



## **Community Impact Grants of the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region**

### **Capacity Building Grant Initiative**

#### **Definition of Capacity Building:**

Capacity building is defined as the activities that strengthen the infrastructure and operations of not-for-profit organizations, ultimately making them more effective, efficient, and better able to fulfill their mission. It involves development of an organization's core capabilities such as staff and board leadership, financial management, fundraising, use of technology and evaluation. Capacity building is facilitated through technical assistance, organizational and leadership development, coaching, training, networking, strategic planning, and management consulting.

#### **Background**

Many area nonprofit organizations are struggling to redefine themselves as they attempt to keep up with a series of fundamental shifts in the environment in which they operate. These shifts include changes in government funding, competition from other nonprofit and for-profit organizations, changing demographics and a host of other challenges. A number of organizations have begun to lose touch with their constituencies because they are being forced into offering fragmented services targeted only to the most needy in the community. Many organizations have to redefine the role their boards play in raising funds for their programs. Others find themselves willing but unable to explore potential opportunities for collaborating or merging with other organizations. Because it can be difficult, if not impossible, for not-for-profit organizations to find the time or resources to step back from day-to-day operations and engage in creative thinking about these and other issues, the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region created the Capacity-Building Grant Initiative.

#### **What is the purpose of the Initiative?**

The Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region offers small, flexible, one-time grants (**up to \$2,500**) to support some of the costs associated with organizational capacity-building. The Foundation encourages innovation and creativity by supporting activities designed to:

- Refine or rethink an organization's vision
- Promote collaboration between organizations
- Engage in long-range community planning
- Strengthen constituent involvement in decision-making
- Stimulate new, community-based leadership development

#### **What kind of activities does the Initiative support?**

This initiative supports the costs associated with:

- "Visioning" meetings to consider an organization's future and mission
- Community meetings and gatherings of constituents
- Staff and board training
- Leadership development workshops
- Visits to other programs
- Visits by experts to provide information
- Preliminary discussions with other organizations regarding collaborations, affiliations or mergers
- Research into new management or program models

### **Who can apply?**

The Community Foundation welcomes grant applications from organizations that are tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. If a project or organization does not have nonprofit status, an application may be submitted with the assistance of a nonprofit organization that has agreed to serve as the fiscal sponsor. While grants are not awarded to public schools or other public agencies, consideration is given to requests from community organizations that offer programs in collaboration with public agencies or whose programs serve public school students. If an organization is applying for or has received support from the Community Foundation's other grant making programs, it is still eligible for a grant from this Initiative.

***\*\*Please note: each calendar year, organizations are eligible to apply for Community Foundation Impact grants OR Community Foundation Capacity Building grants. Organizations will not be awarded Impact and Capacity Building grants in the same year.\*\****

### **What size are the grants?**

The Initiative supports one-time, short-term, capacity-building activities. As such, grants are considerably smaller than the Community Foundation's other grants – ranging from \$250 - \$2,500. **Requests should not exceed \$2,500, and total project costs should not exceed \$5,000.** The Initiative does not support general operating expenses or recurring costs for activities that require ongoing support.