The Colorado Health Foundation™

Grantmaking Glossary

 # A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

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501(c)(3): The section of the tax code that defines nonprofit, charitable, tax-exempt organizations; 501(c)(3) organizations are further defined as public charities, private operating foundations and private non-operating foundations. See also operating foundation; private foundation; public charity.

A

activities: The actions an organization takes to fulfill its goals, implement a program and achieve desired outcomes. Activities may also be called "strategies," "action steps," "processes" or "methods."

applicant: An organization that submits a proposal for financial assistance.

assets: The amount of capital or principal — money, stocks, bonds, real estate, or other resources — controlled by a foundation or corporate giving program. Generally, assets are invested and the resulting income is used to make grants.

attachments: Supporting documentation that is included with your grant proposal. Requested attachments for proposals submitted to The Colorado Health Foundation are most recent full 12 months financial statements, audited if available within that timeframe. Additional documentation may be requested if you are working with a fiscal sponsor

award: Financial support to help you achieve your goal.

B

beneficiary: In philanthropic terms, the donee or grantee receiving funds from a foundation or corporate giving program is the beneficiary, although society may benefit as well.

board of directors: The group of volunteers with the responsibility for governance and supervision of the policies and affairs of the organization, its committees, and its officers. It carries out the purpose of the organization.

budget: A planning document projecting the income and expense necessary to accomplish an objective.

C

capacity-building: The act of providing technical assistance necessary to help nonprofits increase specific capabilities to deliver stronger programs, take risks, build connections, innovate and iterate.

capital support: Funds provided to improve an organization's facilities or infrastructure. Funding might include, but is not limited to, new construction, expansion, renovation, or replacement of an existing facility or piece of equipment.

chair: The person in the chief volunteer position or the person elected to lead the board.

communities of color: Include Arab/Middle Eastern, Asian/Pacific Islander, Black/African American, Indigenous/Native American, Latinx/Hispanic and multiracial peoples.

community: Broadly, the Foundation defines community as a social group of any size whose members reside in a specific and shared locality, and often have common characteristics or interests and/or cultural and historical heritage. Specifically, the Foundation considers the following entities within the definition: individuals, organizations, networks, coalitions, sub-populations, neighborhoods, regions and systems that underlie shared characteristics and interests or locality.

community-based organizations: An organization that is representative of the

community, demonstrates it is driven by community members in all aspects of its existence and works to meet community needs.
cornerstones: Our work, and that which we expect in the work of our partners, is rooted in three cornerstones.

- We serve Coloradans who have less power, privilege and income, and prioritize Coloradans of color.
- We are informed by the community and those we exist to serve.
- We do everything with the intent of creating health equity.

Cross-cutting Efforts: The Foundation's cross-cutting efforts include our Locally-focused Work.

D

direct costs: Specific costs incurred by a grant-support project (e.g., salaries, training, travel, administrative/operating) presented in an itemized list.
diversity: The range of differences, including but not limited to: race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, physical and mental ability, faith practices and socioeconomic class. It also encompasses different political preferences, geographic perspectives, and elements of lived experience such as immigration or veteran status, among others. Diversity is not simply a list of identities and experiences, it involves elevating the perspectives, voices, needs and influence of those who have historically had less power and privilege.
demographic data: The Foundation requests key demographic data from grant applicant organizations about themselves (their staff and board) and for the communities they serve. Demographic data requested includes identification related to race and ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and disability. There is also an option to share additional demographic data that does not fall within the above-mentioned categories.

donee: The recipient of a grant. (Also known as the grantee or the beneficiary.)
donor: An individual or organization that makes a grant or contribution to a donee. (Also known as the grantor.)

E

employee matching grant: A contribution to a charitable organization by an employee that is matched by a similar contribution from his or her employer. Many corporations have employee matching-gift programs in higher education that encourage their employees to give to the college or university of their choice.
endowment: Funds intended to be invested in perpetuity to provide income for continued support of a nonprofit organization.
equipment: Tangible, nonexpendable, personal property including exempt property charged directly to the award having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost to be stated by the grantmaker.
evaluation: The systematic collection of evidence that enables stakeholders to judge merit, worth and/or value. Used to better understand an organization's work, improve its effectiveness, and make decisions about future work. Evaluation can take many different forms and employ many different methods, depending on the questions that need to be answered. Evaluation is one source of evidence that becomes part of how an organization learns about its work.

