

How to Apply for a Grant

FUNDING OVERVIEW

Based in Los Angeles, ECMC Foundation is a national foundation working to improve postsecondary outcomes for students from underserved backgrounds. It is one of several affiliates under the [ECMC Group](#) enterprise based in Minneapolis, which together work to help students succeed.

The Foundation makes investments in two focus areas: College Success and Career Readiness; and uses a spectrum of funding structures, including strategic grantmaking and program-related investments, to fund both nonprofit and for-profit ventures. The funding information on this page is for traditional grants in the Foundation's two focus areas.

FOCUS AREAS

- **College Success** — The College Success focus area aims to increase the number of students from historically and presently underserved backgrounds who persist through and graduate from an institution of higher education with a bachelor's degree. Understanding that many of our students begin their postsecondary pathways at community colleges, we actively engage in opportunities to invest in transfer success. College Success invests in postsecondary programs and initiatives that:
 - Improve and scale systemic reforms and supports to increase student success at postsecondary institutions.
 - Increase currently enrolled students' persistence toward a degree.
 - Support on-time transfer from two-year to four-year institutions.
 - Enhance students' pathways to graduation with career-ready skills.
 - Elevate new research findings and publications that promote student success outcomes.
- **Career Readiness** — The Career Readiness focus area is committed to improving postsecondary career and technical education (CTE) outcomes for students from underserved backgrounds. Grants made as part of the Career Readiness focus area typically fund intermediaries supporting, institutions and organizations implementing, or third parties researching or evaluating credit-bearing postsecondary pathways for adult learners that lead to credentials and provide a pathway to careers paying family-sustaining wages. Career Readiness supports projects, programs and initiatives that aim to:
 - Build the capacity of institutions and organizations to provide accredited, credit-bearing, industry-informed and transferable postsecondary CTE pathways.
 - Conduct research and evaluations to inform the field and promote postsecondary CTE programs that are part of educational pathways that lead to portable certificates or degrees.
 - Support adult learners' postsecondary CTE advancement toward a certificate or associate degree with the inclusion of learner-centered approaches and academic and non-academic wraparound supports.

Grant funding varies based on program need and relevance. For the Foundation's giving level history, please visit our [Grants & Investments](#) page.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility for ECMC Foundation grant funding is determined by the following criteria. For certain Request for Proposals, criteria are added for specific grant opportunities.

For program-related investments, visit the Education Innovation Ventures page to learn more about eligibility.

Who is eligible?

- Nonprofit organizations registered as a U.S. 501(c)(3) or a 509(a)(1), (2) or (3) of the Internal Revenue Code
- Government entities

Who is ineligible?

- Organizations seeking funding to support endowment funds, political activities and lobbying, scholarship programs, capital campaigns or fundraising activities.
- Any entity or program outside the United States.

GRANTS SUBMISSION PROCESS

Letters of Inquiry

ECMC Foundation accepts Letters of Inquiry (LOIs) on a rolling basis. All LOIs must be submitted through our [online system](#).

LOIs must provide the following:

- An overview of your organization, its purpose, relevant history and data on effectiveness.
- A brief summary of the activities for which you are requesting support, including an outline of your objectives.
- The approximate start date and duration of the proposed activities.
- The total amount of funding needed, the amount requested from ECMC Foundation, and information about other sources of support, both assured and requested.
- Contact information and EIN for the organization.

Formal Proposals

LOIs that most closely reflect ECMC Foundation's program priorities will be invited to submit a full grant proposal. Proposals are accepted upon request only. A request for a proposal should not be interpreted as an indication of likely support.

Foundation staff may request additional information in writing from applicants and may request to meet with applicants, either virtually or in person.

Review Process

The ECMC Foundation Board of Directors meets four times a year to consider grant proposals. Please be aware that the full grant proposal process—from first contact to board approval—can take several months. We ask grant candidates to be mindful of this and provide themselves with sufficient time.

[Submit an LOI to apply for a grant.](#)