THE ASSISI FOUNDATION
OF MEMPHIS, INC.

Grantseeker Resource Packet

Updated 2025

Welcome!

Whether you are a first-time applicant or have received funds in the past, we recommend that all applicants review this packet as it contains current best practices as well as frequently asked questions.

Once you've reviewed, call us at (901) 684-1564 if you have questions or need advice on how to proceed or prepare your grant request. We'll do our best to provide direction and guidance. Our staff is always available to assist potential grant applicants.

Contact Us

Questions about areas of focus, programs, what to include in your application? Please contact one of the following:

- Tiffanie Grier, Program Officer, tgrier@assisifoundation.org
- Ernestine Smith, Sr. Program Officer, esmith@assisifoundation.org

Need technical assistance with the portal? Please contact:

- Taylor Wamble, Director of Grants Management, grants@assisifoundation.org

Quarterly Deadlines

Specific dates are accessible from The Foundation's website.
https://assisifoundation.org/for-grantseekers/#application-dates

- **1st Quarter:** Mid-November of preceding year
- **2nd Quarter:** Mid-February
- **3rd Quarter:** Mid-May
- **4th Quarter:** Mid-August

Quarterly Eligibility

While many organizations may apply at any time, please take note of the following if you are an Arts, Education or Digital News nonprofit. This allows us to consider all applications of these types all at once.

- **Arts and Culture** requests are accepted in the <u>first</u> quarter only.
- **Education** or education-related requests are accepted <u>second</u> quarter only.
- **Digital News** requests are accepted only in the <u>third</u> Quarter

Notification Schedule

Your program officer will be in contact with you by phone or email.

- **1st Quarter:** Early February
- **2nd Quarter:** Early May
- **3rd Quarter:** Early August
- **4th Quarter:** Early November

Application Process

1. Submit a complete application via the grants portal with all proper attachments.
2. Applications are reviewed for eligibility and completeness. Please check your application thoroughly before submitting.
3. Complete and eligible requests are processed, and an interview is scheduled.
4. Board decisions and notification

General Eligibility

If you have any questions regarding the following, please contact us prior to submitting an application. Please see the FAQ section for more details.

1. **IRS status:** Your organization must currently hold tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code.
2. **Geographical Location:** Your organization must based in the Greater Memphis area.
3. **Faith-Based Organizations**: Organizations that exclude individuals based on their faith are not eligible for funding. This includes, but is not limited to, requiring participants, staff, or board members to sign a statement of faith affirming specific religious beliefs or limiting services, employment, or leadership opportunities to individuals of a particular faith. Your organization is required to certify that it welcomes individuals of all faith traditions, both Christian and non-Christian.

Exclusions

The Foundation does not make grants for the following:

- Individuals (including personal financial assistance or scholarships)
- National fundraising campaigns
- Events (including but not limited to): auctions, dinners, fundraisers, festivals, health fairs, conferences, tournaments, workshops, or event tickets
- Religious outreach projects that serve only one congregation
- Political organizations, candidates, or lobbying efforts

- Financial shortfalls, such as recurring budget deficits or government funding cuts
- Athletic competitions, including tournament fees and travel expenses
- Evangelization or proselytizing efforts
- Ongoing program expenses, such as annual workshop series, membership dues, regularly needed medical equipment, or patient care costs
- Regularly supported activities of fundraising organizations
- Sponsorships
- Emergencies
- Charter Schools
- Summer Camps

Applicant Organizations

Who Can Submit the Application?

- Applications must be submitted by the organization that will receive the funding.
- This means the legal entity to which the grant check will be written must be the one applying and must be within our funding area.

Who Must Sign the Documents?

The Executive Contact (included in the application) is required to sign:

- The certification and acceptance document (which must be uploaded with the application).
- The grant agreement if the organization is awarded funding.

If the applicant organization has other required signers, those individuals' approvals/signatures must be provided before submission to avoid delays.

Organizations with Multiple Branches

Requests from large organizations with more than one site must come through the office of the Chief Executive Officer, or equivalent administrative role.

Schools, Academic Institutions, or for Education-Related Programs Funding

- Requests from academic institutions with more than one site or with multiple departments (e.g., colleges and universities) must come through the office of the President or equivalent office.
- Requests from public or other school systems must come from the Superintendent's office.

