

Applicant Eligibility

Who can apply?

Eligible applicants include:

- Only projects that will serve **rural** North Carolina communities are eligible
- Nonprofits
- Town and county governments
- Faith groups, including rural United Methodist churches
- If your organization is not a 501(c)3 nonprofit, you can still apply for grant funds in partnership with a fiscal agent.
- Former and current grantees can re-apply, but they must submit a final report for previous grants before new funding can be disbursed.

Can organizations outside North Carolina apply?

Our funding is currently limited to North Carolina.

What if our organization doesn't have 501(c)3 nonprofit status?

If your organization is not a 501(c)3 nonprofit, you can still apply for grant funds in partnership with a fiscal agent (a government agency or nonprofit that accepts grant funds on your organization's behalf).

Application and Application Process

When is the application due?

Applications must be submitted by Friday, February 14, 2020 by 11:59 p.m. EST via our online application form: http://bit.ly/CNEF_Application (General Application) or http://bit.ly/UMC_CNEF_2020 (for Rural United Methodist Churches).

Can you help us with our project or application?

Resourceful Communities team members will be available to provide assistance to CNEF applicants, including discussion of a draft application. Please contact Kathleen Marks at smallgrants@conservationfund.org to connect with our staff. We are unable to discuss applications after February 3.

What is the triple bottom line?

Resourceful Communities' "triple bottom line" incorporates **environmental** stewardship, community **economic** development and **social justice** to address community challenges.

Results of triple bottom line efforts might include, but are not limited to:

- Economic: Economic development can be direct (e.g., create jobs, generate additional income, create a business) or indirect (e.g., develop new job skills, provide education, reduce poverty, create new economic opportunities through agriculture, tourism or similar project).
- Social Justice: Meaningfully engage people of color or low wealth; educational improvement; overcome barriers to participation; address racism and injustices.

- Environmental: Provide environmental education; protect land/water resources; reduce pesticide usage; improve water quality; plant trees to offset carbon; improve energy efficiency.

How do I count in-kind support?

In-kind resources that support your project include goods (equipment, supplies, etc.), services (printing, transportation, etc.) and volunteers (fundraising, legal support, etc.). In-kind support can demonstrate broad commitment to your work.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides hourly wages by occupation that can be used to determine the value of volunteer time. Visit <http://www.bls.gov/bls/blswage.htm> for more information, or visit <http://www.conservationfund.org/what-we-do/resourceful-communities/tools-and-forms> for additional information on in-kind support.

How do we become a network partner?

One of Resourceful Communities' priorities is to create a network of engaged and informed community practitioners who connect with and learn from each other. We provide opportunities to come together through workshops, convenings and other network events. Network participants include "community partners" or "resource partners" (agencies or nonprofits that can provide technical assistance, funding, or other resources). We encourage applicants to participate in our network to help them better understand Resourceful Communities and to strengthen community efforts. We post network events on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/resourcefulcommunities. Like us to stay in touch!

Eligible Uses of Grant Funds

Can my organization use grant funds to cover operating expenses?

Small grants can be used for operating expenses, if they are related to the proposed project.

Can my organization use grant funds for building renovations?

Building renovations are not often triple bottom line projects and therefore, funds *typically* cannot be used to cover renovations. On rare occasions, a portion of the small grant can be used for building materials, if tied to broader triple bottom line programming. Please discuss any proposed construction projects with a Resourceful Communities team member. We may also be able to direct you to funding sources that support building renovations.

Can my organization use grant funds for equipment?

Grant funds cannot be used to purchase equipment for *individual ownership*. Equipment must be related to program delivery. Reviewers will not prioritize requests that use an entire grant to purchase one piece of equipment. Please contact Resourceful Communities for ideas on other potential resources to support such requests.

Can my organization use grant funds for feasibility studies?

Though we understand the need for thorough planning, CNEF funders prioritize project implementation rather than feasibility studies.

Are there other ineligible uses of grant funding?

Please note that CNEF grants **cannot support** deficit financing, for-profit businesses, individuals, equipment for individuals, or projects that do not include triple bottom line benefits.

Grant Information

How big are grants?

Grants cannot exceed \$15,000. There is no minimum amount that must be requested for a Creating New Economies Fund (CNEF) application to be considered, however, grants average \$8,000-\$12,000.

If we get a grant, when will my organization get the money?

Grants will be announced for this cycle between April-June 2019. We will notify applicants as soon as possible, and as appropriate, we will work with groups that have potential to strengthen their proposals. Once notified of an award, grantees must submit a signed grant agreement before funds can be released. Processing payment typically takes 2-3 weeks.

How long is the project period?

Grants will be announced for this cycle between April-June 2019. Final reports for those grants will be due January 2020. However, if you need more time to complete your project, we encourage you to contact us by December 2019 to discuss extending the project period.

Where can I find a list of previously funded grants?

Since 2001, Resourceful Communities has awarded more than 400 small grants, funded by public and private organizations, to support innovative community projects across North Carolina. Please visit <https://www.conservationfund.org/our-work/resourceful-communities/our-approach> and scroll to *Investing in Communities* for general information about the Creating New Economies Fund (CNEF) or to download a list of supported projects.

Can you share more about grant priorities?

Proposals receiving the highest consideration will:

- Incorporate triple bottom line results.
 - Please note: Targeted funding is available in 2019 for rural United Methodist churches across North Carolina. Separate targeted funding is available for projects that advance healthy eating or active living in Bladen, Burke, Columbus and Robeson Counties.
- Be planned and implemented by a community organization that has participated in Resourceful Communities network events (workshops, peer learning visits, convenings, etc.).
- Build on local assets (a community's natural, historical, cultural and human resources) to address economic, social and environmental challenges in a community.
- Meaningfully engage those who benefit from the project, particularly people of color or low wealth.
- Address "root causes" of community challenges. Root causes often include, but are not limited to:
 - Poverty/ need for local jobs
 - Exclusion and inequities, especially among low-income communities and communities of color
 - Environmental challenges such as flooding, poor drainage, land loss, toxins, etc. that disproportionately impact low-income communities and communities of color
- Focus on work in rural, Tier One counties or low-income communities

Have more questions?

Please email smallgrants@conservationfund.org or call (919)-951-0111.

We thank our supporters for making the Creating New Economies Fund possible.

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