



Grant Applicant Eligibility: EIN, Organization Name, and Fiscal Sponsorship

To help ensure accuracy, transparency, and IRS compliance, please review the following requirements before submitting your grant application.

Definitions

Applicant Organization

The organization listed as the official applicant in the grant system. This entity must provide its own EIN and is responsible for meeting all eligibility and reporting requirements. The applicant organization name must match IRS or Candid records unless using a recognized DBA.

Fiscal Sponsor

A separate organization that agrees to receive, manage, and distribute grant funds on behalf of another group that does not have the capacity or eligibility to do so directly. A fiscal sponsor must have its own EIN, appear in IRS or Candid records, and agree to manage funds in accordance with IRS charitable expenditure standards. When used, the fiscal sponsor receives the grant check.

Authorized Subdivision (of a Government Unit)

A department, district, or legally recognized component of a city, county, or township that operates under the governing authority of that unit of government. Authorized subdivisions may apply as the applicant organization when they hold the EIN for the project. Examples include public libraries, park districts, school districts, fire departments, and fair boards.

1. EIN Requirements

- All applicants **must** have an Employer Identification Number (EIN).
 - If your group does not have an EIN, you may [obtain one before applying](#).
 - Groups without an EIN that do not plan to obtain one should work with an eligible organization that is willing to apply for and administer the grant.

2. Organization Name and EIN Match

- The organization name on your application must match the legal name (or registered DBA) associated with your EIN.
- DBA names are acceptable only if they are recognized in IRS or Candid records for that EIN.

3. Applicants Using a Fiscal Sponsor

- You must provide the fiscal sponsor's legal name and EIN.
- If your group has its own EIN and is a 510(c)(3) in good standing or an authorized unit of government, you may apply under your own name. You do not need a fiscal sponsor.
- Grant checks will be issued to the fiscal sponsor, not directly to the sponsored group.
- By listing a fiscal sponsor, you are confirming that the sponsor has agreed to manage the funds on your behalf. We may request documentation of this relationship.

4. Government Units and Subdivisions

- Cities, counties, townships, school districts, park districts, fire departments, public libraries, and other authorized subdivisions may apply directly.
- If a community group **does not** have its own EIN and wishes to work with a government unit, the government unit (or one of its officially recognized subdivisions) must be listed as the applicant organization.
- Committees or volunteer groups affiliated with a government unit (such as Friends groups or booster clubs) may apply:
 - under their own name only if they have their own EIN, or
 - under the government unit's name if they do not. In this case, the application must be submitted by an individual authorized by the government unit to enter into financial agreements with the Foundation.

Need Help?

If you are unsure which name to use or whether your EIN is current, you can look up your organization through:

[IRS Tax-Exempt Search](#)

[Candid \(formerly Guidestar\)](#)

You are also welcome to contact us before applying. We're happy to help you navigate the requirements and avoid delays in reviewing your request.