**Please select <u>one</u> application to submit as the priority for the annual education application cycle.

City, County, Municipal, or Government Organizations

If you would like to submit an application, please contact the Foundation before starting the application. Please be prepared to discuss any unique requirements or questions. For example:

a. Who has the authority to submit a request?
b. Does the person submitting the request have the authority to accept a grant?
c. Will a grant, if approved, have to go through an additional process like approval from the council, commission, mayor, etc.?
d. Who assumes liability if conditions of a grant, if approved are not met?
e. Grant letters are typically sent electronically with digital signatures. If you do not accept electronic signatures, what is required?

Application Details

Applying for a general or capital grant? Know the difference:

General Grant requests seek funding for projects/programs, operations, and capacity building or other activities consistent with our guidelines.

Capital Grant requests seek funding to purchase, renovate or construct facilities.

If your request is for both, please complete the general application but address the items listed under Capital Grants below.

General Requests

Preference is given to GENERAL GRANT REQUESTS that:

- Address a critical community need or opportunity.
- Address root causes of a problem.
- Include clearly stated goals, timelines, objectives and measurable outcomes.
- Include an effective mechanism for measuring the impact.
- Exhibit sound and realistic financial plans as well as diverse funding sources.

General cont'd

- Will not duplicate existing services unless there is a clear need for additional services.
- Can be replicated by other organizations.
- Involve collaboration or cooperation with other organizations.
- Promote activities that build and sustain connections among diverse groups.

The requesting organization should:

- Demonstrate the expertise and experience necessary to accomplish the project.
- Operate under sound financial principles.
- Have a plan for ongoing financial and community support for sustainability.

Capital Requests

Preference is given to CAPITAL GRANT REQUESTS that:

- Demonstrate that the project is necessary to fulfill the organization's mission and conduct its programs, and is part of a long-range plan for the organization.
- Serve a broad segment of the Greater Memphis area.

- Enhance or improve the organization's ability to meet the needs of those it serves.
- Provide a detailed, itemized capital project budget.
- Demonstrate diverse funding sources, including agency and board contributions, public appeals, grants and loans.
- Provide a project timeline/schedule that includes the campaign's start date, expected duration, plans for additional funding if needed, and date that construction/renovation will begin.
- Explain the impact that the project will have on the agency's ongoing operating budget.

The requesting organization should:

- Include a method to evaluate the campaign's success. For example, will it be based on reaching the goal, finishing the project on schedule, or increasing services provided as a result of the campaign?
- Preferably, have raised in cash or pledges at least 50% of the capital campaign total.
- Have leveraged other support.
- Some or all of a Capital project grant may be made on a matching/challenge basis. The terms of the match will be determined on a case-by-case basis, in partnership with the grantee.

Typically, payments of Capital project grants are made when the organization begins the construction/renovation. Specific terms and payment schedules will be based on the project scope, award amount, project duration and completion of required reporting at appropriate intervals.

Special Considerations

Endowment Funding

 If you are applying for funds for an ENDOWMENT that is not part of a capital campaign request, include the following (at a minimum) in the narrative portion of the general grant application (next page)

- State the amount of your current cash reserve (a minimum of 3–6 months is preferred; ideally 12 months.)
- Explain how spending percentages (programs/services vs. personnel vs. facilities) are adjusted when there is a funding shortfall, if applicable.
- Describe the process used if sufficient working capital is not maintained (eliminate programs or services; use line of credit.)
- Total amount of endowment to be raised.
- Amount raised to date.
- Number and amounts of pending requests.
- Name of Registered Investment Advisor (RIA) for the endowment or process taken by the board to secure appropriate advice to manage the endowment.

Technology Funding

Should minimally include as appropriate for your setting:

- Technology assessment including infrastructure
- Specific goals and objectives
- Implementation strategies
- Funding plan
- Warranties
- Replacement policy for loss, damage, etc.
- Replacement plan when technology becomes obsolete
- Staff development/training
- Risk management procedures
- Evaluation plan

FAQS

Do I need to have been in operation for a certain period of time to qualify for funding?

Helpful but not required. If you are a startup, consider attending Before You Ask for guidance on applying for funds. We do require the following attachments:
- An IRS determination or 990s
- Audited Financials or unaudited Financial Statements.

