



HAWAI'I COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

## FLEX 2019

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### 1. What is the FLEX Program?

Hawai'i Community Foundation's FLEX Program is intended to award flexible support to organizations that can demonstrate that they are **high-performing**; that is, that they understand their community and are well connected, *are achieving critical results*, and are fiscally healthy. Hawai'i Community Foundation (HCF) believes that the best investment of scarce resources is an investment in high-performing organizations that achieve results for their community.

#### 2. What is "flexible" support?

Core support. General operating support. Infrastructure support. Unrestricted support. Flexible support. These phrases are used interchangeably to refer to the same thing: grants in support of an organization's mission rather than specific projects or programs. HCF chose the phrase "flexible" because we want organizations to be able to use funding for operations, infrastructure, or programs.

#### 3. How will HCF decide whether my organization qualifies as "high-performing"?

HCF looks to three core characteristics as indicators of a high-performing organization – **Accountable, Results-Oriented, and Connected to Community**, what we now call the **ARC of Change**. The strongest proposals will be those that can demonstrate the elements of the ARC of Change framework. See the *Criteria for Review* in any of the RFPs for a fuller discussion.

#### 4. I have a project that needs funding; should I apply to FLEX?

FLEX funding is intended to support high-performing *organizations*. Prior to 2019, project-based funding was allowable through FLEX. This year, project-based funding will only be considered under the **Community Grants Program** which will be released in *June 2019*. The Community Grants program will support programs and projects with targeted and intentional work in specific communities, allowing them to stand out to particular funders.

#### 5. Through which Request for Proposal (RFP) should I apply?

Prior to this year, the FLEX Grants Program had two RFPs – one for organizations with large operating budgets, and one with smaller operating budgets. Since 2018, there are three FLEX Request for Proposals:

- 1) FLEX Grant Program - for organizations with operating budgets of \$250,000 or more;
- 2) FLEX Grant Program, *Small* - for organizations with operating budgets of less than \$250,000;
- 3) FLEX Grant Program, *Micro* – for organizations with operating budgets of less than \$100,000

Organizations with operating budgets of less than \$100,000 can apply **either** through the FLEX Grants Program-Small RFP **or** the FLEX Grants Program-Micro RFP, **but not both**. Organizations with budgets of

less than \$100,000 should review each RFP and determine which one is most appropriate for them. Check the 2019 FLEX Eligibility Chart on page 5 of the FAQ for help on determining which program is appropriate for your organization.

## **6. What are geographically restricted or specific funds and are they a part of FLEX?**

Prior to 2019, geographically restricted or specific funds supported the FLEX program. These funds only offer grants to organizations or groups that are providing services in specific geographic locations. As of 2019, these funds will no longer be a part of FLEX but will, instead, support the **Community Grants Program** that will be released in June. An organization or group may be eligible for funds that are geographically specific if they are:

- A community-serving group;
- A nonprofit that has had its 501(c)(3) status for less than 2 years;
- A fiscally-sponsored entity;
- An individual public or charter school;
- A parent-teacher organization;
- A nonprofit that was established to support a public or charter school; or
- A nonprofit that has been in existence for 2 or more years

**and provide service in one of the following geographic locations:**

- Island of Hawai'i, Kaua'i, or Lāna'i
- On O'ahu:
  - North Shore (Kawela Bay to Ka'ena Point)
  - Kahuku
  - Hau'ula
  - Lā'ie
  - 'Ewa Beach
  - Wai'anae
  - Kapolei

## **7. I am a new applicant to Hawai'i Community Foundation. How do I apply for this grant online?**

Your organization must first request an online account. Please visit the “*Nonprofit Gateway*” at <https://nexus.hawaiicommunityfoundation.org/nonprofit> or use the link at the bottom of the Hawai'i Community Foundation website. Click on “**New User Registration**” to request an account for your organization. You will be sent two emails: **first**, you will receive an initial email confirming your request has been received; **second**, to access your account, you must wait for a second email confirming that your request has been processed. Please note that it may take up to two (2) business days to establish your account. Please request your account well ahead of the deadline to give yourself ample time to complete the application.

