



Lake-Geauga Fund Request for Proposal Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the difference between a grant from the Lake-Geauga Fund Request for Proposal (RFP) and a traditional Cleveland Foundation grant?

The Lake-Geauga Fund RFP offers one opportunity per year to apply for a grant, while the Cleveland Foundation Board of Directors approves grants on a monthly basis through our traditional grant application process. The Lake-Geauga Fund RFP will support project proposals that introduce a collaborative mission that addresses a significant local issue, identifies key stakeholders actively involved with collaboration, and outlines a coordinated approach to make a tangible difference. Traditional Cleveland Foundation funding supports project proposals that satisfy one or more of our four priority areas:

1. Improving access to services and programs for vulnerable and underserves populations
2. Strengthening nonprofit organizations (capacity building)
3. Testing new ideas and different partnerships
4. Supporting policy and advocacy

Applying for a grant from the Lake-Geauga Fund RFP is a one-step process: completing a full application addressing the request for proposal. Applying for traditional Cleveland Foundation funding requires two steps: an inquiry and, if invited, a full application. For more information, please visit the [grantmaking](#) section of our website. Organizations that serve Lake and Geauga County residents are welcome to apply any time for traditional Cleveland Foundation grant funding.

2. Are start-ups/new nonprofits eligible to apply?

Yes. Any nonprofit organization that serves residents of Lake and/or Geauga counties is eligible to apply; however, funding is not guaranteed.

3. Must I have previously applied to the Lake-Geauga Fund to be eligible?

No. Any non-profit organization that serves residents of Lake and/or Geauga counties is eligible to apply for a Lake-Geauga Fund grant.

4. Are there still quarterly due dates for Lake-Geauga Fund?

No. As a result of the new grantmaking structure of the Lake-Geauga Fund, funding opportunities will only be offered one time per year through the Lake-Geauga Fund RFP. However, a nonprofit organization that provides services in Lake or Geauga counties can now apply anytime, year-round, for traditional Cleveland Foundation grant funding.

5. What is due on the November deadline?

A full application responding to the RFP issued on behalf of the Lake-Geauga Fund of the Cleveland Foundation is due close of business on November 14, 2016.

6. Can you apply if your program is operating on an academic calendar year?

Yes. The operating cycle of your program ***does not*** prohibit you from applying to the Lake-Geauga Fund RFP.

7. Can I pursue a collaborative project that is a new idea?

Yes. The Lake-Geauga Fund RFP is looking for projects that address a significant community issue. New and transformative ideas are considered and may be in the planning or implementation phase.

8. Do I have to pick a priority from the Fred Talks?

No. The priorities developed by the community at the Fred Talks were used to inform the direction of the Lake-Geauga Fund grantmaking focus and can be used as a guiding tool, but it is not a requirement. The foundation understands there may be other projects that can be transformative.

9. Should I contact members of the Lake-Geauga Fund Advisory Committee?

No. Nonprofit organizations are strongly encouraged to contact the primary point of contact at the Cleveland Foundation.

10. Who is the primary point of contact?

Stephen Caviness, Program Officer
scaviness@clevefdn.org
(216) 615-7582

11. What level of funding should I ask for?

The Lake-Geauga Fund has approximately \$200,000 available for grantmaking this year. Under the old Lake-Geauga Fund model, the average grant was around \$25,000. The new fund strategy aims to give larger grants that are more impactful. Any level of funding requested should be realistic and aligned with the scope of the project being proposed.

12. Can I apply for more than one year of funding?

Yes. A grant request can cover one or multiple years of project support.

13. What should be reflected in the budget?

The project budget should reflect the total cost of the project over the grant period requested. The request from the Lake-Geauga Fund should supplement the project and ***not*** be the primary source of income.

14. If I apply to the Lake-Geauga Fund, can I still apply to the Cleveland Foundation?

Yes. You can still apply to the Cleveland Foundation. The Lake-Geauga Fund is an additional funding opportunity.

15. Can I apply for recurring costs after my grant has ended?

Typically, the Foundation provides project-based funding and ***does not*** fund general operating costs. Funding from the foundation is generally used to help jumpstart a project with an expectation that the organization will absorb costs of the project into its operating budget. However, foundation staff are open to hearing about the funding needs of the project beyond the grant period.

16. Does the Cleveland Foundation have an in-kind policy?

No. The foundation evaluates each grant request on a case-by-case basis. While cash contributions toward a project are critical, in-kind resources with noticeable value can have just as much impact. Strong projects typically include a blend of cash contribution and in-kind resources.

17. When will grantee(s) be notified of a decision?

The foundation will notify grantees by the end of December 2016 with a funding decision.