

THRIVING COMMUNITIES

GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Effective: September 2023

The Thriving Communities Grant Program is designed to promote economic development, support vibrant community life, and provide equal access to basic necessities. All grant recipients must be located within the Norfolk Southern territory. Grants are awarded for specific projects and programs only, not for general operating support.

To be eligible, an organization must meet the below criteria:

- Qualifies as a tax-exempt nonprofit organization based off one of the following charitable criteria:
 - A public 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as listed in the IRS Master File
 - A state, county or municipal government entity and seeks funding to serve the needs of the community at large.
 - A public or charter school
- Operate in one of Norfolk Southern's 22-state network
- Located within 30 minutes of NS rail (Note: Priority may be given to organizations closest to our rail)
- Aligns with Norfolk Southern's [Corporate Giving Focus Areas](#) (Note: Projects that align with the safety focus area should be applied for under the Safety First Grant)

Applications must include the following:

- A valid W9 Form dated after 2018
- A valid 501(c)(3) determination letter from the IRS or letter demonstrating tax exemption status as a state, county, or municipal government entity
- A valid contact email address & phone number for questions regarding grant
- If applying as a 501(c)(3):
 - Short overview of the organization (major achievements, recent accomplishments, impact, and major donors)
 - Board of Directors listing
 - Latest IRS 990 filings
 - Budget for program or proposed project
 - Full year operating budget

Applications will not be accepted from:

- Organizations not in the NS territory
- Organizations requesting general operating support (i.e., funding requests for salaries, overhead, rent or utility expenses)
- Organizations that do not have a 501(c)(3) public charity status or are not tax-exempt as a government entity
- Organizations that have a written policy or a history of discrimination against individuals because of their race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, or veteran status
- Organizations requesting general operating support
- Individuals or organizations established to help individuals
- Religious affiliated organizations that do not support the community at large or discriminate based on religion type
- Fraternal organizations
- Political or lobbying organizations
- Fundraising events, telethons, races, or benefits
- Amateur, civic, or professional sports or athletic organizations, clubs, or activities
- Organizations whose programs have an international and/or national scope
- Civic leagues or Chambers of Commerce
- Referral or consulting agencies and organizations