

## **AMB West Community Fund** **2021 Funding Priorities**

Known by guests for their caring and attentive service, the associates of AMB West strive for that same reputation in the local community. Throughout the year, our associates give back to the communities in which they live and work – through their physical involvement, personal philanthropy, and grants made to nonprofit organizations by the AMB West Community Fund. AMB West associates review grant proposals, attend site visits, and provide recommendations for investments made by the AMB West Community Fund. Associates incorporate the Blank Family of Businesses Core Values in all aspects of their community giving:

- Give back to others
- Include everyone
- Innovate continuously
- Lead by example
- Listen and respond
- Put people first

The mission of the AMB West Community Fund is to enhance the quality of life for the residents of Montana, particularly in Park and Gallatin Counties. Established in 2001, the Fund has awarded more than \$7 million in grants. After assessing the landscape of existing programs and areas of need through data and conversations with community stakeholders, the Fund has identified four priority areas for 2021: happiness, early childhood development, youth empowerment and development, and youth suicide prevention. Application requirements, preferences, and priorities are outlined in the following sections and links.

### **Application Requirements**

The AMB West Community Fund supports creative approaches and innovative programs that improve outcomes for children and families in Park and Gallatin Counties. The Fund will only consider proposals from organizations that build on community assets and demonstrate the ability to foster community cooperation and collaboration. Nonprofit organizations focused on advocacy or policy changes are eligible to apply and must demonstrate how their activities hold promise for large-scale systemic change.

All applications should describe 1) the problem being addressed and/or community opportunity, 2) proposed efforts, and 3) expected outcomes (for children, families, or communities). Applicants should articulate the logical connection between the problem identified, the proposed solution, and the anticipated outcomes. Additionally, proposals should describe how they will track and measure outcomes. For example, newer projects should track service goals and sustainability, whereas established programs should track progress toward outcomes.

The AMB West Community Fund will consider funding multi-year projects that are of exceptionally high quality, address a significant need, and implement sustainable solutions that connect resources across sectors.

**Capital projects are supported on a limited basis. Please contact us prior to submitting a capital proposal.**

### **Preferences**

Within the four priority areas listed above, AMB West will give preference to projects and organizations that:

- Provide or enhance services in rural areas where resources and services are limited
- Serve populations in high-risk situations in Park County
- Enhance successful existing programs that serve the community to help them build toward the future and amplify their impact
- Demonstrate that they are supported by the community and/or are supported by data and incorporate data in their decision-making processes
- Elevate parent and caregiver and/or mentor engagement

### **2021 Funding Priorities**

***Due to AMB West Community Fund's multiyear grant [commitments](#), The Fund has limited remaining funds for our 2021 grant cycle. Our investment strategy for 2021 will include a competitive grant cycle for our Happiness priority area only. The Fund will consider requests falling under our other priority areas by invitation only. Please contact us with inquires.***

### **Happiness**

AMB West Philanthropies recognizes that while life is ever-changing, these times have especially highlighted the urgent need for growth and opportunity in resilience, adaptability, and human connection. In 2021, The Fund has therefore elevated efforts to improve the invaluable elements of human happiness within our communities.

The Fund requests collaborative and community-woven approaches increasing access to outdoor immersion in local natural settings, education addressing whole-person health, and critical wraparound services. The Fund is especially interested in creative strategies that foster healthy and meaningful relationships as isolation is a crucial barrier to well-being and longevity.

The Fund will consider proposals that support and integrate healthy social-emotional development for all age groups. Further, the Fund has an interest in self-care proposals that promote wellness among individuals such as counselors, healthcare providers, teachers, nonprofit leaders, and others who serve our community members who face high-risk situations.

The Fund strives to build upon community development providing both proven and innovative pathways to cope and hope during challenging times. Proposals for programs sparking joy and enhancing happiness for the future of our communities will be prioritized. (Note: Under this focus area, the Fund will not consider requests for medical or scholarly research on wellness.)

**Applications accepted by invitation only under the priority areas below:**

**Early Childhood Development**

The Fund will award grants to organizations providing children, birth to five, with quality opportunities that will prepare them for successful lifelong development. The Fund is especially interested in projects that promote healthy parent-child relationships and connection to community resources, as well as social and emotional skills among parents and children.

**Youth Empowerment and Development**

The Fund seeks creative nonprofit efforts to increase youth development opportunities and nurture young leaders. The Fund is especially interested in programs that empower youth and cultivate young stewards of land and wildlife through education, challenges of physical activity, wilderness experiences, and outdoor adventure. This includes programs that introduce youth and their families to the area's natural resources. The Fund will also consider approaches that help youth identify passions and goals and connect them to pathways and support to achieve their aspirations. Proposals that incorporate youth service-learning, civic engagement, and social emotional skill building will receive preference.

**Youth Suicide Prevention**

As part of its commitment to young people, the Fund has identified youth suicide prevention in Park County as a priority funding area. Montana's youth suicide rate is one of the highest in the country, and Park County's rate is especially high. The Fund seeks proposals that build on Park County's many strengths and that will contribute to a sustained, long-term reduction in youth suicide ideation and attempts.

