

2024 AMB West Community Fund Grant Guidelines

Through community-driven strategic philanthropy, the AMB West Community Fund (the Fund) is committed to catalyzing and nurturing both grassroots and systemic change to help build a thriving future for all Montanans. We listen to organizations and individuals closest to the challenges, who are inspired to help, and are deeply invested in solutions that support economic mobility and personal well-being, especially for those most vulnerable. We strive to bridge divides and foster common ground by honoring diverse voices, staying open to shifting perspectives and new ideas, and bringing our neighbors together to connect through a sense of shared purpose.

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 and Indigenous communities across the state. Established in 2001, the Fund has awarded over \$10 million in grants. After assessing the landscape of existing programs and areas of need and opportunity through data and conversations with community stakeholders, the Fund has identified two priority areas for 2024: nurturing childhood and thriving youth. Application requirements, preferences and priorities are outlined in the following sections and links.

The AMB West Community Fund is led by AMB West and Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation associates in Montana. The AMB West portfolio of properties includes Mountain Sky Guest Ranch, West Creek Ranch, Paradise Valley Ranch, and The Ranch at Dome Mountain. At our ranches, our team is focused on meaningful and impactful guest service, and we strive to uphold those standards through the ways in which we support the local community. Throughout the year, our associates give back to the communities in which they live and work – through volunteerism, personal philanthropy and grants made to nonprofit organizations by the AMB West Community Fund. AMB West associates help to identify and cultivate funding opportunities, 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

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 and Indigenous communities across Montana. The Fund will only consider proposals from organizations that build on community assets and demonstrate the ability to foster community coordination 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 and/or opportunity, the proposed solution, and the anticipated outcomes. Additionally, proposals should describe how the organization will track and measure outcomes. For example, pilot or grassroots projects should track service goals and sustainability, whereas established programs should track progress toward long-term outcomes.

The AMB West Community Fund will consider funding multi-year projects that are exceptionally high quality, address a systemic need and/or opportunity, 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 two priority areas listed below, the Fund will give preference to projects and organizations that:

- Provide or enhance services in rural areas where resources and services are limited.
- Meaningfully engage diverse voices and empower marginalized communities, particularly those elevating youth voices.
- Serve high-risk and vulnerable populations in Park and Gallatin Counties and Indigenous communities across Montana, focusing on access to economic mobility and/or personal well-being.
- Enhance or replicate successful existing programs that serve the community to help build toward the future and amplify impact.
- Demonstrate strong, diverse community support.
- Incorporate an evidence-based, data-supported approach and utilize data in the decision-making processes.
- Promote social emotional learning and trauma-informed approaches.
- Elevate parent/caregiver or mentor engagement.
- Staff, teacher and administration support and training.
- Pilot programs exploring innovation by proof of concept.

2024 Funding Priorities

Nurturing Childhood

Early childhood is the foundation of our community's future. To support preventative and upstream approaches, the Fund seeks organizations expanding access to quality childcare and early childhood experience, providing children – zero to five – with opportunities to prepare them for successful lifelong development. The Fund is especially interested in projects promoting healthy parent-child relationships, connection to community resources, and social and emotional skills among parents and children.

Thriving Youth

Thriving youth are energized about their future and have a sense of purpose.

The Fund seeks creative efforts to help youth discover and develop talents, attributes, and passions; develop goals; connect to pathways and support networks to achieve their aspirations; and build life skills to reach independence and goals.

To provide effective opportunities for youth, it is imperative that youth voice is incorporated in all aspects including planning, execution, and evaluation. Proposals engaging and enabling youth and their peers to be advocates for their own well-being and mental health as well as fostering a desire for informed civic engagement will receive preference. Youth voice could take many forms, examples include creating a youth advisory panel for an existing youth-serving organization, training youth in leadership and civic engagement around local issues, training youth on appropriate responses to mental health crises, or launching a public health campaign to reduce stigma associated with seeking help.

Parents and caregivers play a critical role in supporting the well-being of youth, 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 demanding work schedules, their own behavioral health challenges (e.g., substance use), mistrust of services, or need for additional skills and support. The Fund is interested in supporting projects that engage parents/caregivers through outreach or training, enhanced mental health and substance abuse services, or school-parent partnerships. Approaches should include a plan for supporting parents/caregivers of high-risk youth (e.g., economic need, abuse) and decreasing stigma associated with accessing services.

Unfortunately, many youth experience anxiety and depression making it difficult to thrive. The Fund will also consider projects aiming to connect youth to positive, dependable relationships or that encourage youth activities promoting youth vitality and diminished risk for suicide. Other projects may focus on early risk detection and intervention through improved coordination of services and follow-up, access to crisis management, or education opportunities for community members about appropriate responses to mental health crises.

The Fund is especially interested in programs cultivating youth land and wildlife stewards through education, physical activity, wilderness experiences, introduction to regional natural resources, and outdoor adventure. These opportunities not only connect youth to the land to make more informed decisions about our natural landscapes in the future, but the outdoors provides a special healing space to promote well-being.

How to Apply

Requirements for Consideration

Organizations must be classified as 501(c)(3) by the IRS.

- Programs must provide enhancement to (not replace) public support.
- Programs must be secular in nature and adhere to a nondiscrimination policy.
- Programs/projects must fall within the 2024 Funding Priorities.

- Organizations must demonstrate they are building on community assets and have fostered community cooperation and collaboration.

The Fund does not provide funding for:

- Organizations practicing discrimination based on age, race, national or ethnic origin, religion, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or veteran status.
- Gifts to individuals
- Houses of worship (e.g., churches, synagogues, mosques, etc.)
- Political campaigns

Grant Application Process

Grant applications are no longer being accepted for 2024

Applicants must submit a video within the application:

Application Video Details

Videos should highlight information about the program/project for which funding is requested and briefly describe the organization. The video should be no more than **three 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. A viewer should be able to understand the organization's mission and the main points of your funding request from the video.

Please answer the following questions in submitted videos:

- Brief description of Organization.
- What is the problem, challenge and/or community opportunity being addressed?
- What are the proposed efforts/solutions to address above?
- What are the expected outcomes?
- How will your organization coordinate resources or include partnerships with other organizations/resources (public and private)?

Applications and videos must be submitted by 5:00 p.m. Thursday, February 1, 2024.

You will receive notification regarding the status of your application by March 1, 2024.

Organizations interested in applying for a grant should direct programmatic questions to Tawnya Rupe Mraz at tawnya.rupe@ambff.org, and CyberGrants and grant process questions to abigail.lawson@ambff.org.