



John Muir Health

Community Health Fund
Building Bridges to Better Health

Grant Program Guide

The Mission: Create Lasting Health and Health Care Improvements

The Community Health Fund (CHF) carries out a unique community benefit function for John Muir Health: distributing grants to nonprofit organizations working to improve the health and well-being of medically uninsured, underinsured, underserved, and vulnerable populations most at-risk for poor health in Central and East Contra Costa County. Our governing board's mission is to create lasting health and health care improvements for these individuals and communities. Our most valuable contribution has been fostering the start-up and expansion of programs and services that achieve this mission.

Funding Priorities

Because health and wellness depend on a complex mix of factors – not just individual biology, but also on the social determinants of health (e.g., access to care, poverty, environment, nutrition, racism) – we seek to support nonprofit organizations in the development and implementation of sustainable health initiatives that achieve one or more of the following aims:

- (1) Expand access to high quality affordable primary, specialty, dental, and/or behavioral health care for those who need and cannot afford it.
- (2) Fill gaps in service for high quality affordable primary, specialty, dental, and/or behavioral health care.
- (3) Enable organizations to adapt to a changing health care delivery system, including enhancing the coordination of care across multiple settings.
- (4) Initiate or expand support services that address one or more of the social determinants of health and, where appropriate, complement existing health care delivery systems. Such services support the maintenance of physical health, mental health, and wellness and include, but are not limited to: health care workforce development, health education, case management, social support, healthy eating and nutrition, anti-racism efforts and support for aging in place.
- (5) Accomplish internal systems, personnel and resource improvements.

Types of Projects

The CHF typically supports projects in two categories: **health initiatives and annual program support.**

Health Initiatives: We define a health initiative as an organization or a group of organizations employing new strategies for delivering needed care and services, measuring and documenting the value of its strategies, and sustaining its efforts after CHF funding has ended. Successful initiatives typically involve collaboration among multiple nonprofit organizations, take place over a number of years and emerge from careful planning, capable implementation, and rigorous documentation of results.

Annual Program Support: While our preference is to fund larger health initiatives, sometimes organizations, for a variety of reasons, are not yet ready to undertake that type of effort. Therefore, we offer yearlong program support when a smaller effort has the potential to evolve into a multi-year health initiative.

Funding Process and Strategic Approach

We work proactively with leadership teams from partner organizations to improve and/or expand their services and/or to improve their organizational capacity. Our collaborative approach begins immediately. We start with a series of discussions designed to ensure the type of lasting success to which we are committed.

The initial discussion seeks to identify visionary leadership, a well-conceived strategic approach, and key program staff. We require organizational leaders to come prepared to share facts and circumstances that point to a need for action, a vision for action, and an assessment of the organization's ability to lead an effort.

Ensuing discussions explore the feasibility for action, what it would take for the organization to achieve a state of readiness, who suitable partners might be, and how to create a written business plan. CHF staff will guide leadership teams to the point where there is mutual agreement that the organization is ready to create a business plan for an initiative or program. From there, the process is as follows:

- Develop the written business plan, which must include a description of how grantees intend to use their initiative to meet the needs of BIPOC populations.
- Execute the plan for a defined period of time.
- Evaluate the implementation.
- Implement strategies for sustaining the effort.

We do not have set application or proposal deadlines. We do prefer, however, that grant cycles start and end: (1) July 1 – June 30 or (2) January 1 – December 31.

Funding Eligibility Standards

The CHF's governing board has established the minimum standards below for all organizations interested in us funding a multi-year health initiative or annual program.

Geographic Scope: Initiatives and programs must take place within John Muir Health's service area: Central and East Contra Costa County. An organization based out-of-county must have a relevant track record and physical presence in Central or East Contra Costa County prior to seeking CHF funding.

Tax-Exempt Status: Organizations must be tax-exempt, 501(c)(3), nonprofit corporations. Corporate and tax-exempt status must have been in effect for at least a full twelve (12) months. The CHF does not use third party fiscal agents to accept and administer its grants for any purpose or on behalf of any group.

Organizational Leadership: Organizations must have in place experienced executive leadership, a full complement of highly engaged governing board members, and experienced program leadership.

Financial Stability: Organizations must be financially stable with appropriate internal financial systems and accounting staff.

Resource Development Capabilities: Organizations must have established systems and personnel dedicated to developing revenue from an array of sources and must demonstrate an ability to obtain other sources of funding to sustain programs.

We invite all inquiries, and will schedule a meeting to discuss an organization's vision, capabilities, and strategies for improving the health and wellness of medically uninsured, underinsured, and underserved populations. Please contact the Community Health Fund at (925) 941-3100 to arrange a meeting.