History
The Limitless Fund was created through the generosity of an anonymous donor who offered a challenge gift to help the Manistee County Community Foundation grow its ability to meet the ever-changing needs of the community. The Foundation met and surpassed the challenge due to an outpouring of community support, and is grateful to everyone who contributed to make this grant program possible.

Purpose
The Limitless Fund is unique in the Foundation’s roster of over 100 funds because it is not restricted for a specific purpose. The permanent endowment can be used to strategically address the ever-changing needs of Manistee County.

The MCCF Board of Directors has decided to consider grant requests for any charitable purpose except for recreation (active and/or outdoor) under the Limitless Fund Grant Program which will also include several Field of Interest Funds. Grant requests for recreational (active and/or outdoor) purposes shall be considered under the Foundation’s Minger Family Endowment Fund Grant Program.

Current Funding Priorities
Currently, the MCCF Board has decided against adopting funding priorities for the Limitless Fund in order to provide maximum flexibility in responding to pressing community needs, gaps in services and emerging opportunities.

Available Funds
The amount of funds available for granting each year is determined by the MCCF Board of Directors in accordance with the Foundation’s Spending Policy.

Grant Amounts and Project Completion Timeline
Generally, the minimum grant award shall be $1,000 and the maximum grant award shall be $5,000. All projects should be completed within one year of a grant award.

Renewable grants are not offered at this time. Applicants with funding needs that span more than one year, or that exceed the maximum grant award, should contact the MCCF to discuss their project prior to the application deadline.

Note: Grant funds may NOT be used to pay expenses incurred prior to grant award date.

Grant Cycle and Application Instructions
The Foundation will announce a competitive grant cycle at least once per year through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process.
The first step in seeking a grant from the MCCF is to submit a completed Grant Inquiry Form, which is available on the MCCF website (www.manisteefoundation.org). MCCF staff will send notification within two weeks regarding the eligibility of the project.

A link to an application form will be provided if the project is considered eligible for funding. The Limitless Fund grant application deadline is October 15th. Limitless Fund grant awards are anticipated to be announced prior to December 31st.

**Number of Applications Allowed**
There will be no limit on the number of applications an organization may submit to the MCCF Limitless Fund Grant Program. However, organizations may generally receive no more than one grant per year. In the event that an organization is serving as a fiscal agent for a project, they may be awarded more than one grant per year.

**Eligible Applicants**
- 501(c)3 nonprofit organizations
- School districts
- Units of government, including recognized tribal governments
- Other tax-exempt organizations

**Eligibility of Faith-Based and Religious Institutions**
MCCF may make grants to faith based organizations or religious institutions for services that address community needs or which enhance the quality of life for all citizens.

Grants must:
- Have a clear public benefit.
- Be fully accessible to persons regardless of their individual religious creed or convictions.
- Respect diversity of religious and spiritual beliefs of all individuals.
- Not directly fund religious programs or services that require adherence to a particular religious belief, doctrine or creed.

**Eligible Projects**
- Must be located in Manistee County, unless pre-approved by the MCCF, and benefit residents of Manistee County.
- Must be supported by the applicant’s highest governing body as indicated by the submittal of a resolution or letter

The intent of the Limitless Fund is to be as flexible as possible. However, the MCCF Board may consider additional criteria when determining whether or not a project is eligible for funding.

**Project Requirements**
- If applicable, any facility developed or maintained should be useable by people of all ages, abilities and income, if reasonably possible. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements must be met. All required permits must be secured.

- If applicable, applicants must have control of any property being developed such as fee simple ownership, a permanent easement or a long term lease. Any exceptions to this requirement should be discussed with, and may be approved by, the MCCF.

- If applicable, equipment purchased as a result of the grant shall remain under ownership by the grantee and used exclusively for projects or programs administered by the grantee for the useful life of the equipment. Any exceptions to this requirement should be discussed with, and may be approved by, the MCCF.
• If applicable, a facility or structure developed as a result of a grant shall remain under ownership by the grantee and available for its proposed purpose for the useful life of the facility or structure. Any exceptions to this requirement should be discussed with, and may be approved by, the MCCF.

