

# 2015 Request for Proposals (RFP)

## FLEX Grants Program



HAWAII COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION

*For Nonprofits with Annual Operating Budgets of **\$100,000 and above***

### PURPOSE

The FLEX Grants Program provides unrestricted support for high-performing nonprofits. HCF believes that high-performing nonprofits can:

- 1) demonstrate the importance of their organization to their community,
- 2) capture and use information to continually improve their programs to better meet their mission,
- 3) describe the impact of their programs, and
- 4) demonstrate financial stability

National surveys of nonprofits rate unrestricted or flexible support as one of the most important types of funding needed to support nonprofit work and improve results. Unrestricted support allows an organization to prioritize its own needs and respond to unforeseen needs or opportunities. Funds may be used for a variety of purposes including administrative costs, program expenses, or salaries.

FLEX is supported by several funds of the Hawaii Community Foundation including:

Robert E. Black	Ka Papa o Kakuhihewa	Richard Smart
East Hawaii	County of Kauai Fund	UHA Foundation
Ewa Beach Community	Annie Sinclair Knudsen Memorial	Bernice & Conrad von Hamm
Jean I. Fennimore	Kukio Community	West Hawaii
SunEdison Community	Lanai Community Benefit	Additional Donor Advised Funds
Hokulia Community Benefit	Reverend Takie Okumura Family	
Kahuku Community	Omidyar Ohana	

*Nonprofits will be considered for funding only by the funds for which they qualify based on the individual fund's restrictions. Information submitted in the Organization & Program Profile allows HCF to match applicants with appropriate funds.*

### ELIGIBILITY

1. Fiscally-sponsored projects regardless of budget size, public schools, charter schools (including Foundations or nonprofits established to support charter schools), and parent-teacher organizations are only eligible for funding through the **FLEX Small Grants RFP: For Organizations with Annual Operating Budgets less than \$100,000**: <http://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/flex>.
2. Eligible organizations must have had their tax-exempt **501(c)(3)** status for a minimum of two (2) years.
3. Eligible organizations must provide services in the State of Hawaii, and have been providing those services in Hawaii for a minimum of 2 years. FLEX does not fund the start-up of projects or organizations.
4. Organizations with multiple branches or chapters may only submit one application for their organization.
5. FLEX does not fund government departments or programs (including the University of Hawaii).
6. Organizations currently funded by HCF with overdue final reports are not eligible to apply.
7. If your organization received a FLEX grant in 2014, you must complete the online reporting survey by May 27, 2015 in order to be eligible for a 2015 FLEX grant.
8. Organizations with an HCF Organizational Capacity Building Implementation grant must complete and report on that grant before applying to FLEX.

9. If you are the supporting organization for another entity then you must specify whether you are requesting funding for your organization or for the organization you support. Your narrative responses should reflect the organization for which you are requesting funding.

## GRANT RANGE

Grant amounts of up to 20% of an organization's most recently completed annual budget will be considered and will generally not exceed \$50,000. Grants will be considered for one year of funding.

## CRITERIA FOR REVIEW

Proposals will be reviewed against the following criteria:

1. **Important Community Issue**
  - Organization can demonstrate that it is meeting an important need and/or providing important services for the community.
2. **Impact of the Organization**
  - Organization can clearly articulate the results it is trying to achieve for the community.
  - There is a clear rationale for the strategies or activities that the organization has selected to serve its community.
  - There is a clear connection between what an organization is trying to achieve and the results that it is measuring.
  - Organization can demonstrate that its services are high quality and have a positive impact on the community.
3. **Financial Health**
  - Organization has the financial capacity to support continued programming and operations.

### ***FLEX GRANTS MAY NOT BE USED FOR THE FOLLOWING:***

1. Re-granting (i.e., redistribution of these funds to other organizations or individuals)
2. Endowments
3. For the benefit of specific individuals
4. Major capital improvements including capital campaigns, construction or renovations (however, minor capital improvements required to implement programs are allowable)
5. Activities that promote religious beliefs

## ONLINE SUBMISSION

Applications must be submitted online at: <https://nexus.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/nonprofit>

Or click on "NONPROFIT GATEWAY" at the top of the HCF homepage

If you are a new user, click "**New User Registration**;" the process may take up to (2) days so please register early!

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

- Only complete applications will be accepted.
- The online application has fillable boxes with character limits. The character counts in MS Word do not match the character counts in the application. If you cut and paste your work into the application, please be sure your text fits the space provided.
- We recognize the significance of diacritical markings in written Hawaiian as pronunciation guides; however, the online application system is unable to accept diacriticals. Please do not include these in your narrative, it may cause errors in the way the online system processes your proposal.

## ORGANIZATIONAL & PROGRAM PROFILE

As part of the online application you will need to answer questions about:

- your service locations – including details about the services you provide in specific geographies,
- types of services you provide -- including the age ranges of those you serve,
- number of full, part-time staff, and volunteers,
- date of incorporation, and
- mission statement.