Youth suicide prevention efforts can occur at many levels. For example, proposed projects may aim to improve mental health, strengthen relationships, or provide positive youth activities to promote youth vitality and diminish risk for suicide. Other projects may focus on early risk detection and intervention through improved coordination of services and follow-up, provide crisis management, or educate community members about appropriate responses to mental health crises.

Project types – The Fund is committed to addressing youth suicide using strengths-based approaches that build on the strong work already underway in Park County. The Fund expects to focus its 2021 Youth Suicide Prevention grant making on three project types: 1) Youth voice and engagement; 2) Parent support and outreach; and 3)

Innovation. Proposals for the Youth Suicide Prevention must specify the proposed project type.

1) Youth voice and engagement – The Fund is interested in supporting projects that will engage and enable youth to be advocates for youth well-being and suicide prevention in the community. These projects could take many forms, including creating a youth advisory panel for an existing youth serving organization, training youth in leadership and civic engagement around issues of mental health or suicide prevention, training youth on appropriate responses to mental health crises, or launching a public health campaign to reduce stigma associated with seeking help. *Projects proposed under this project type should include local youth in all aspects of the work, including planning, execution and evaluation.*

2) Parent support and outreach – Parents and caregivers play a critical role in supporting the well-being of youth in Park County, from engaging in discussions about challenges their children face to facilitating access to resources available through organizations such as schools or mental health providers. However, not all parents are able to fulfill this role due to a variety of factors, including things like demanding work schedules, their own behavioral health challenges (e.g. substance use), mistrust of services, or need for additional skills and supports. The Fund is interested in supporting projects that engage parents/caregivers through, for example, outreach or training, enhanced mental health and substance abuse services, or school-parent partnerships. *Projects proposed under this project type should include a plan for supporting parents/caregivers of youth in high risk situations (e.g. due to economic need, abuse) and for decreasing stigma associated with accessing services.*

3) Innovation – In addition to the two project types outlined above, the Fund is open to proposals that take an innovative approach to the Youth Suicide Prevention priority area. These may include proposals that tackle issues such as strategic use of data, firearm safety, the unique needs of underserved groups (e.g. rural communities, LGBTQ youth), or other issues linked to youth well-being and suicide prevention. *All projects proposed under this project type should include a well-articulated rationale for how it is related to youth suicide prevention.*

## **How to Apply to AMB West Community Fund**

### **Criteria for Consideration**

The Fund considers secular programs and focuses on programs that function during out-of-school time. A limited number of in-school programs are considered, provided they involve teacher and administration training and family engagement. Organizations must offer programming in Park or Gallatin Counties, Montana.

- Organizations must be classified as 501(c)(3) by the IRS
- Programs must provide enhancement to (not replace) public support
- All programs must be secular in nature and adhere to a nondiscriminatory policy
- Projects/programs must fall within the Happiness, Early Childhood Development, Youth Empowerment and Development, or Youth Suicide Prevention priority areas (refer to the “2021 Funding Priorities” page for details)
- Organizations must demonstrate that they are building on community assets and have fostered community cooperation and collaboration
- Capital projects are supported on a limited basis. Please contact us prior to submitting a capital proposal

The Fund does not provide funding for:

- Organizations that practice discrimination on the basis of age, race, national or ethnic origin, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, disability or veteran status
- Gifts to individuals
- Dinners, exhibits, conferences, and sports or other events
- Houses of worship (e.g. churches, synagogues, mosques, etc.)
- Political campaigns
- Organizations identified by the Philanthropic Advisory Service of the Council of Better Business Bureaus as having questionable financial practices
- Organizations outside the United States

### **Grant Application Process**

**To Submit a 2021 Grant Application for \$20,000 or less [CLICK HERE](#)**

*Invitation Code: AMBWSM2020*

**To Submit a 2021 Grant Application for over \$20,000 [CLICK HERE](#)**

*Invitation Code: AMBWCF2020*

***In addition to a grant application, all applicants must submit a brief video. A link to submit the video is provided in the grant application.***

## Application Video Details

Submit a video that highlights information about the program/project for which you are requesting funding. The video should be no more than two minutes long. It can be produced with a smart phone and does not need to be professional grade. Videos will be viewed by the AMB West Community Fund Advisory Committee and used as a tool to determine community investments. Be sure the video summarizes your program/project and how the funds will be used. Without reading the application, a viewer should be able to understand the main points of your funding request.

Please answer the following questions in submitted videos:

- The problem being addressed and/or community opportunity
- Proposed effort to address problem
- Expected outcomes
- How the proposal coordinates resources or included partnership with other organizations/resources (public and private)

**Applications and videos must be submitted by 5:00pm Monday, February 1, 2021.**

You will receive notification regarding the status of your application by March 1, 2021.

Organizations interested in applying for a grant should direct questions to:

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