



LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER

MEMBER OF CONGRESS

Community Project Funding - Frequently Asked Questions

What is Community Project Funding?

Community Project Funding is generally defined as spending provisions in the House appropriations bills that:

- Are requested on behalf of constituents or constituent organizations by a Member of Congress.
- Provides, authorizes, or recommends a specific amount of discretionary budget authority, credit authority, or specific funding amount to a specific entity for a specific purpose.
- Has a purpose that must meet the objective of a federal program under existing law.

Community Project Funding is requested for projects with a clear purpose and goal above and beyond normal operating activities, and for which non-federal funding is not available or sufficient. It is likely that Community Project Funding will only serve as a partial contribution to the total cost of a project.

Is there a deadline for submitting a request?

Yes. The deadline to submit a Community Project Funding request for our office is April 16th at 5pm.

What if I miss a deadline? Are any exceptions made if the bill hasn't been passed?

Congressional offices review numerous requests in a short amount of time. As a result, deadlines are strictly enforced. Once my office submits our requests to the full committee, the Congresswoman is unable to change or add requests. That is why it's important to submit your request before the deadline.

Are Community Project Funding requests publicly disclosed?

Yes. All requests for Community Project Funding submitted by the Congresswoman to the committee for consideration must be publicly listed on that her website, including the name and address of the requestor, the amount requested, and the justification for use of taxpayer funds.

Are there limitations on what Community Project Funding can be used for?

Yes. Federal Programs have very specific restrictions on how federal funds can be used. It is recommended that you closely examine this guide for references to eligible uses or limitations on use. However, each account and program is different so if you have questions, please email DE00.fundingquestions@mail.house.gov.

Can I request funding for “bricks and mortar”?

Generally, no. Funding for building construction or renovation is a frequent request. But most appropriations accounts specifically prohibit this kind of project given the high demand. Our resource guide found on the bluntrochester.house.gov stipulates the limitations.

However, there are some exceptions, including the Economic Development Initiative under the Department of Housing and Urban Development, and certain projects before the Agriculture Subcommittee, etc.

How much should I request? Is there a maximum amount?

It depends on the account from which you are requesting funds. You should not request more funds than you need or that can be realistically spent in the fiscal year for which you receive the funds. While you should request the amount that can be expended in the upcoming fiscal year that you need, please remember that projects are rarely funded fully due to budgetary restraints. Funding from Community Project Funding in one fiscal year is not a guarantee for Community Project Funding in future years. There is no stated maximum, but there are trends from previous years, depending on the account, that give likely ranges. Please reach out to our office for specific questions related to your project at DE00.fundingquestions@mail.house.gov.

What if I do not know the appropriate Account or Agency for my project request?

The resource guide linked on bluntrochester.house.gov has been prepared to outline information on available accounts. Requestors should use this guide to identify the appropriate account to identify one that meets the needs of your project or organization. Please email if you need additional information at DE00.fundingquestions@mail.house.gov.

If my project is funded, will I receive the full amount I request?

There is no guarantee that an approved Community Project Funding request will be funded at the requested level. It is very likely that you will only receive a portion of your request, if funded at all. Please keep this in mind when requesting support for your project.

Do I need letters of support?

Yes, you need to demonstrate community support. The more community support for a project, the better. As listed above, letters of support from local, municipal, and state elected officials and stakeholders, as well as editorials and articles in local newspapers on the importance and necessity of the project are all important. Additionally, resolutions passed by local government would demonstrate support. If you have questions on satisfying this requirement, please reach out to my office by email at DE00.fundingquestions@mail.house.gov.

I submitted a request. Will it be approved? When will I know?

The FY 2022 Community Project Funding process is extremely targeted, and this process is also very competitive. While our team will look at all requests, it is strongly recommended you explore other grant and funding sources as well.

The subcommittee deadlines are April 28th through April 30th. In order for our office to properly examine all requests, our office's deadline is April 16th at 5pm.

There are many variables that dictate the process after the submission's deadline. Typically, the House Appropriations bills are considered by the Committee in the late spring, with the Senate considering bills in late spring and over the summer. The House typically will pass most appropriations bills by July. The House and Senate have to then work out the differences in each of those bills.

