commitment to our grants process as well as inclusion, diversity, equity, and access. Typically, our CORE grants committee ranges anywhere from 15-25 reviewers. This year, CFSA will make a public call for volunteers to expand our recruitment for committee members and ensure better overall representation of the Southern Arizona community.

Nonprofits who are not actively applying for a grant within that application cycle may have staff volunteer to serve on a CFSA grant, award, or scholarship committee through our public call for volunteers.

The CORE grants committee scores according to the “C.O.R.E” rubric and takes other factors into consideration for decision making to ensure a diverse pool of finalists. These factors include:

- Geographic area served by the nonprofit
- Nonprofit budget size
- Nonprofit focus area

**CORE Collaborators:** Donor Collaborators are comprised of other foundations, Donor Advised Fundholders and other donors who want to invest in your organization. Collaborators utilize CFSA’s processes, applications, and the Grants Review Committee expertise to assist with their grantmaking decisions.

**How is CORE funded?**

CFSA’s 2022 CORE Grants are made possible with support from CFSA’s Unrestricted Funds, CFSA’s Field of Interest Funds, our generous CORE Donor Collaborators, and a match from the Connie Hillman Family Foundation.
The availability of unrestricted funding, the number of donor collaborators who join each year, and market performance of funds can all influence the availability of total grant funding from year to year. CFSA is committed to seeing this grant program continue to grow, evolve, and reach even more deserving organizations for years to come by continuing to grow our donor collaborator program.

Below is a breakdown of funding sources for CORE 2022:

![Image of funding sources chart]

**Final Selections & Funding**

The committee scores during the application round and after viewing interviews. At the end of the interview round, the committee will meet once again to discuss the overall results of their scoring, make final recommendations, and assist CFSA with distributing its unrestricted funds.

From the list of finalists presented by the CORE Grants Review committee, donor collaborators and our field of interest funds will make their funding selections.

Final notifications will be sent out on April 7th and the list of 2023 CORE Grantees will be made public on May 4th.

**What happens if I am not selected for a CORE grant?**
In the years since its inception, CORE has become an increasingly large and increasingly competitive grant program. Not being chosen for a CORE grant is not a reflection of your organization’s impact and importance in the Southern Arizona community. If you are not selected for this round, we encourage you to apply again for the next cycle.

The CFSA staff and our donor collaborators trust our grants committee to make recommendations based on the rubric they’re provided as well as the overall pool of applicants. When applying, please pay close attention to the rubric and how it connects to each question within the application.

This year, we are working harder to ensure that every single application that is scored receives constructive written feedback from the assigned group of reviewers. We will make this feedback available to all applicants upon request (regardless of the grant outcome) via email after the completion of the grant round on May 4th. Because decisions are ultimately made by our grants committee and due to the limited capacity of our staff, we will not be providing feedback calls this year.

Tell Us About Your Experience!

Hearing and acting on grantee feedback provides an opportunity for funders to be more inclusive and equitable. Following this year’s CORE grant round, we will send out a process feedback survey to all CORE grant applicants that will help us to gain more insight on how we can improve our processes and your grant application experience.

Your feedback on last year’s survey was monumental to our work as staff and we are grateful for your continued honesty and transparency. It is our goal to approach our grant processes from a trust-based philanthropy lens and nonprofits like yours are instrumental to that effort.
Final Tips:

1. Save and exit any other application drafts that you may have open in Common Grant Application before trying to edit your CORE Grant application.
2. On deadline day, double check to make sure you hit “Submit” and be sure to submit before the 5:00 PM deadline - have someone on CFSA staff to double check!
3. If you are experiencing any issues with the platform, uploading documents, or submitting, please give us a call (numbers below) or email community@cfsaz.org as soon as possible.
4. Feel free to work on your application offline/using a Word document and then add your answers to your application once you’re ready to submit – but be mindful of character count.
5. Utilize this CORE 101 guide as a section-by-section helper for your application.
6. If you or an organization you know of need the CORE application translated in Spanish, please let us now so that we can send you a PDF copy.
7. In Common Grant Application, please use the “help boxes” marked with a blue question mark box and sublabels to guide you.
8. Please convert all documents to PDF before uploading them to your application to ensure your formatting doesn’t change.

We know that any grant process can be stressful and taxing on an organization and its employees. We encourage you to reach out to any member of our staff with questions regarding the application via phone or email. Our team is here to help, and we wish you the best of luck with the entire CORE Grants experience.

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David Gardner– dgardner@cfsaz.org – 520-770-0800 - x7128
Natalia Gabrielsen – ngabrielsen@cfsaz.org – 520-770-0800 – x7114