Please note this may not be a complete list of project requirements and that requirements may be modified by the MCCF Board of Directors. Grantees that do not fulfill all project requirements may not be considered for future funding from the MCCF.

Applicant Match Requirement
Applicants must contribute a portion of the total project cost, known as match. A minimum of 10% cash match is required. Additional match is encouraged and may include grants from other sources and donations. The requested grant amount and total of all match sources should equal the total project cost.

Example:
$5,000 = total project cost
$500 = applicant cash match (must be at least 10% of total project cost)
$4,500 = requested grant amount (may not exceed 90% of total project cost)

Note: Applicant match may not be used to pay expenses incurred prior to grant award date. Applicant must verify that all matching funds have been committed to enter into a grant agreement.

Grant Payments and Reporting
Upon receipt of a signed grant agreement, the total grant amount will be paid to Grantee at the beginning of the project. A Final Grant Report and Final Financial Report will be due no later than 30 days following the end of the grant period or completion of the project, if earlier.

Grantee Recognition Requirements
Grantees shall recognize the Manistee County Community Foundation Limitless Fund, and/or other Field of Interest Fund if noted, as a funding source and adhere to the recognition requirements outlined in their grant agreement.

Grant Guideline Compliance
Grantees that do not comply with the grant guidelines may not be considered for future funding from the MCCF.

Funding Decisions
All grants will be approved by the MCCF Board of Directors. The MCCF Board of Directors may use discretion in awarding grants outside of a grant cycle.

Questions?
Contact the MCCF staff at (231) 723-7269 or email grants@manisteefoundation.org.

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Evaluation of Grant Applications

MCCF may contact applicants to schedule a site visit as part of the grant investigation process. Grant applications will be evaluated, in part, based on meeting the criteria listed below.
1. **Documented need for the project**
   There is a clear need for the project. It is documented by items such as: survey results, requests from the public, complaints, pictures, etc. Any similar opportunities in the area are identified and there is a description of why the project is still needed.

2. **Benefit to community**
   Information is provided about how the community will benefit from the project, such as how many users are anticipated to benefit and from what segment of the population. If applicable, the applicant has stated when the facility or project will be available for use (i.e.: year-round or seasonal, hours open, etc.).

3. **Quality of the project**
   There are clear goals set for the project and reasonable metrics. The applicant has explained the process used to determine the project type, scope and design (if applicable) and why the project is compatible with the site location. The applicant explained how potential users will know the site or program exists.

4. **Support for the project**
   General support for the project from the public and/or letters of support from project partners were provided. Documentation from the applicant’s highest governing body indicating they are supportive of the application and project was included.

5. **Feasibility of the project**
   Information was provided about how the applicant would complete the project and how they determined the total project cost (matching funds plus grant request amount). The applicant provided assurance that the project could be completed as proposed.

6. **Ability of the applicant to successfully complete project**
   The applicant demonstrated they could successfully complete the project by providing examples of past grant projects completed by the applicant and/or by identifying who will be completing and overseeing this project. Information is provided that assures the MCCF that the project will be completed successfully including the financial management of the project.

7. **Accessibility of project**
   People of all ages, abilities and income would be able to access and participate in the project, program or facility.

8. **Leveraging of other funds/level of match**
   Greater than 10% match is provided and the project is funded by multiple sources, including the applicant.

9. **Collaboration with other entities**
   The applicant is collaborating with other entities related to the project, as applicable, such as shared programming, maintenance, finances, etc. If the collaboration exists, it is clear how it will result in more efficiency and less duplication of efforts.

10. **Ability of applicant to sustain/maintain the project**
    The project will be maintained to assure the continued viability and use. If applicable, the anticipated useful life of any equipment, facility or structure is provided along with an explanation of how the applicant will ensure it remains available for its intended use throughout that time.