## **8. If I was a 2018 FLEX or 2018 Community Grant recipient, am I eligible for the 2019 FLEX grant program?**

Yes, you are eligible for the 2019 FLEX grant if you were a FLEX or Community Grant recipient in 2018. However, you **must** submit your **final report survey** by **May 15, 2019** and have no other overdue final

reports for any HCF grant. Grant recipients should review their 2018 award letter for information and details.

**9. Am I still eligible if I have not yet submitted my final report for the FLEX 2018 grant?**

The final report is submitted in the form of a survey. Additional information regarding this survey is sent to the email address on file (the email address your organization used when registering for an account). All final report surveys must be submitted online by May 15, 2019. If the deadline is missed, an organization is not eligible to apply for the FLEX 2019 grant program. However, even if an organization does not apply for a FLEX grant in 2019, a 2018 final report is still due by November 30, 2019 to satisfy the 2018 grant requirements. *An overdue final report for any HCF grant will make an organization ineligible to apply for FLEX.*

**10. Do I need to know the funding criteria of the different funds that support the FLEX program?**

No. Information that is entered in the Organization and Program Profile section of the application, as well as responses to narrative questions, will allow HCF to match an organization with all appropriate funds. Our ability to match an applicant with appropriate funding depends on the information provided. We encourage all applicants to be accurate and thorough in their responses. We also have some funds that are “unrestricted”, which means that they can fund any type of nonprofit.

**11. If awarded, what can my FLEX grant monies be spent on?**

FLEX funds can be used toward a variety of purposes including administrative costs, program expenses, or salaries. However, FLEX grants **MAY NOT** be used for:

- Re-granting
- Endowments
- For the benefit of specific individuals
- Major capital improvements, including capital campaigns, construction, or renovations (minor capital improvements required to implement programs are allowable)
- Activities that promote religious beliefs

**12. What do you mean by previous year’s operating budget (projected and actuals) and current year’s projected budget (income and expenses)?**

As a way to assess the financial health of an organization, HCF reviews an organization’s ability to appropriately budget for its expenses, generate revenue, and respond to any financial challenges or opportunities. We do this by looking at an organization’s projected operating budget for the previous year, and then the actual income and expenses that occurred (or final Statement of Activities). We also look at the current year’s operating budget to determine if appropriate financial adjustments were made in response to the prior year’s final financial position.

An example of what we are requesting appears on the next page and is based on a calendar year. Individual organizations may have different fiscal years and should provide the appropriate budgets for its full fiscal year (ex. July – June or September – August).

**Sample Current year's operating budget**

	2019 Projected Budget
<b><u>Income</u></b>	
Contributions	
Individuals	35,000
Corporations	65,000
Grants	175,000
Event Income	
Fundraiser	155,000
Fun Run	75,000
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>505,000</b>
<b><u>Expenses</u></b>	
Personnel	
Salaries – Professional	350,500
Payroll Benefits	88,000
Program Activities	66,500
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>505,000</b>
Net Ordinary Income	0

**Sample Previous year's operating budget**

	2018 Projected Budget	2018 Actual Income and Expenses
<b><u>Income</u></b>		
Contributions		
Individuals	48,000	33,687
Corporations	60,000	63,502
Grants	150,000	168,000
Event Income		
Fundraiser	150,000	145,454
Fun Run	75,000	69,082
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>483,000</b>	<b>479,725</b>
<b><u>Expenses</u></b>		
Personnel		
Salaries – Professional	298,400	280,365
Payroll Benefits	86,080	85,000
Program Activities	98,520	113,799
<b>TOTAL EXPENSE</b>	<b>483,000</b>	<b>479,164</b>
Net Ordinary Income	0	561

**Note:** National organizations must also submit **Hawai'i-specific** operating budgets and advisory board lists.

**13. How will I know the results of my FLEX grant?**

All applicants will receive notification letters in the mail sometime in November 2019. If awarded a grant, a grant check will accompany the notification letter. The letter will also have the contact information of the program officer who reviewed the application. *If a grant was not awarded, we encourage applicants to contact the program officer listed in the notification to discuss the results of the grant application.*

**14. If I still have questions, who should I contact?**

If an organization is located on the Neighbor Islands, please contact the appropriate office for information:

Kaua'i – Uri Martos, (808) 245-4585, or [umartos@hcf-hawaii.org](mailto:umartos@hcf-hawaii.org)

Maui, Moloka'i, Lāna'i – Hannah Werth, (808) 242-6184, or [hwerth@hcf-hawaii.org](mailto:hwerth@hcf-hawaii.org)

