



## Grant Guidelines

### History of the Foundation

John P. “Jack” Ellbogen is the benefactor of the Foundation. He was a Wyoming native who lived in communities across the state and demonstrated a deep love for and commitment to Wyoming. Jack recognized the value of education early in life, often crediting it as the key to his success. He believed that classroom teachers are the most important factor to enhancing student learning. Supporting quality teaching became his life’s work in time spent and resources provided. The Ellbogen Foundation mission, vision and values were established to reflect Jack’s giving philosophies and priorities. We adhere to the Principle that **Donor Intent is the Essential Criteria for Every Board and Staff Decision.**

### Mission, Vision, Values and DNA

#### *Mission Statement*

To create or cause change primarily for the benefit of the people of the State of Wyoming through the support of science, education, and charity.

#### *Vision*

Empower the people of Wyoming to lead healthy lives in thriving communities.

#### *Value Statements*

- We act out of integrity and honesty in all our relationships.
- We approach our work with purpose and thoughtful consideration.
- We actively seek out and are enriched by the expertise of and partnership with others.
- We use our resources to energize, engage and inspire toward positive, systemic outcomes.
- We fulfill our commitments in good faith for the common good.

### Geographic Focus

The Ellbogen Foundation funds work that benefits the people of Wyoming, with emphasis on grants to Wyoming-based organizations. Grants to organizations outside Wyoming are rare and are only considered if their work directly benefits the state. We prioritize grant operations and activities that serve all of Wyoming or large regions of the state. By invitation only, we will review proposals from organizations serving a single community or county.

## Programming Interests and Grant Considerations

Education remains a top priority for the Foundation. We focus on teacher quality and meaningful learning experiences as cornerstones for academic success and workforce readiness. We also recognize that educational achievement depends on strong home and community environments. As part of this broader view, we have increased funding to address food insecurity and to strengthen family life and wellbeing.

The Foundation is committed to remaining connected to Wyoming and to supporting grants that respond to evolving needs.

When reviewing and deliberating on grant requests, the Ellbogen Board considers:

- Alignment – Does the proposal align with the Foundation’s guidance and interests? How does it address emerging needs in line with donor intent?
- Impact – Will it deliver measurable, meaningful, sustainable impact for people in Wyoming?
- Geographic area served – Does it serve the state or a large region? Will its impact and learning benefit others over time?
- Quality – Does it meet identified needs with a sound plan and high likelihood of success?
- Coherence – Is the proposal well-organized, clear, and focused, avoiding repetition and ensuring the content is unified and meaningful?
- Collaboration – Are there strong, appropriate partnerships with evidence of shared commitment?
- Applicant capacity – Does the organization have a strong track record? Is staffing and resourcing adequate? Are financials healthy and stable?
- Budget – Are expenses reasonable and necessary? Is the organization financially sound and positioned for ongoing work?

## Grant Types and Restrictions

Most grants are initiated by the Foundation, but we welcome proposals that align with our guidance and interests. We receive far more requests than we can fund. When a proposal strongly aligns with our priorities, we may consider:

- General Operating Grants – Flexible funding for organizations with strong leadership and clear evidence of meaningful impact.
- Project Support Grants – Targeted funding for specific programs or projects that deliver meaningful results.
- Seed, Capacity-Building, Matching, Endowment, or Research Grants – May be considered, but applicants should consult with the Foundation before submitting.

We fund only public charities or government agencies. We cannot fund individuals, even for scholarships at public institutions.

We do not fund:

- Capital campaigns or building renovation projects (including energy projects),
- Lobbying or activities that influence public elections,
- Charter or private schools.

Note:

- Local and regional anti-hunger organizations are supported through grants to the Wyoming Hunger Initiative and Food Bank of Wyoming. They should not apply directly to the Foundation.
- Local and regional early childhood organizations are supported through grants to the Wyoming Early Childhood Outreach Network and the Wyoming Early Childhood Professional Learning Collaborative. They also should not apply directly.

## Grant Sizes

The Foundation makes grants of varying sizes. When determining your request amount, consider:

- The Ellbogen Foundation's typical annual distribution,
- Your organization's budget and capacity to deliver the proposed impact,
- Opportunities to leverage other funding. The Foundation generally prefers not to be the sole or primary funder of a project or organization and will look for evidence of additional support in your proposal and financial materials.

## How to Apply

The Foundation takes responsibility for identifying and supporting the best organizations and programs aligned with Donor Intent and our mission. We hold two grant cycles each year, in spring and fall. Our goal is to maintain a fair, thoughtful process that manages the volume of proposals, helps us discover new funding opportunities, and ensures our Board has the information needed to make informed, impactful funding decisions.

We encourage you to connect with Foundation staff to help you navigate our grant process. For specific details, please visit the [Ellbogen Foundation website](#).

- The Ellbogen Foundation requires a Letter of Inquiry (LOI) as the first step in the grant process. Before each Board meeting, a 5-day window is designated for receiving LOIs through a form that will be available on the website only during that period. LOIs submitted outside of the designated timeframe or not submitted through the required form will not be shared with or reviewed by the Board.
- Fewer than half of those who submit an LOI are asked to complete a full grant request for consideration by the Ellbogen Foundation Board of Directors. The full request includes both narrative and financial information necessary for the Board to make funding decisions.
- All organizations awarded funding are required to submit an annual grant report that includes both narrative and financial content.