## NARRATIVE QUESTIONS

All nonprofits have missions that they care deeply about. The following questions are intended to help HCF staff, advisors and donors understand the purpose of your organization, the reason you selected the programs, services or activities that you offer, and how you measure results. While we are interested in the activities you performed over the last year (e.g., # of people served, amount of service provided), we are most interested in what happened as a result of these activities. What changed? What difference did your activities make for the people or communities or landscapes where you work? *(The following character counts are approximate to the specified page lengths based on single-spacing in Arial 12-point font with 1 inch margins.)*

1. Please describe the **community** your organization serves, including who you serve, where you serve and the needs or opportunities you are working to address or the opportunities you are working to provide. *(max 2,000 characters = 1/2 page)*
2. How does your organization **assess** or learn about the needs and/or emerging issues of the community it serves? (for example consumer feedback, community forums, audience surveys, data tracking, etc.). *(max 1,500 characters = 1/3 page)*
3. What **results** (longer-term outcomes or positive changes) is your organization trying to achieve? Why are these results important? *(max 1,500 characters = 1/3 page)*
4. Which **programs, services or activities** does your organization use to achieve these results? Of all the programs, services or activities your organization could provide to achieve results **why** have you chosen the programs, services or activities that you offer?\* (for example, the use of evidence-based practices, research, past experience serving community, etc.). *\*If you are an independent school please also describe how your school is providing a 21st century education, often referred to as a student-centered curriculum that emphasizes critical thinking, communication, creativity and collaboration. (max 3,000 characters = 3/4 page)*
  - 4a. If the organization provides services on multiple islands, please be specific about any programs, services or activities, including the locations, number of people you serve and indicate how consistently services are provided in the following areas: Islands of Hawaii, Kauai, or Lanai; North Shore, Oahu (Kawela Bay to Kaena Point), Kahuku, Hauula, Laie, Ewa Beach, Waianae or Kapolei on Oahu. The Advisory Grant Committees for these communities look closely at this information when reviewing proposals. *(max 1,500 characters = 1/3 page for each service area)*
5. How does your organization **measure** results? Please describe what data you collect, how and how often it is collected, and how you use this information to make decisions. If possible, please also include a description of how your organization measures the **quality** of its activities, i.e., how well it performed the services it provided (for example, customer satisfaction, performance against standards or industry benchmarks, level of participation, are you accredited and if so by what entity, etc.). *(max 3,000 characters = 3/4 page)*
6. Referring back to the results that your organization is trying to achieve (Question #3) and how you measure those results (Question #5) please describe what your organization **achieved** over the "past year" (either fiscal or calendar year is acceptable). Specifically, how much did your organization do and what difference did your efforts make for the community you serve? *(max 3,000 characters = 3/4 page)*
7. What are the main **challenges** and **opportunities**, both programmatic and financial, facing your organization over the next year? Please describe how your organization intends to address any challenges, and/or take advantage of any opportunities. *(max 3,000 characters = 3/4 page)*
8. How does your organization **financially support** its activities and infrastructure? Please describe your organization's typical sources of income or revenue. *(max 1,500 characters = 1/3 page)*
9. If you have been previously funded by the FLEX Program please tell us how your organization continues to evolve and improve on its mission? *(max 2,000 characters – ½ page)*

## ATTACHMENTS

The first 4 items are required parts of your proposal; proposals missing any of these will not be reviewed.

1. One-page board or leadership group list with affiliations. Include island specific advisory boards or committees, if applicable.
2. Current year's operating budget including income and expenses\*
3. Previous year's operating budget including both income and expenses\*
4. The first page of your most recently filed 990 or 990EZ
5. *Optional: Recent program, activity and/or evaluation report*

\* If you are a national organization please submit your Hawaii program budget. Proposals without a Hawaii-specific budget will not be considered.

**DEADLINE: Submit your application by clicking the "Submit" button at the end of the application no later than 4:00 p.m. HST, Wednesday, June 3, 2015**

## QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS RFP

If you have any questions, please visit the FLEX Grants web page at <http://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/flex>.

If your organization is located on the Neighbor Islands, please contact the appropriate office:

Kauai -- Darcie Yukimura, (808) 245-4585 or [dyukimura@hcf-hawaii.org](mailto:dyukimura@hcf-hawaii.org)

Maui, Molokai, Lanai -- Deborah Rice, (808) 242-6184 or [drice@hcf-hawaii.org](mailto:drice@hcf-hawaii.org)

Hawaii Island -- Diane Chadwick, (808) 885-2174 or [dchadwick@hcf-hawaii.org](mailto:dchadwick@hcf-hawaii.org)

If your organization is located on Oahu, please contact:

Cecilia Fong, (808) 566-5561 or [cfong@hcf-hawaii.org](mailto:cfong@hcf-hawaii.org) or

Pam Funai, (808) 566-5537 or [pfunai@hcf-hawaii.org](mailto:pfunai@hcf-hawaii.org)

If you have questions about registering your nonprofit on-line or about the on-line application process, please contact:

Joe Duax, (808) 566-5554 or [jduax@hcf-hawaii.org](mailto:jduax@hcf-hawaii.org)