F

fiscal sponsorship: Affiliation with an existing nonprofit organization for the purpose of receiving grants. Grantseekers may either apply for federal tax-exempt status or affiliate with a nonprofit sponsor.
fiscal year: A 12-month period upon which a budget is planned.
focus area: An enduring, board-directed area that guides how the Foundation engages through grantmaking, investing, policy and advocacy, convening and learning. The Foundation has four focus areas, including: Maintain Healthy

Bodies, Nurture Healthy Minds, Strengthen Community Health and Champion Health Equity.

form 990-PF: The public record information return that all private foundations are required by law to submit annually to the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

form 990: The information return that public charities file with the IRS.

foundation: A tax-exempt nonprofit institution that typically distributes funds rather than operating its own programs.

funding opportunities: Our funding opportunities focus on specific needs aligned with a particular priority within our focus areas. These vary for each funding deadline (Feb. 15, June 15 and Oct. 15). Applicants will be required to address detailed criteria specific to that funding opportunity. Grant funding is highly competitive within the pool of applicants for each individual funding opportunity.

funding types: To ensure we are bringing health in reach for all Coloradans, the Foundation funds impactful work, organized by two funding types: funding opportunities and rapid response funding.

G

general/operating support: A grant made to further the general purpose or work of an organization, rather than for a specific purpose or project; also called an unrestricted grant or basic support.

goals: Clear statements of the overall purpose of your program. Goals provide an answer to the problem statement and communicate the intended aims or impacts over the life of the program.

grant: An award of financial assistance from a foundation or the government.

grantee: The organization/group/agency that receives a grant and is accountable for how the funds are used.

grantee financial report: A report detailing how grant funds were used by an organization. Many corporate grantmakers require this kind of report from grantees. A financial report generally includes a listing of all expenditures from grant funds as well as an overall organizational financial report covering revenue

and expenses, assets and liabilities. Some funders may require an audited financial report.

H

health: The Foundation considers health to be the ability to engage in and enjoy a vibrant life – a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

health equity: Health equity exists when there are no unnecessary, avoidable, unfair, unjust or systemically caused differences in health status.

I

indicators: Measurable markers that a certain condition or circumstance exists, or certain outcomes have been achieved. They provide evidence about how much progress you have made toward a particular goal, output or outcome. Indicators may be quantitative or qualitative, and may be gathered in lots of different ways.

indirect costs: The overhead necessary to support a grant (e.g., rent, maintenance, depreciation) that cannot be directly attributed to a specific project.

in-kind contribution: A contribution of equipment, supplies, or other tangible resource, as distinguished from a monetary grant. Some corporate contributors may also donate the use of space or staff time as an in-kind contribution.

inputs: Can include the resources used to achieve specific objectives of a program, such as staff, facilities, equipment and money. Also includes less 'tangible' factors such as relationships, staff behavior, culture, etc. that impact what work is done, or how it happens

intersectionality: Recognizes that people fit into and identify with multiple forms of identity markers, such as race, ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation (for example, a person might identify as Latino and transgender). These markers and identifiers are overlapping and do not exist independently of each other and they combine to create different modes of discrimination, privilege and pride.

J

JEDI: An acronym for justice, equity, diversity and inclusion.

joint venture: Operation consisting of two or more nonprofits, or a nonprofit and a for-profit organization.

K

L

learning: A practice of noticing results, reflecting on the cause of these results, and taking new actions such that the results of those actions produce better results than what was previously experienced. Learning happens over time, with iterative experiments that improve thinking by discovering what actions will produce better results.

letter of inquiry / letter of intent: A brief letter outlining an organization's activities and its request for funding that is sent to a prospective donor in order to determine whether it would be appropriate to submit a full grant proposal. Many grantmakers prefer to be contacted in this way before receiving a full proposal.

liability/liabilities: 1) Claims on assets held, excluding ownership equity. For a foundation, payments outstanding for grants authorized and not yet paid or remaining grants to be paid over multiyear periods, are liabilities. 2) The state of being legally obliged and responsible for actions, people, or debts.

M

matching grant: A grant that is made to match funds provided by another donor. See also challenge grant; employee matching grant.

mission: The main purpose/reasons that an organization exists.

mission statement: A statement that describes how an organization's purpose is aligned with its vision. A mission statement is brief — "short enough to fit on a t-shirt" is one rule of thumb — and describes why the organization exists, what it does, for whom it exists, and the value that it creates, without listing specific activities employed to achieve the mission. An organization should decide how

often to revisit the mission statement and who should participate in its review. An annual review is wise, since communities change and program demands shift. Re-examining the mission statement ensures that it continues to reflect an organization's values and offers the appropriate direction for the organization.
multi-year grant: A commitment by a foundation to provide support for more than one year (typically two to five years), contingent upon satisfactory grantee performance.

N

narrative: The written portion of your grant, describing who, what, when, where, why, and how the funding will be used. Every grant application has at least two parts: the narrative and the budget.
nonprofit, not-for-profit: An organization that provides services of benefit to the public without financial incentive. A nonprofit organization is qualified by the IRS as a tax-exempt organization.

