

Victoria S. and Bradley L. Geist Foundation: Enhancements for Foster Children Funding Opportunity

Online Application Deadline:

- Monday, September 15, 2025, 4:00 p.m. HST
- Please note that these guidelines have been updated. Please review the changes.

OVERVIEW

The purpose of the Foundation's Enhancements for Foster Children program is to enhance the lives of foster children by providing items and services that allow them to enjoy a quality of life similar to that of their peers. The funds are offered in the belief that every child is special and that their growth should be nurtured and celebrated.

ELIGIBILITY & REQUIREMENTS

Eligibility Requirements

Tax-exempt Hawaii organizations are eligible to apply. This includes nonprofit organizations, 501(c)(3) organizations, religious organizations that are exempt from taxation, and units of government.

Grant Range and Duration - Grants range from \$5,000 to \$50,000.

- Grantees may propose an administrative fee for administering these funds.
- Organizations that have received Enhancement Grants for over three years are eligible for a two-year grant period. The grant period will be from January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2027.
 - For newer organizations, the grant period will be one year, from January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2027.
 - Requests for up to three years will be considered. If funded, subsequent years will be contingent on the submission of satisfactory progress reports.

Grant Requirements

The Foundation seeks to make grants to organizations to purchase enhancement items and services for the benefit of eligible children.

"Eligible child" means a person who:

- Resides in Hawai'i; and
- Is in one of the following categories:

- Is under 18 years of age, or under 21 years of age and remains in the foster care system because he or she is attending high school;
- Is placed by a Hawai'i state government agency in therapeutic foster placement or in kinship, foster, or respite care;
- Is placed by a Hawai'i state government agency in permanent custody.

“Enhancement items and services” means:

1. Extracurricular activities (e.g., graduation or prom attire, field trips, athletic uniforms);
2. Hobbies, sports, and cultural activities (e.g., hula lessons, soccer registration);
3. Intersession activities (e.g., summer camp);
4. Facilitation of transition into adulthood (e.g., driver's education, copy of birth certificate);
5. Quality of life enhancements (e.g., modest birthday and holiday presents, books, toys).

The following restrictions apply:

1. Each expenditure must respond to a specific request made by an eligible child's foster caregiver, social worker, therapist, school counselor, guardian ad litem, or similar professional service provider for a specific item or service that will enhance the child's quality of life.
2. Payments must be made to vendors for the benefit of eligible children. Payments must not be made directly to children or their foster caregivers.
3. Enhancement funds are not intended for basic living expenses such as housing, groceries, medical and dental care, and ordinary tuition expenses.
4. Grantees may expend no more than \$650 per eligible child during the grant period.
5. Grantees may spend no more than 10% of the project budget on administrative fees.
6. Grantees must return all unexpended funds at the end of the grant period.
7. Grantees may always request additional funds if all enhancement funds are expended before the end of the grant period. Please contact the lead officer with any requests.
8. Grantees must submit a final report by January 31, 2028. The Foundation may require interim reports. The Foundation does not accept proposals from organizations with overdue reports.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Online Application

This application is available for online submission through the Hawai'i Community Foundation's Grants Portal. New users may register for an account here

https://hawaiicf.smartsimple.com/s_Login.jsp. Registered users may log in to their account to submit an application. Please give yourself adequate time before the submission deadline to access the system and familiarize yourself with the application process and requirements.

Please reference our Applicant User Guide for further instructions

<https://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/file/2024/Applicant-User-Guide-8.8.24.pdf>.

Instructions

- Only complete and timely applications will be accepted.
- The online application has fillable boxes with character limits. The character counts in MS Word may 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.

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

As part of the online application your organization profile must be certified prior to submission of grant applications and must be certified annually. Information needed to complete your organization's profile includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter (not required if previously applied to the Foundation or if applying through a fiscal sponsor)
- Number of full-time, part-time, or regular volunteer staff
- Organization Mission
- Service Location(s)
- Types of services provided – including age, gender, and target populations served
- Financials – including, income statement (or profit/loss statement) and balance sheet for the most recently completed fiscal year, and annual operating budget for the current year
- Board of Directors List

APPLICATION

The application consists of 4 tabs. Information needed to complete your application includes, but is not limited to the following:

