

Grantmaking Policies for the 2026–2030 Grant Cycles

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About us

The Women's and Girls' Fund (WGF) is a leadership initiative of Kern Community Foundation (KCF). We work to transform the lives of women and girls in Kern County by mobilizing the power and passion of women working together. In particular, we educate to build awareness of needs unmet by current strategies, endow a permanent fund whose annual yield supports programs benefiting women and girls, and empower women and girls to be philanthropists and advocates for positive social change.

Grantmaking Philosophy

WGF values social-change grantmaking that focuses on long-term solutions to systemic challenges facing women and girls in urban, rural, and unincorporated communities throughout Kern County. We believe that when women and girls prosper, communities thrive. We will continue to fund high-quality direct services, and we especially look for efforts that go beyond direct service to address root causes; build sustainable impact; shift behaviors; increase access to skills and resources; cultivate leadership from those most affected; extend impact beyond immediate participants; support replication; and develop collaboration across organizations.

Our Focus for 2026–2030: Education + Daily-Life Knowledge

Building on a decade of work centered on educational attainment, WGF will continue to advance learning and expand to fund programs that equip women and girls in Kern County with knowledge and practical skills to navigate daily life. Priority domains for funding considerations are:

Mental Health & Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

Examples of funded content: SEL skill-building; stress and emotion management; resilience; healthy relationship building (consent and boundary-setting); trauma-informed supports; stigma reduction; access to and navigation of mental-health resources and referrals.

Life Skills & Economic Mobility

Examples of funded content: financial and economic literacy (budgeting, credit, savings, debt, taxes, student-aid navigation); career exploration; workforce readiness; entrepreneurship; consumer rights; housing navigation (tenants' rights, affordability resources, homelessness prevention); transportation and childcare access planning.

Health Education & Safety

Examples of funded content: women's and adolescent health literacy (preventive care, reproductive health, maternal health, menstruation equity); personal and domestic safety (safety planning, bystander intervention, resource navigation); online safety and digital citizenship (privacy, scams/fraud, cyberbullying); substance-use awareness and harm-reduction education (non-clinical).

Transforming the lives of women and girls by mobilizing the power and passion of **women working together.**

Priority Populations and Settings

Girls and women across the lifespan (K–8, 9–12, post-secondary, and adults), with attention to English learners, youth in rural and underserved communities, first-generation college students, justice-impacted youth, foster and system-involved youth, and women re-entering the workforce.

School-based, community-based, and workplace settings; programs may be curricular, ex-curricular, or community education.

Outcomes We Seek

Pre-K

- Safety & wellbeing: Adoption of safer daily routines (e.g., car-seat use, safe sleep, drowning-prevention practices, safe storage of medications/household products).
- Caregiver knowledge & engagement: Increased caregiver knowledge, confidence, and practices that promote learning and health (daily shared reading, positive discipline, nutrition, healthy media/screen habits, online safety for families); participation in family workshops/home-learning activities.
- Two generation models (when applicable): Improved caregiver stability and capability directly tied to child outcomes (benefits navigation, budgeting/financial basics, connections to housing/food/transport resources).

Grades K–8

- Increased literacy and numeracy
- Increased percentage scoring proficient/advanced on state or successor assessments
- Growth in SEL competencies and safe online behaviors
- Early interest in STEM.

Grades 9–12

- Improved A–G completion and high school graduation
- Reduced need for remediation in math/English in post-secondary
- Financial-aid completion and post-secondary/career planning
- Knowledge of healthy relationships and digital safety
- Vocational readiness for higher paying pathways, including STEM.

Post-Secondary / Adult

- College persistence and completion
- Industry-recognized credentials
- Higher paying employment
- Improved financial capability (e.g., savings behavior, credit building)
- Navigation of housing and health systems
- Increased use of preventive health services
- Improved safety knowledge and help-seeking.
- Cross-cutting “soft skills”

We also value projects that foster:

- Work ethic
- Reliability
- Positive attitude
- Self-motivation
- Problem-solving
- Time-management
- Communication
- Teamwork
- Self-confidence

What We Fund

WGF will consider proposals that:

- Address root causes of problems faced by women and girls
- Deliver direct education/services and build toward systemic change (policy/practice shifts, scalable models, collaborations) when the status quo has limited effect.
- Include clear, measurable outcomes
- Strengthen organizational capacity to sustain impact beyond the grant year (e.g., train-the-trainer, integration into partner systems).
- Leverage partnerships (schools, community-based organizations, healthcare, justice, workforce, housing) and elevate the voices and leadership of women and girls most affected.
- Increase skills and/or access to resources for constituents, propelling them to self-sufficiency
- Provide potential for replication to multiple sites/communities

Who May Apply

As a field of interest fund of the Kern Community Foundation, we comply with the Foundation's grantmaking guidelines. Organizations should have a 501(c)(3) nonprofit designation or fiscal agent and be registered with Kern Community Foundation. All organizations seeking funds must have current, Silver-level participant status on [GuideStar](#). All must have a presence in Kern County and all programs must benefit women or girls within Kern County.

Funding is typically for one year only. Multi-year grant requests *may* be considered, but applicant should also be prepared to accept one year's funding only. All requested follow-up reports for previous grants from the Foundation (including The Women's and Girls' Fund) must be on file before an agency can apply for additional funding. Nonprofits submitting full applications should have their organizational profile online at Kern Community Foundation's Nonprofit Search. Contact the Foundation for more information and assistance.

The Women's and Girls' Fund WILL NOT provide grants to: individuals, political campaigns, one-time events, capital fund drives, litigation, programs inconsistent with

non-discrimination statutes, religious causes, endowments, reimbursements, scholarships, businesses or for-profit organizations, government agencies except public school districts (although we prefer to grant to a foundation associated with the district), programs that do not specifically address the needs of Kern County women or girls, or any organization that limits options.

While we do not fund religious causes—religious education—we happily fund faith-based organizations doing social change work.

Expectations of grant recipients

Grant recipients will sign a fund agreement with Kern Community Foundation before grant monies are delivered. Grant recipients will be expected to complete interim and final evaluations of their program's outcomes. Forms will be provided. One half of the entire grant amount will be provided upon the Foundation's receipt of a signed fund agreement. **The second half of the grant amount will be provided upon the Foundation's receipt of the interim evaluation of the program being funded.**

A representative from the successful grantee organization should plan to attend the spring luncheon of The Women's and Girls' Fund, where the award will be made. Publicity around the grant award is encouraged. Any promotional materials, press releases, etc., produced in connection with the grant award should note that the grant was funded by The Women's and Girls' Fund of Kern Community Foundation. We will happily supply The Women's and Girls' Fund and Foundation logos for use in publicity. Copies of any printed materials and photographs should be shared with the Foundation.

If you have questions please contact Chief Impact Officer, Teems Tulfo, (661)325-5346 or fatima@kernfoundation.org.