Hawai'i Island – Chelsey Chow, (808) 935-1206, or [cchow@hcf-hawaii.org](mailto:cchow@hcf-hawaii.org)

If an organization is located on O'ahu, or for additional information regarding FLEX, please contact:

Ophelia Bitanga-Isreal, (808) 566-5593 or [FLEX@hcf-hawaii.org](mailto:FLEX@hcf-hawaii.org)

For inquiries about registering a nonprofit on-line or about the on-line application process, please contact: Mary-Joy Llaguno, (808) 566-5533, or [MLlaguno@hcf-hawaii.org](mailto:MLlaguno@hcf-hawaii.org).



HAWAI'I COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

**2019 FLEX Grants Program - Eligibility Chart**

The Hawai'i Community Foundation developed three different FLEX Request for Proposals (RFPs) to better support nonprofit organizations in Hawai'i. Please refer to the chart below to help you determine under which RFP your organization should apply. **All organizations must be currently serving the communities of Hawai'i, and have done so for at least 2 years, regardless of operating budget.**

Community-serving groups that do not have a 501(c)3 nonprofit designation, programs of churches, programs of schools, and fiscally sponsored organizations **are no longer eligible** for the FLEX Grants Program. These groups and organizations will be eligible for funding through the Community Grants Program to be released in June 2019. The Community Grants program will support programs with targeted and intentional work in specific communities, allowing them to stand out to particular funders.

Please use this chart as a guide but review the complete RFP for details and information. If you still are unsure how to apply, or have additional questions, please contact Ophelia Bitanga-Isreal at (808) 566-5593 or [FLEX@hcf-hawaii.org](mailto:FLEX@hcf-hawaii.org).

Type of Organization	FLEX Grants Program	FLEX Grants Program – Small	FLEX Grants Program – Micro
Nonprofit organization with a 501(c)3 designation for at least 2 years, and an operating budget of \$250,000 or more.	<b>X</b>		
National nonprofit organization with a branch, office, or presence in Hawai'i, with 501(c)3 designation for at least 2 years, and a local Hawai'i operating budget of \$250,000 or more.	<b>X</b>		
Nonprofit organization with a 501(c)3 designation for at least 2 years, and an operating budget of less than \$250,000.		Organizations in this category can apply in <i>either</i> the Small program or the Micro program, <i>but not both</i> .	
		<b>X</b> This RFP may be more appropriate for 501(c)3 organizations with a small budget that conduct multiple programs or projects, or for organizations with paid staff. Please review both RFPs for additional details.	<b>X</b> This RFP may be more appropriate for organizations that conduct only one program, or that may have a mostly volunteer staff. Please review both RFPs for additional details.

National nonprofit organization with a branch, office, or presence in Hawai'i, with 501(c)(3) designation for at least 2 years, and a local Hawai'i operating budget of less than \$250,000.		<b>X</b>	
Organizations whose primary purpose is to raise funds to support another charitable organization, <i>applying on behalf of itself</i> .	<b>X</b> Supporting organization's operating budget is \$250,000 or more.	<b>X</b> Supporting organization's operating budget is less than \$250,000	
Organizations whose primary purpose is to raise funds to support another charitable organization, <i>applying on behalf of its supported organization</i> . Note: Funding <b>cannot</b> be requested for a charter school.	<b>X</b> Supported organization's operating budget is \$250,000 or more.	<b>X</b> Supported organization's operating budget is less than \$250,000	
Nonprofit organization with a 501(c)(3) designation, but for less than 2 years (regardless of budget size).	Ineligible to apply for FLEX. See Community Grants Program in June 2019.		
A Hawai'i Dept. of Education School conducting a program or project, regardless of budget size.	Ineligible to apply for FLEX. See Community Grants Program in June 2019.		
A church conducting a program, regardless of budget size.	Ineligible to apply for FLEX. See Community Grants Program in June 2019.		
A community-serving group without a 501(c)(3) designation.	Ineligible to apply for FLEX. See Community Grants Program in June 2019.		
For-profit organization	Ineligible to apply.		
Government agency, other than a Hawai'i Dept. of Education school	Ineligible to apply.		
University of Hawai'i	Ineligible to apply.		
An individual	Ineligibly to apply.		