- **Program Overview:**
 - Provide general information and characteristics about the program including program title, duration, area of interest, program location(s), ages and genders served, and the CHANGE sector(s) your program most closely aligns with.
 - For more information about the CHANGE framework, please visit our website <https://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/change>.
 - If you have a fiscal sponsor, you will be asked to identify your fiscal sponsor. Please note, your fiscal sponsor must first be registered in the Grants Portal prior to submitting your application.
- **Program Information:**
 - **Organization Description:** Describe the organization or program. What is the organization's mission and history, geographic reach, and volunteer and/or paid staff size? What is the organization's experience implementing this program and staff capabilities to conduct the proposed work? Briefly describe the organization's place in the child welfare or mental health field and in this community. (*Maximum 2,500 characters = ¾ page*)
 - **Executive Summary:** Provide a brief but concise summary of the applicant's proposed program. This executive summary may be used for different purposes,

including external communications, to describe the program should a grant be awarded. *(Maximum 2,500 characters = ¾ page)*

- **Problem or Opportunity:** Describe the enhancement items and services you propose to fund. Describe any programs your organization currently offers that will be complemented by the Enhancements program. *(Maximum 3,000 characters = ¾ page)*
- **Program Activities:** Describe how your organization will market the availability of the Enhancements program to the community you propose to serve. Provide an estimate of the percentage of children served who will be clients of your organization and those who will be referrals from outside of your organization's client base. Describe the qualifications of the staff or volunteers who will oversee and coordinate the Enhancements program. *(Maximum 3,500 characters = 1 page)*
- **Expected Results:** Describe the results your organization intends to achieve with the Enhancements program. Describe how your organization will evaluate the impact of the Enhancements program. *(Maximum 3,500 characters = 1 page)*
- **Budget:** Provide your total program budget, amount requested through this application, and upload a copy of your program's budget, showing income and expenses, indicating sources of income that are pending and secured.
- **Support Documents & Certification:** Upload any additional required documents as listed in the application guidelines. If you are using a fiscal sponsor, please be sure that they certify your application prior to submission.

ADDITIONAL REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

For those with current Enhancements Grants, the following is required.

- **Interim Expense Report for Prior Year Awards:**
 - Provide the total number of enhancement requests:
 - Provide the total amount expended in each category:
 - Extracurricular activities (e.g., graduation or prom attire, field trips, athletic uniforms);
 - Hobbies, sports, and cultural activities (e.g., hula lessons, soccer registration);
 - Intersession activities (e.g., summer camp);
 - Facilitation of transition into adulthood (e.g., driver's education, copy of birth certificate);
 - Quality of life enhancements (e.g., modest birthday and holiday presents, books, toys) with a further breakdown of numbers of children who received birthday and holiday presents;
 - Administration fee.
 - Provide the total number of unduplicated children served and the total number of children served who are not clients of the agency.

- We'd love to hear how it went. Your feedback helps us improve the program. Please share your thoughts in one page or less on the following:
 - Is the funding opportunity meeting the needs of the foster youth requests?
 - Are funds consistently running out before the grant end date? If so, please explain the trends you see in your spending of the funds.

FISCAL SPONSORS

Please reference our [External User Guide](#) for more information regarding fiscal sponsorship.

- Fiscal sponsors must have an account in the portal. Their profile must include their IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter and up-to-date financial documents.
- Required Documentation to be uploaded to the application:
 - Resolution by fiscal sponsor's board of directors authorizing fiscal sponsorship
 - Fiscal sponsor's agreement form

Both forms can be found at: <http://www.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/grants/fiscal-sponsor-materials>

- Starting July 28, 2025, fiscal sponsors will be required to certify the application before it can be submitted by the applicant. To do so, the applicant must invite the fiscal sponsor to collaborate on the draft application. Please reference this [video](#) and our [External User Guide](#) on how to invite collaborators. The fiscal sponsor as a collaborator can then check the Fiscal Sponsor certification box under Supporting Documents & Certification.

RESOURCES

- For documents to be uploaded, please use the following descriptive file name format when uploading your files: Application ID #_Your Org Name_Name of File. (For example, "2145_HCF_Budget.pdf" or "2145_HCF_Board of Directors.doc").

DEADLINE

For applications to be considered they must be submitted online by clicking the "Submit" button on the final page of the application. Applications submitted by 4:00 p.m. (HST) on these dates will be considered at the next Board of Trustees meeting in the following months:

September 15, 2025, for the November meeting.

(Note: applications for the Enhancements for Foster Children grants will only be accepted at the September 15th deadline)

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you have questions about this funding opportunity, please contact Jarissa Lum, lead officer, via e-mail at jlum@hcf-hawaii.org or call (808) 566-5522.

The Foundation does not accept incomplete applications or applications from organizations with overdue reports.

For technical assistance with the online application process, please submit a support ticket at <http://hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/ticket>.