If your project is selected by the Congresswoman, you will be notified by our office. The Committee requires all members to publicly disclose and post their final requests to the Appropriations Committee once the requests are made. Please remember, even if your project is supported in the House and/or Senate Appropriations bills, the funding level is subject to change until the final bill is signed into law.

This process can be long, but our office will be sure to keep all projects updated of their status.

If my Community Project Funding request is granted, what is the process for getting the assistance and how quickly will I receive it?

In general, recipients of Community Project Funding will be contacted by the appropriate agency or office that oversees the account from which your project received funding. This cannot happen until the appropriations bill in which your project was listed is signed into law. The timing varies between

departments and agencies – some may start the process within several weeks, others may take several months after the bill’s enactment into law.

The process of accessing funding and the time it takes to complete the necessary steps surprises many recipients who expect the money to be provided immediately.

Please be sure to take this into account when submitting a request.

Can I depend on receiving Community Project Funding for the same project more than once?

Generally, no. Most successful requests are one-time infusions of funding, generally used to launch a project or partially contribute towards the total cost of a project.

Given the limitations on the appropriations process for Community Project Funding, there is no guarantee that Congress will support a project for more than one year.

Constituent Questions

Kathryn from Rehoboth Beach asks if these projects are for large national projects or for community concerns?

Excellent question. The House Appropriations Committee made the process this year focused on projects of community need with in the districts of each member of Congress. To meet that goal, they made a number of requirements that would ensure these projects are local and community based. First, they require Members to demonstrate the need by the community itself. Second, they banned for-profit entities from being the grantees. Third, the accounts that are eligible for community project funding are very limited and are focused on the needs of our communities. However, please note that multiple members can join to make national requests as long as they are focused on addressing issues in their communities.

Many people asked about which projects would fall under community project funding?

This is a great question and it is dependent on the need it would address. Our resource guide linked on the website, bluntrochester.house.gov, provides some details about which projects are eligible. Generally, construction and renovation projects will not be eligible, though that is dependent on the subject area. Additionally, most public works projects are eligible but those will generally require local governments to support the project. In certain cases, acquisition of public land may be eligible for

community project funding. Unfortunately, there are many limitations to funding.

For your specific project questions, please email DE00.fundingquestions@mail.house.gov. But remember that regardless of the project, the applying organization MUST be a nonprofit or a unit of local government, and the project must have demonstrated community support.

We also received many questions about whether certain organizations can apply for funding?

This is a great question. Nonprofits and units of local government, such as towns, cities, counties, and states, are eligible to apply. That would mean any 501(c) entity including certain associations that file with the IRS under those designations. The opportunities available to these organizations, however, are circumscribed by the accounts that are available for community funding requests. Please read the resource guide found on our website, bluntrochester.house.gov and feel free to email questions to DE00.fundingquestions@mail.house.gov.

Danielle from Wilmington asked if an organization can apply if it is not a 501(c)(3) but is supported by a 501(c)(3)?

This is a very good question and it depends on the status of the applying organization. If it is another 501(c) nonprofit, then yes. If it is a for-profit entity, even if it receives some funding support from a nonprofit, then no. If it is a not-for-profit entity, like a credit union, they cannot be the apply entity. However, there are instances where not-for-profit entities or other entities that may not be eligible applicants can be eligible subgrantees. These are situation dependent so for specific questions, please email DE00.fundingquestions@mail.house.gov.

Larry from Bear asked if we could fund projects that are by a Delaware business that is operated by a sole proprietor?

Thank you for the question. For-profit entities are not eligible for community project funding, including if they are owned by a sole proprietor.

Lynn from Newark asked if we could share projects for the last 10 years and their outcomes?

Thank you for the question, Lynn. This is an entirely new process. The last time Congress accepted these types of requests was over ten years ago. This year, the process is focused on transparency and making a real impact to the communities that need it. This is an opportunity to ensure Delaware gets its fair share and support for projects that can really impact the lives of Delawareans. That is why it is imperative that organizations applying for

these projects provide the requested information and documentation, especially those demonstrated community need. Our application can be found on bluntrochester.house.gov and if you have questions, please email DE00.fundingquestions@mail.house.gov.