

2026 Grant Writing Guide For Women's Giving Circle Applications

The mission of the Women's Giving Circle, a fund of the Eau Claire Community Foundation, is to improve the quality of life for women and children in Eau Claire County through collective philanthropy.

Grant Eligibility Restrictions

- Applicants will need to submit evidence of 501(c)(3) IRS status, or another qualified 501(c)(3) organization must agree to serve as fiscal agent.
- Applications from tax-exempt entities like government, educational and religious organizations are also accepted.
- The applicant's proposal must address the needs of women and/or children 18 years of age and younger.
- The Women's Giving Circle makes grants to nonprofit agencies located in Eau Claire County, or to those able to demonstrate significant impact within this area.
- The Women's Giving Circle does not make grants to organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, ancestry, color, age, familial status, disability, religion, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, lawful sources of income, national origin, or any other discriminatory practice prohibited by state or federal law and the organization must demonstrate cultural sensitivity in the implementation of the project.
- If an organization is funded by the Women's Giving Circle in two consecutive years, its application will not be considered in the third year. However, it can apply again in the fourth year.
- The Women's Giving Circle supports proposals that have been planned considering overall community needs and do not duplicate existing services.
- Funding for the following will be considered on a case-by-case basis:
 - Travel grants that do not directly support the implementation of the proposal.
 - Requests from endowments and foundations.
- Because of limited funds the following will not be supported:
 - Annual fundraising drives
 - Asset purchases not related to the proposal
 - Capital campaigns
 - Debt reduction
 - Ongoing operating expenses or building funds
 - Political parties, candidates, or partisan activities
 - Proposals with a religious focus
 - Scholarly research

Allocated funds must be used during the specified grant cycle:

January 1 to December 31 of the year following the grant award

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Evaluation Criteria

The Womens Giving Circle Fund favors **proposals** that:

- Give a clear and concise explanation of a new or ongoing proposal.
- Fulfill the applicant's mission statement.
- Positively impact the lives of the target population of women and/or children in Eau Claire County.
- Establish a clear purpose for the proposal and explain how it will be determined whether or not the purpose has been accomplished.

Application Process

Applications for grant proposals will become available on April 1 of each year. For further information or application materials, visit the Women's Giving Circle page of the ECCF website at <https://eccfwi.org/lasting-impact/wgc/> You can also contact the ECCF at 715-552-3801 or grants@eccfwi.org.

You must use the online Women's Giving Circle application form to submit your application. All required supporting documents can be uploaded directly onto the application. They are:

1. Budget: Organization's current overall operating budget, including expenses and revenues.
2. Proof of tax-exempt status: Copy of tax-exempt status letter from the IRS, Government Certificate of Exemption, or equivalent proof of tax-exempt status.
3. Year-to-date financials: Your organization's most recent financials, including your balance sheet and statement of activities.
4. Board of Directors: List of current Board of Directors or equivalent governing body members.
5. Letter(s) of Support (required if you have a fiscal sponsor): A letter of support is required if another organization/person is integral to your grant proposal and/or is a fiscal sponsor. If you have more than one letter of support, please combine them into one document and upload.
6. Organization logo: Please upload your organization's logo if you have one. This will be displayed at various Women's Giving Circle gatherings if your grant proposal is funded.

The application form must be submitted by the date indicated on the ECCF website.

Awards are announced in November for grant funds to be used between January 1-December 31 of the following year.

Follow-Up Requirements:

The final Grant Report is due within 30 days of proposal completion or by January 31 of the year following proposal implementation, whichever comes first. Grant Report forms will be sent to WGC grant recipients.

Grantees should acknowledge the following fund in all publicity materials related to their grant-funded proposal:

“The Women's Giving Circle Fund of the Eau Claire Community Foundation”

Our logo is available upon request and should be used where appropriate. Recipients are also asked to document their proposal with photographs, which should be submitted using the Grant Report Form along with copies of any press releases, media coverage, or newsletter articles.



A Fund of the Eau Claire Community Foundation

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Ideas to Consider When Responding to Application Questions:

The prompts within the following pages are intended to help you interpret and answer the questions in the Women's Giving Circle Grant Application. WGC offers these as ideas for consideration, or "questions to ask yourself" as you describe your proposal within each section of the application. **You need not respond to every prompt, as they may not all apply to your organization's proposal.**

A nine-point scale will be used by grant reviewers to evaluate responses on your application:

HIGH (7-9 pts) - the response provides all or most of the requested details (including most, if not all, the necessary supporting documentation/data), is clear and logically stated.

MEDIUM (4-6 pts) – the response provides some relevant detail (including at least some supporting information and data) and is stated with adequate clarity.

LOW (1-3 pts) – the response provides little to no relevant detail, may be confusing, and provides little to no supporting data.