O

operating expenses: The money needed to keep your organization going, not the funding needed for specific programs or services.
operating support grant: A grant to cover the regular personnel, administrative, and miscellaneous expenses of an existing program or project. See also general/operating support.
outcome evaluation: An evaluation used to identify the results of a program's effort. This type of evaluation provides knowledge about (1) the extent to which the problems and needs that gave rise to the program still exist, (2) ways to ameliorate adverse impacts and enhance desirable impacts, and (3) program design adjustments that may be indicated for the future.
outcome objective: The specific goal of your activity. Example: "By Dec. 31, we will add electronic health record software to 20 computers in 10 community health clinics."

outcomes: The results that your program aims to achieve. Outcomes are the changes that occur because of a program, or the difference that is made by a program. When defining outcomes, consider: how does the program touch the lives of individuals, groups, families, households, organizations or communities?

P

priority population: The specific population intended as beneficiary of a program. This will be either all or a subset of potential users.

private foundation: A nongovernmental, nonprofit organization with funds (usually from a single source, such as an individual, family or corporation) and program managed by its own trustees or directors. Private foundations are established to maintain or aid social, educational, religious or other charitable activities serving the common welfare, primarily through the making of grants. See also 501(c)(3); public charity.

profit: Net proceeds after deducting allowable costs.

program officer: A staff member of a foundation who reviews grant proposals and processes applications for the board of trustees. Only a small percentage of foundations have program officers.

project director: Person responsible for all activities covered by the grant, including assessment and follow-up.

proposal: A written application, often accompanied by supporting documents, submitted to a foundation or corporate giving program in requesting a grant. Most foundations and corporations do not use printed application forms but instead require written proposals; others prefer preliminary letters of inquiry prior to a formal proposal. Consult published guidelines.

public charity: A nonprofit organization that qualifies for tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code. Public charities are the recipients of most foundation and corporate grants. Some public charities also make grants. See also 501(c)(3); private foundation.

Q

R

race and ethnicity: Terms constructed by humans and there is no universal agreement on how to describe these two concepts. We consider race to be a human-made social construct with no biological foundation. The idea of ethnicity is also human-made, and is based on a common set of beliefs, traditions and customs.

racial justice: Exists when there is not only the absence or alteration of systems that create and perpetuate racial disparities in areas including health, education and wealth, but the presence of transformed and fundamentally different systems that operate on behalf and inclusive of communities of color.

rapid response funding: Our rapid response funding supports short-term advocacy initiatives. There is no deadline for rapid response grants. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis.

RFP: An acronym for Request for Proposal. When the government issues a new contract or grant program, it sends out RFPs to agencies that might be qualified to participate. The RFP lists project specifications and application procedures. While an increasing number of foundations use RFPs in specific fields, most still prefer to consider proposals that are initiated by applicants.

S

self-assessment: The process of evaluating one's own organizational or personal effectiveness. The term is sometimes recommended for restriction to processes that are focused on quantitative and/or testing approaches.

strategy: Describes what an organization plans to do in order to achieve its intended goals.

strategic plan: A document at the organizational level, delineating an organization's mission, goals and strategies for attaining those goals. A good strategic plan articulates goals and strategies for the organization as a whole, and

broad goals and strategies for its programs.
summary: Brief written description of the proposal (includes who, what, why, where, when and how).

T

tax-exempt: Refers to organizations that do not have to pay taxes such as federal or state corporate tax or state sales tax. Individuals who make donations to such organizations may be able to deduct these contributions from their income tax.
technical assistance: Operational or management assistance given to nonprofit organizations. This type of help can include fundraising assistance, budgeting and financial planning, program planning, legal advice, marketing and other aids to management. Assistance may be offered directly by the staff of a foundation or corporation, or it may be provided in the form of a grant to pay for the services of an outside consultant. See also in-kind contributions.
theory of change: A description (often visual) that describes what outcome you are trying to change, and how you're going to get there. It makes thinking visible about how change happens in the world and what role your actions are designed to play in supporting that change.

U

V

vision: 1) The ideal future the organization is striving to achieve. 2) A process by which an organization envisions the future it wants, and plans how to achieve it. Through public involvement, organizations and communities identify their purpose, core values and vision for the future, which are then transformed into a manageable and feasible set of goals and an action plan.
vision statement: Articulates the future an organization aspires to reach. It is a picture of all an organization hopes to achieve and accomplish through its work.

W X Y Z

Definitions compiled from:

Foundation Center. Guide to Funding Research: Glossary. Available at: http://foundationcenter.org/getstarted/tutorials/gfr/glossary.html

Innovation Network, Inc. Glossary: Nonprofit Planning & Evaluation. Available at: http://www.innonet.org/client_docs/File/glossary_apr2005.pdf

Nonprofit Good Practice Guide Glossary. Available at: http://www.npgoodpractice.org/Glossary/Default.aspx