



Better Together – Creative Places Grantmaking Initiative Request for Proposals

“Monroe County has long been a community of makers: industrious people driven to build, create, and innovate – together.”

~2019 Monroe County Quality of Place and Workforce Attraction Plan

Through the ***Better Together – Creative Places Initiative***, the Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County (CFBMC) is seeking to build upon the maker mindset, so prevalent in our county, to **activate or create public spaces that advance a more vibrant, welcoming, and inclusive community**. In 2019, hundreds of individuals participated in the creation of a community-informed quality of place and workforce attraction plan for Monroe County. Through focus groups, surveys, interviews, and town hall meetings, county stakeholders learned a great deal about where we succeed and where we could be better. We also learned that the communities within our broader community are very willing to engage and that being better requires working together.

Monroe County’s ability to attract and retain talent is greatly increased by taking advantage of unique placemaking assets in its communities. Building upon both the spirit and findings from the community design process that resulted in the quality of place and workforce attraction plan, the Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County is seeking proposals for creative place making projects that, through deliberate and thoughtful collaboration, will make us better together.

Purpose

The Community Foundation will use a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to identify one or more grant projects for funding in the spring of 2020. Funding for this initiative is made possible by a CFBMC community beautification fund established by a donor to address community aesthetics and beautification.

Proposals will be accepted from organizations that are designated as 501(c)(3) entities or that fall within the category of an exempt organization, as defined by the IRS, which generally includes schools, governmental units, and religious organizations.

Projects proposed should:

- Advance community aesthetics and beautification
- Address quality of place in one or more Monroe County communities
- Create welcoming, inclusive space(s), accessible to all
- Promote a sense of ownership and pride in the community
- Bring community together in all phases of the project
- Contribute to community vibrancy
- Activate underused public spaces or create new ones
- Be completed and open to the public within one year of receiving CFBMC funds
- Have a sustaining impact

Examples of projects that could be appropriate for this funding opportunity include:

- Streetscape beautification and walkability
- Alley activations
- Public plaza development
- Innovative public space amenities that encourage people to interact
- Community art projects
- Farmer's markets
- Amphitheaters and band shells
- Bike and pedestrian pathways

Events are not eligible projects but expenses for convenings may be considered as part of the development process. For instance, expenses to bring community members together to participate in creating, installing, or building a place-based improvement may be considered.

Funding specifics

The Community Foundation has \$20,000 to allocate to this initiative. Grant amounts will range between \$5,000 and \$20,000. Organizations must match 50% of the grant provided by the Community Foundation. Examples of the match requirements follow:

Project Total	\$10,000	\$20,000	\$30,000
Grant from CF	\$6,667	\$13,334	\$20,000
Organization Match	\$3,333	\$6,666	\$10,000

Evaluative Criteria

In addition to meeting the above eligibility criteria, the RFP submission must include the following to be eligible for consideration:

- A well-defined and focused project description that explains why the project is needed and how the project will enhance the community or attract visitors to the project space
- Site control in the form of a legally binding agreement
- A plan for long-term maintenance
- An explanation of the impact the project will have on the community and other placemaking efforts
- A complete project budget that details expenses and additional funding sources
- A thorough timeline for the project, including any developmental planning

Funding Specifics

- The Community Foundation and recipient organization will enter into a formal grant agreement clarifying required reporting, distribution schedules, and other pertinent terms.
- Grant distributions will preferably occur on a reimbursement basis, when possible. Grant checks will be provided following submission of previously approved budget and expense documentation. If this arrangement is not possible, CFBMC would work with the grantee on an alternative solution.

Application Process

Step 1 – Complete an application online via the Community Foundation website and at the following web address: <https://www.cfbmc.org/lasting-impact/apply-for-a-grant/>

Step 2 – CFBMC reviews applications, invites applicants to pitch the project in person.

Step 3 – Feasibility review completed.

Step 4 – Recipient(s) announced. Grant agreement executed.

Step 5 – Funding available.

Step 6 – Monthly progress updates provided to CFBMC.

Step 7 – Project completed. Joint public unveiling event takes place.

Process Timeline

December 20, 2019	Initiative formally announced – RFP process begins
February 29, 2020	Application Deadline
April 2020	Grant Award(s) Announced

Legal requirements

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, sex, gender identity (as defined in paragraph 249(c)(4) of title 18, United States Code), sexual orientation, marital or parental status, political affiliation, military service, physical or mental ability, or any other improper criterion be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity funded in whole or in part with funds made available by the community foundation, and any other program or activity funded in whole or in part with funds appropriated for grants, cooperative agreements, and other assistance administered by the community foundation.

For questions, please contact Marcus Whited at 812.333.9016 or marcus@cfbmc.org.

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