Application Overview

Nature and Purpose of the Proposal

Describe the program for which you seek funding. Explain how it meets your mission. Include goals you hope to accomplish with this proposal. IMPORTANT: This provides the basis for evaluation of your application.

Give an overview of your proposal. Simply explain your main points i.e., title, purpose, what your goals are, amount of funding you're requesting, and who will benefit.

Ask yourself:

- What do you plan to do? Include goals you wish to accomplish.
- What are the characteristics of the population you will be working with? How will this proposal help your target population?
- **Remember: The amount requested must equal the amount listed in the Financial Information Table 1.**

Proposal Information

1. Community need: Identify the need(s) in Eau Claire County your proposal addresses. Explain how you identified and analyzed these community needs. Illustrate with data, including relevant statistics. Use local statistics if available.

- Does your response clearly identify a need experienced by women and/or children (18 and under) in Eau Claire County?
- Does your response clearly describe how the need(s) was determined? Describe any assessment tools used to identify the need(s)? Are sources for statistics identified?

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- 2. Differentiation: Describe how the proposal differs from similar programs/services currently offered in Eau Claire County. Explain how it will avoid duplicating the services other organizations offer.**
 - Are the ways in which the proposal differs from similar programs currently offered in Eau Claire County clearly explained?
 - Have you explained in what ways the proposal offers something new?
- 3. Collaboration: List other organizations (if any) that are collaborating on this proposal and describe their participation. If no other organization is involved, explain why you believe you are capable of successfully implementing this proposal on your own.**
 - Will other organizations/nonprofits be partnering with you on this proposal?
 - What specific benefits will be brought about through this collaboration?
 - Within the collaboration, what contributions will each partner organization make? Examples include event venue, expertise, promotions, supplies, etc.
- 4. Timeline: Explain the timeline for your proposal. Use a numbered list of the planning, spending, implementation, and evaluation steps associated with this proposal in chronological order.**

REMINDER: WGC grant dollars can only be used from January 1, 2027 to December 31, 2027.

 - What steps/major tasks are important to your proposal and need to be included in your timeline?
 - Have you included critical dates for these steps/major tasks? Have you provided a clear chronology?
- 5. Activities: Describe up to three major actions your proposal will include. Explain how each will help accomplish the proposal's purpose.**
 - Some examples may include: events, promotions, purchases, and programs.
 - How are the actions significant to your proposal's purpose?
 - Have you given a clear description of each major action, i.e., what will be done, who will be involved?
- 6. Evaluation: How will you know if your proposed program is successful? List methods to show how you will measure whether specific goals (as mentioned earlier in the "nature and purpose of the proposal" section of your application) are accomplished.**
 - Examples might include surveys of stakeholders, tracking of participation numbers/rates, and health/learning outcomes.
 - What methods do you plan to use to illustrate progress toward meeting proposal goals?
 - How will the results of these evaluations be recorded, compiled and communicated?
- 7. Staffing: Describe how your proposal will be staffed and managed. Include both paid staff and volunteers.**
 - Who will be included in the staff involved with your proposal? Paid? Volunteer?
 - What staff is necessary to accomplish the activities and purpose of your proposal?
 - What knowledge or expertise do staff or volunteers possess that will help them carry out this proposal?
- 8. Impact: What are the lasting effects and impact your proposal will have on the target population?**
 - Have you clarified what short- and/or long-term impact your proposal hopes to have on the target population?
 - What anticipated enduring benefits will enhance the lives of the target population and community?

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Financial Information

Women's Giving Circle Funding: Provide the estimated program cost for each budget category and designate what portion will be funded from the Women's Giving Circle funds you are requesting. Enter \$0 for irrelevant budget items and NA for irrelevant text boxes.

- Four possible categories of spending to be supported specifically by this Women's Giving Circle grant could include salaries/benefits, contracted services, supplies/advertising/printing, and other expenses. State dollar amount proposed for each and clearly explain how these funds will be used.
- **The TOTAL AMOUNT of grant support you are requesting from the Women's Giving Circle entered in the Application Overview section MUST EQUAL the amount in the last cell of TABLE 1.**

Other Sources of Funding Support: Show any funding support for your proposal which is anticipated to come in from sources other than the Women's Giving Circle. Enter \$0 for irrelevant budget fields and NA for irrelevant text boxes.

- To fund your program, describe monetary sources you are pursuing or have pursued, other than this Women's Giving Circle grant proposal. These sources can originate internally from your organization's resources. In addition, resources may come from individuals or other organizations/nonprofits in the form of donations, grants, or in-kind contributions.
- State the dollar amount and explain how these funds are to be used.

NOTE: The total amounts in TABLES 1 and 2 will be automatically computed.