



Baptist Community Ministries

Letter of Intent Guidelines

Revised 10-2017



Baptist Community Ministries (BCM) is a health conversion foundation committed to improving the physical, mental, spiritual and social lives of people living in the greater New Orleans region.

Revised October 2, 2017

GENERAL INFORMATION

Baptist Community Ministries' online grant application process is designed to make applying for grants easier and more time efficient for nonprofit organizations. Applications must align with at least one of the following program objectives:

- ❖ Health: A healthy community provides its citizens an environment that creates a state of positive physical, mental, spiritual, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.
- ❖ Education: A healthy community provides learning opportunities for all of its residents to develop the cognitive, vocational, social, and emotional skills necessary to be successful in college, work, and life.
- ❖ Public Safety: A healthy community provides for a balanced approach to crime prevention and management, including effective interventions and behavioral controls working in cooperation with efficient, effective and coordinated justice system agencies.
- ❖ Governmental Oversight*: All forms of local government (including elected or appointed officials and executive, legislative, or judicial branches) should be trustworthy, open to the public, independently monitored, and accountable to an informed electorate.

*The submission of applications to Governmental Oversight Zone in Spring 2018 has been temporarily suspended while the Board of Trustees engages in strategic planning for this zone. Information regarding prospective funding in future transom grant cycles will be communicated here on the BCM website and in electronic communications.

ELIGIBILITY

- Beneficiaries of grants must reside in Orleans, Jefferson, St. Tammany, St. Bernard, or Plaquemines Parishes
- Minimum grant size is \$50,000 PER YEAR
- Grant term restricted to one to three years
- Organization must be classified as one of the following:
 1. Tax-exempt 501 (c)(3) organizations (excluding 509(a) private foundations)
 2. Governmental entities (Section 170(c)(1))
 3. Private operating foundation described in Section 4942(j)(3) or (5)
 4. State colleges and universities (Section 511(a)(2)(B))
- Grants must be submitted in one of the BCM Zones of Interest (Health, Education, and Public Safety.) **NOTE: The submission of applications to Governmental Oversight Zone in Spring 2018 has been temporarily suspended while the Board of Trustees engages in strategic planning for this zone.**

DEADLINES

Spring Cycle 2018

- January 22- January 31: LOI submissions accepted
- March 6: Notifications of full application invitations sent
- March 23: Full application deadline at 5:00 PM
- May 21 – May 31: Grant decision notifications sent

FUNDING REQUESTS NOT SUPPORTED

- Capital projects for an organization’s facilities, such as construction or purchases of major equipment
- General operating support for an organization, often referred to as an unrestricted grant

HOW DO YOU APPLY?

The grant application process begins with the submission of an online eligibility questionnaire. Please note that all applications must be submitted using the BCM Grant Application Portal. Please be prepared to provide the following information during the application process:

- Brief Mission Statement
- Program focus and population served
- Project description
- Other sources of funding for project
- Expected outcomes
- An Executive Summary Budget (sample format provided at <http://www.bcm.org/transomgrants>)
- A one-page Board List with BCM affiliations

There is a 1200 word limit for your answers to the LOI questions. Because of these limitations, it is in your best interest to focus on the information that is most necessary to portray the importance, likelihood of success, and sustainability of the proposed program or project without omitting any requested information. The full proposal will provide you the opportunity to expand on what you include in the LOI with greater detail.

GRANT APPLICATION PORTAL

- A link to the application portal will be posted to the BCM website during the LOI window. Visit www.bcm.org/transomgrants
- First time applicants must click “New Applicant” to create an account.
- Returning applicants should login using email and password.
- If you have an account and do not remember your password, click the “Forgot Password?” link to reset your password.

Revised October 2, 2017

- Once an application is created, applicants will receive an email with a link to access their account and application. Please save this link and use it to complete your application.

Please Note: Clicking the LOI link on the BCM website will create a new application. To avoid duplicates, use the link provided in your email to complete existing applications.

TIPS FOR COMPLETING A LETTER OF INTENT

In your answers, be **brief, but specific**. Stronger LOI's will be those which:

- Clearly and specifically **articulate the problem** which the project will address—in a local context (broad issues like poverty or literacy or violence in the United States is too general a problem identification context)
- **Describe who will benefit** from the effort (the more specific your target demographic is, the clearer it is to us that your target is a well-defined)
- **Outline how the project will be implemented** (the plan should be clear and directly address the identified problem as experienced by the target population for the effort)
- **Summarize the qualifications or experience** the applicant has in addressing the problem, working with the target population, and conducting similar or related work
- **Describe the anticipated impact** of the project, in terms that can be measured in a full application

LETTER OF INTENT QUESTIONS

The following questions must be answered in 1200 words or less:

1. Briefly describe the problem or opportunity your project seeks to address.
2. Briefly describe who will most directly benefit from the proposed project.
3. Summarize your organization's plan for how it will address the problem or opportunity described in Question 1.
4. Briefly explain why the plan described in Question 3: how and why does it work, including how it draws on emerging or proven best practices or offers an alternative innovative approach.
5. Are other organizations currently working on the problem or opportunity stated in Question 1? Outline your project's distinct features, and how it will improve/contribute to the existing field of work.
6. Briefly outline the resources and experience of your organization that will contribute to your project's success.
7. Briefly state the expected measurable impact of the proposed project.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Submissions are reviewed by BCM program directors and readers.
- The Grants Committee reviews the letters of intent, and determines which organizations are invited to submit full applications.

PLEASE VISIT <http://www.bcm.org/transom-grants> for Sample Documents and Templates.