Do I have to be a 501(c)(3) to qualify for funding?

Yes, your organization must have current tax-exempt status with an IRS determination letter in-hand. Even if you have applied for tax exemption but have not received the approval paperwork, we cannot accept an application until you do.

Must I have a board of directors in place to apply for a grant?

Yes. Consider attending Before You Ask if you are a newly established organization.

Am I still eligible for funding even if my organization doesn't fall within your areas of focus?

Possibly. Please contact a program officer to discuss your organization and goals.

What is Before You Ask?

It is a free 12 week training program offered by the Foundation. There is more information located on our website. https://assisifoundation.org/community-initiatives/

Am I required to attend Before You Ask in order to apply?

Before You Ask is not required. However, new or smaller agencies may find this class helpful before beginning to request funding from foundations.

Must my organization provide services only in Shelby County?

No. The Foundation predominantly serves Shelby County, but we also provide limited support to Fayette and Tipton Counties in Tennessee; Crittenden County, Arkansas; and DeSoto County, Mississippi. Any organizations or programs outside of the specified counties are ineligible.

Can I apply if my organization is located outside of your funding area but the program/service provided is?

Not likely. Please answer the following questions:

- Did a local nonprofit invite your partnership?
- Is your mailing address in our funding area?
- Do you have local staff and board members?

If you answered no to any of these questions, we ask that you do not apply.

What attachments does the Foundation require in addition to the narrative portion of the application?

- Signed certification & acceptance document (linked on our website near the login button or within the portal)
- Last two years complete form 990s
- Last two years complete audited financials or financial statements
- Board list
- Key individuals list
- Project budget
- Organization budget

The organization's Form 990 must be current, accurate, and filed with the IRS to be considered for funding.

Does The Foundation require a special budget format?

No, please use your agency's format. Be aware that different projects require different budget detail. Your budget format should match the nature of your request.

What should be in the budget?

Budgets are commonly divided into two parts: expenses and income. Examples of budgets can be found online.

What should I include in the expenses portion?

Include personnel expenses for all people who work on the project, including employees or independent contractors. For employees, list the title, annual pay rate and if the person will be working less than full time or fewer than 12 months on the project, and the portion of time to be dedicated to the project. Also add payroll taxes and fringe

benefits like health insurance. For independent contractors or consultants, list either their flat fee for the project or their hourly rate.

Also include direct expenses, or non-personnel expenses, that you would not incur if you did not do the project. This includes travel, printing, space or equipment rental, supplies, insurance or meeting expenses, like food and drink.

Finally, incorporate administrative or overhead expenses, or non-personnel expenses you will incur whether or not you do the project. Calculate these correctly and accurately. For example, if you pay $500 a month for office space for four employees, you will continue to rent the office even if the project doesn't happen. If it does happen, the project/program director will occupy one-quarter of the office space, so you can charge for one-quarter of the rent, utilities and administrative costs, like phone, copying, postage and office supplies.

What should be included in income?

Earned income or what people give you in exchange for the service or product. Contributed income, including cash and in-kind contributions. Show cash contributions first and indicate whether each item is received, committed or pending. In-kind contributions are goods or services instead of cash. They include donated space, materials or time.

Note: If you list in-kind contributions as budget income, you must show corresponding expenses. If someone gives you something at a major discount, show the entire expense and then list the portion donated under in-kind contributions. Also, if you are applying for a matching grant, in-kind income may be used as part of the match. This is reviewed on an individual-case basis.

Other income—if you plan to seek funds from other funders and know you won't receive money from all of them, an "other funders" line is an easy way to indicate how much total money you need to receive from all other sources to balance the budget.

Can I apply for operating support?

Yes, but please include the following in your attachments: your Board approved strategic business plan and projected budget for the number of years for which you are requesting funding in the Project Budget attachment.

Can I apply for multi-year funding?

Yes. Please be sure that the amount requested is the *total* amount for however many years you are requesting. Please include the amount requested for each year in the brief summary narrative field. The project budget attachment should include all years for which funds are requested.

What if my organization has an active grant with Assisi right now – can I apply for another?

We generally do not accept applications if you have an open grant. Please discuss this with your program officer.