

Conservation, Food, & Health Foundation Concept Application Tips

Tips for Using the System

Don't have a U.S. charity number? Type 12-1234567 instead

Can't find the application form? If you don't see the application form, you probably did not enter "cfh2015" as the access code in the field on the top-right side of your screen after you registered and logged in.

Make a PDF of your application. You should print out a copy of the proposal using the Print Packet function. Review your proposal draft before clicking "submit."



Uploading? Keep in mind that the upload fields only accept one document. If you upload the wrong document, simply browse and upload the right one to overwrite the incorrect upload. You will know that the upload worked when you see the document link in the field when you save your draft. You will also see it when you print a PDF of the proposal.

Cutting and pasting is fast. Cutting and pasting directly from your word processor is easy if you keep in mind that 3,200 characters (including spaces) equal approximately one page with four paragraphs in 12 point type. To facilitate cutting and pasting, text limits are typically generous, but do not feel compelled to write more than necessary just to use all of the characters allowed.

Pasting trick. Hit the spacebar after you paste to get the section to "stick" in the box.

Forget formatting. The system removes all formatting from your pasted text. It will turn bullets into gibberish. Use a dash instead. Saving your documents in RTF or a simple text file before you paste will require less clean-up in your proposal.

What is the deadline? Check with the particular foundation about deadlines, but most set a firm time before 12:00 midnight EST on the date specified by the funder.

Did we get it? Once you click *submit*, your proposal is on its way – *you can't edit your draft any more*. Log in to check the status of your proposal submission. You will also see the status of any other proposals you submitted online to all of the GMA Foundations clients using the system.

Need tech support? Tech support is available between 9:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. EST. Call the Grants Manager at GMA Foundations at 617-391-3085 or email online@gmafoundations.com.

Got suggestions? Write mnicosia@gmafoundations.com with comments, tips and ideas that can improve this system. Your feedback helps us make improvements.

Application Questions

What are the deadlines?

The foundation has two 4-month funding cycles each year. The first begins in January and ends in May. The second begins in September and ends in December.

Concept applications received by January 1 will be considered for eligibility for the March 1 full proposal deadline. Grant payout for this cycle will be in June.

Concept applications received by July 1 will be considered for eligibility for the September 1 full proposal deadline. Grant payout for this cycle will be in December.

May I mail a hard copy of my concept application or proposal or email it?

No.

Will the foundation support indirect costs or administrative overhead?

No. You have a better chance of competing for scarce dollars if you allocate direct costs to the CFH grant.

May we submit our application in a language other than English?

Unfortunately, we lack the capacity to translate proposals submitted in other languages.

Can an organization submit two concept applications for consideration?

In fairness to other organizations seeking support, we ask that organizations submit only one concept application per round of funding.

Does the foundation provide multi-year funding?

The foundation does not make multi-year grants. Applicants must re-apply through the competitive grants process each year. The foundation provides continued funding on a case-by-case basis depending on the past success of the project.

Will the foundation support organizations that it has never heard of?

Yes. However, it is difficult to evaluate concept applications submitted from organizations totally unknown to us, particularly from organizations in the developing world, where it is difficult for the foundation to obtain information. Applicants not well known in the United States may provide references and materials showing the nature and functioning of the organization.

Does the foundation require a format for reporting on grants?

Yes, please refer to the reporting instructions that were sent with your grant check. If you are requesting continued funding, send an interim report and a financial status report form. We also enjoy reading the publications that emerge from research supported by the foundation.

Will the foundation support travel costs to the developing world?

The foundation prefers to maximize the impact of its grant dollars by supporting project expenses in developing countries. The money spent on one plane ticket, for example, could support the salary of a health worker, researcher, or agricultural extension agent for several months in a developing country. That being said, the foundation may consider supporting a small portion of travel expenses when costs are an integral and reasonable part of the project budget.

Will the foundation support fellowships, scholarships, and training activities for university students?

The foundation prefers to support the project-based technical and scientific training of early-career or established professionals from the developing countries who: 1) are working in the field on specific issues that address priority research concerns in its main areas of support, and 2) demonstrate leadership potential in their field in their home countries. These grants are relatively rare.

Will the foundation support comprehensive village level anti-poverty programs in developing countries, many of which address the intersection of conservation, food, and health?

The foundation prefers to support specific projects and strategies, which have potential for broad applicability to other organizations or communities in developing countries. It seldom funds projects that only have a local impact. The foundation focuses its areas of interest with the hope of supporting projects that offer potential benefit beyond local action. One-third of all concept applications reviewed by the foundation are not considered for funding because they seek support for very general village improvement efforts, basic organic farming, animal husbandry training projects, or for general operating support.

Low Priority Areas of Funding

The foundation has fairly broad guidelines but there are some common characteristics that make some applicants less competitive than others. These include:

Humanitarian aid programs and social service programs: Feeding programs, emergency medical care, and other direct social services to populations in urgent need are not a priority of the foundation.

Projects with primary a local emphasis: The foundation prefers to support specific projects and strategies which have potential for broad applicability to other organizations or communities in the developing countries. It seldom funds projects that only have a local impact. The foundation focuses its areas of interest with the hope of supporting projects that offer potential benefit beyond local action.

Village improvement and basic farmer training programs: Very generalized village improvement efforts, basic organic farming, animal husbandry training projects, or for general operating support for agricultural extension programs are not a top priority.

Capital requests: The foundation does not fund capital improvement projects, large equipment purchases or funds to build buildings, water systems, pumps, wells, etc.

Limited financial capacity: The foundation rarely makes grants that exceed 25% of an organization's total operating budget. It also rarely funds start-up organizations with limited track records.

Microenterprise, ecotourism, and livelihood projects: The foundation typically does not fund economic development, livelihood, or Microenterprise projects. It recognizes the important link between conservation and livelihoods but does not emphasize this dimension in its support of food production or conservation programs.

Publications: The foundation rarely supports publications.

Social science research: The foundation gives priority to requests that reflect a deep understanding of the social, political, and economic dimensions of its interest areas but channels its limited resources toward applied research projects that ask pragmatic questions related to the natural and health sciences.

Medical care: The foundation typically does not make grants for primary medical care service delivery at clinics or hospitals. It emphasizes the development of prevention, health promotion, and family planning initiatives that have the potential for replication and widespread adoption.

Lack of explicit leadership from and partnerships with local organizations. Many U.S. and U.K. organizations present their work without referencing local project leaders and organizations.

Good Grantwriting Practices

Avoid acronyms. Too many acronyms make us dizzy. Unless you use an acronym for your organization's name, please spell everything out. Do not assume familiarity with your field's shorthand.

Avoid jargon. Development jargon gives us indigestion. Please "catalyze and synergize your sustainable system-wide participatory stakeholder engagement and knowledge acquisition frameworks" for your project somewhere else.

Avoid repetition. Brevity is appreciated! The new online format has caused an epidemic of duplicative cutting and pasting. The reviewers ask that you avoid supplying the same information in responding to different questions. If you find that you are repeating yourself, reference where you have already supplied the information instead.

Check your math. Double check your financial information.

Deadlines

	Grant Round 1	Grant Round 2
Concept Application Deadline	January 1	July 1
Request for Proposal Issued	February 1	August 1
Proposal Deadline	March 1	September 1
Grant Awards	June 1	December 1