

## Guidelines to Kern Community Foundation's Competitive Grantmaking Programs: 2009

The Kern Community Foundation is proud of its brief, yet significant grantmaking history – made possible through funds created by many generous and caring donors. During its first decade (1999 to 2009), the Kern Community Foundation has provided grants to hundreds of local nonprofits.

*As a result, the Kern Community Foundation has changed lives for the better and helped fulfill the vision of its donors of a brighter, more promising tomorrow.*

### *How is grantmaking possible?*

KCF has various types of permanent endowment funds, often referred to simply as "funds," which have been entrusted to KCF by generous donors throughout Kern County.

The Community Foundation invests and manages these funds with the goal of increasing their principal and returning part of the earnings to the community through grant making.

Donors establish funds for a wide variety of purposes, ranging from providing scholarships, to benefiting specific charities, to supporting a particular purpose. Other funds have been earmarked for an area of philanthropic interest<sup>1</sup>; while still others have been created for discretionary grantmaking purposes.

### *What grants can my organization apply for?*

The Kern Community Foundation conducts a diverse set of competitive grant programs annually. Most of KCF's competitive grant programs only accept grant requests at specific times during the year (forms made available during their acceptance period).<sup>2</sup>

In addition to the array of competitive grant programs, the Kern Community Foundation also awards grants through donor-advised, designated and scholarship funds. In most cases, these funds are not open to applications from organizations.<sup>3</sup>

**Unsolicited requests for funding or applications received after a granting program's cycle has closed are returned to the applying organization.**

<sup>1</sup> Examples: youth programs, education, literacy, health or arts & culture

<sup>2</sup> Any exceptions to KCF's grant acceptance procedures are noted in the "KCF Grantmaking Program Descriptions" document.

<sup>3</sup> Please contact the Programs & Community Partnerships Officer at the Kern Community Foundation for additional information.

**Please note that within KCF's Competitive Grantmaking Programs:**

1. We only fund organizations and projects located in Kern County, California designated as a 501c3 public charity by the IRS.
2. Grant applications are available for download on KCF's website during their specific open cycles or by contacting the Kern Community Foundation's Programs & Community Partnerships Officer.
3. All KCF competitive grants require a formalized evaluation report to be submitted regarding use of the funds. Depending on the particular composition of a grant program, reporting may be required quarterly, semi-annually and/or at end of the grant term.
  - a. All reports required of a funded grant program must be received, reviewed, approved and on file with the Kern Community Foundation before an agency can apply for additional Foundation funding.
  - b. Applications received from organizations with delinquent reports will be considered non-responsive and will not be reviewed.

***What are the deadlines for grant applications?***

There are different deadlines for each of KCF's competitive grants. It is the responsibility of the applying organization to observe the exact closing date, which is noted on both the application template as well as the KCF website.

**Application deadline dates and times are firm.**

All applications must be postmarked by a post office or hand delivered to the Kern Community Foundation offices by the explicit date and time identified to be accepted for that cycle.

***Can my organization receive a grant from more than one of the grant programs?***

All of the Kern Community Foundation's Granting Programs have specific eligibility requirements; however, a nonprofit organization is eligible to apply for as many grant programs as appropriate.

Currently, KCF only allows one application per organization (501c3) per grantmaking program unless special accommodations are made in advance.

- ◆ If an applying organization has previously provided direct services to their constituents within the specific grantmaking focus, then in most cases, the organization is considered eligible.
- ◆ If an applying organization is considering an expansion, enhancement, or pilot project that logically integrates with already-existing programs, then the organization may be eligible.
- ◆ If an applying organization has not provided services in the specific focus area of the grant program, it is recommended that an extensive discussion occur between the organization and the Kern Community Foundation's Programs & Community Partnerships Officer.

It is the responsibility of the applying organization to review/ understand both the requirements and restrictions of a particular grant program.

**Organizations are encouraged to contact KCF if unsure about eligibility.**

### *How will our application be reviewed?*

A grant application received for a particular grant program is accepted on a provisional basis and reviewed by KCF Staff for completeness and adherence to the application guidelines.

- ◆ Incomplete, after deadline, and/or unsuitable requests are normally disqualified from further review.
- ◆ All other applications are acknowledged as 'accepted' and advance to the "Community Review Commission" for evaluation and assessment.

The Community Review Commissions established by the Kern Community Foundation consist of a consortium of KCF Board Members, community leaders, and experts in the particular field of grant focus.

The Community Review Commission assesses each application, scores each on an established set of guidelines, and submits the list of recommended grant proposals, amounts and any suggested stipulations to the Kern Community Foundation for review and approval.

**Please note that in most cases; more worthy requests are received than can be accommodated.**

### *What makes a strong application?*

Granting requests are more favorably considered that contain the following:

1. Provides an innovative response to a recognized community need and does not unnecessarily duplicate the efforts of others.
2. Demonstrates a capacity to deliver services both effectively and efficiently.
3. Makes evident the consideration of sustainability for both the organization and the program.
4. Strengthens the capacity of the organization to better serve their clients and community.
5. Contains either a dollar-for-dollar match (on occasion 'in-kind' is acceptable) or has the ability to attract additional funds.

### *What kind of activities does KCF not support?*

#### **KCF Competitive Grant Programs Do Not Fund The Following:**

- ◆ For propagandizing, influencing legislation and/or elections, promoting voter registration; for political candidates, political campaigns or organizations engaged in political activities; for litigation.
- ◆ To institutions limiting their services to persons of a single religious sect or denomination.
- ◆ For social or political problems outside the United States of America.
- ◆ To individuals.
- ◆ To federated appeals or to organizations that collect funds for redistribution to other nonprofit groups.
- ◆ For conferences, workshops, exhibits, travel, surveys, films or publishing activities.