Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota Foundation

Applicant User Guide

For additional assistance email or call:

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Eden Mussie, foundation coordinator Eden.Mussie@bluecrossmn.com or 651-662-9778
Getting Started

All grant applications to the Blue Cross Foundation must be submitted through our online funding portal. To view open funding opportunities and apply for a grant begin by logging into Blue Cross’ funding portal at this address: https://bcbsmn.smartsimple.com/s_Login.jsp

Login Page

New Users

New applicants must register and create an account in the system before they can apply for a grant. To begin your registration, click on the Organization Register Here button shown below.

Returning Users

If you have already created an account enter your email address and password at the Login screen. If you forget your password or are having trouble accessing your account, please click Forgot Password? A temporary password will be emailed to you. (If you do not receive an email in 15 minutes or less be sure to check your spam/junk mail folders.)

When prompted, enter the temporary password that was emailed to you in the Old Password field and create a New Password noting the password policy (Minimum characters 8 – letters and numbers only.)
Organization and Contact Registration Page

When you click on Organizations Register Here you will be taken to the Organization and Contact Registration Page.

If your organization is a public charity, click on Search IRS Database to look for your organization.

How to use the IRS Database Search function:
If you are a nonprofit 501(c)(3) you may use the “Search IRS Database” function to retrieve your organization’s data.

- Enter your organization’s name (keyword search is sufficient, example: “Sample” instead of "The Sample Foundation") or
- Enter your organization’s FEIN/TIN (do not include spaces or dashes, example: 123456789)
- Click Search
- When you find the name of your organization in the search results click on it and close the box.
- Your organization’s information will pre-populate on the form. Enter your personal contact information also and hit Submit.
- A temporary password will be emailed to you. Please be sure to check junk/spam email folders if you do not see an email.

If your organization is not in the IRS database simply complete the required fields on the registration form and hit Submit.
Community Funding Portal

Home

The Home page of the funding portal provides brief summaries of Blue Cross’ community funding entities and includes helpful links on the bottom of the page.

- Organization Details: Click here to update your organization’s profile.
- My Profile: Click here to update your personal contact information.
- Change Password: Click here to change your password.

Funding Opportunities

Under Funding Opportunities--›Foundation you will see a listing of all open Foundation funding opportunities or grants that you have been invited to apply for by Blue Cross Foundation staff. Clicking on the Apply Now button will open the application. You will first be asked to complete an Eligibility Questionnaire before proceeding to the application questions.
My Applications

Foundation: My Grants

This section of your portal will include any draft, submitted or closed applications you have with the Foundation.

In Progress: Any application that has been saved or is currently being worked on by an applicant.
Under Review: Any submitted application that is being reviewed by the Blue Cross Foundation or that has been sent back to the applicant for additional information.
Complete: Includes applications in the following statuses - Approved, Declined or Withdrawn

Foundation: My Grant Requirements

If you have been awarded a grant, this section of your portal is where you will find your grant agreements, assigned progress or final reports as well as reports you have completed and submitted to the Foundation.

Grant Agreements: If you have been awarded a grant, the grant agreement that you need to sign and upload back into the system will be located here.
Progress Reports: Any yearly progress or final reports scheduled for your grant will be here.
Progress Report History: Includes a listing of your submitted reports.
The Grant Application

Completing Your Application

- All applicants must complete the eligibility questionnaire preceding an application. After answering the questions, you will receive a message stating whether or not you are eligible to apply.

- All organization information must be up to date before you begin the application. Click on Organization Details and update all fields and upload your organization’s annual budget in the appropriate field.

- It may be helpful to print the application to review the questions before you begin. Click on the Print Preview button and export the document to a pdf, then print or save the pdf.

- Your application will automatically save every five minutes when you are actively working on it. You may want to save your application more often to avoid losing your work. The session will timeout after 50 minutes of inactivity.

- When you have answered all questions and uploaded all necessary attachments, hit the Review and Submit button. If there are any errors a message will appear in red at the top of the page. Click on each error item to correct the issue. After you have corrected any errors, hit Submit.

- You will receive an email confirmation of your application submission.

Uploading Attachments

To upload an attachment(s), complete the following steps:

- Save the document on your computer
- Click on the Single File or Multiple Files button
- Click on Browse and select the document you would like to attach
- Click on Upload or Start Upload
- Close the open window
- Look at your application and verify that the attachment(s) show as a link
- To delete an attachment and replace with another document, click on Upload and then Delete. You can then upload a new document.
My Application Has Been Approved – Now What?

If your application has been selected for funding you will receive a phone call from your Blue Cross Foundation program officer with details on your approved grant.

Next, the Foundation’s grants manager will prepare a grant agreement and upload it to your online account. You will be notified via email when the agreement is ready for you to review, sign and upload back into the system. The agreement will reside under the Foundation: My Grant Requirements.

Instructions for signing and uploading your grant agreement:

1. From the list below, select and download the Grant Agreement for your recently awarded grant.
2. Print out the Grant Agreement, review and sign.
3. Once signed, scan the signed copy as a PDF and attach it using the Attach Signed Agreement button below.

Declined Applications

If your application has not been selected for funding you will receive an email notifying you of our decision to decline your request.

Progress Reports

A progress report on your grant will be assigned to you and will be found in your portal under Foundation: My Grant Requirements. Click on the Application Name to view and complete the report form and upload the required budget documents.
Using the Notes feature

On your application you will see a Notes tab on the far right side of the screen. You will be able to read messages from Foundation staff here as well as send messages back to Foundation staff as needed. If Foundation staff sends you a note you will receive an email which will contain the contents of the note as well as instructions on how to log into the portal to respond to the message in the Notes tab.

Simply click on the Notes tab to open it and read your message. To respond, click on New, type your message and then click Save. The message will be sent back to Foundation staff.

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