



TTCF'S EVOLVING GRANTMAKING PROCESS: KEY POINTS & FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Tahoe Truckee Community Foundation (TTCF) is evolving its grantmaking strategy. TTCF takes a trust-based and relationship-focused approach to supporting our nonprofits. This year, we have removed the “competitive” nature of our grant cycle to honor the relationships we have with the nonprofits that serve our community's ever-evolving needs and changes.

Why Now?

The new strategy aims to: reduce the burden on nonprofits, address uncertainties they face (such as funding cuts and rising costs), and ensure more equitable resource distribution, regardless of a nonprofit's size or mission. This evolution is guided by strategic questions about making the highest and best use of funds, aligning grantmaking with other support mechanisms like capacity building, and leveraging resources to foster learning and engagement.

Key Changes

- TTCF eliminated the grant application process for 2025;
- Grantees, selected based on the methodology outlined below (Question 2), have been offered trust-based, unrestricted grants; and
- Nonprofits are required to register on www.givebacktahoe.org between October 1 - November 1, 2025, to be eligible for future community grants.

Grantmaking Goals

- **Building readiness:** Strengthening nonprofit capacity to engage in systems change and responsive work.
- **Fostering learning and engagement:** Using grantmaking to gain community insights and create engagement opportunities for funders and donors.
- **Streamlining and aligning:** Simplifying processes, ensuring equitable resource distribution, and connecting grantmaking to TTCF's Strategic Plan.
- **Integration:** Building a grantmaking strategy that seamlessly incorporates other TTCF offerings, including capacity building, leadership development, education, and training.
- **Leveraging Resources:** Expanding donor and co-funder engagement to grow available resources for nonprofits. Ultimately, the aim is to **make the process easier, not more difficult** for nonprofits.

1. What is “Trust-Based Community Grantmaking?”

The 2025 “Trust-Based Community Grantmaking” is an evolution of TTCF’s annual competitive grant cycle. This process has historically included a grant application and volunteer grant committees. This year, we are providing unrestricted grants without the application and volunteer committee process.

The community grants funding **includes**: General Endowment Fund and Nature Fund.

TTCF administers many different grant funds throughout the year, each with different donor sources and distribution strategies. The 2025 Community Grantmaking **does not include**:

- TTCF funding streams: Emergency Response Fund, Forest Futures, Housing Solutions Fund, Mental Health Fund, or Queen of Hearts Women’s Fund.
- Partner funding streams (past or present): Tahoe Donner Giving Fund, Truckee Core Values Fund, etc.

2. How do I apply for TTCF community grants in 2025?

Nonprofits **do not apply** for a 2025 community grant. Grantees have been selected via the methodology below. If you received a grant, you will be notified the week of September 29, 2025, via email and mail.

2025 Grant Methodology

The grant selection process underwent the same level of due diligence and intention as always, taking into account qualitative and quantitative data. The methodology included:

- Data analytics from the last 5 years of grant funding;
- Data analytics from the last 3 years of Give Back Tahoe;
- Real-time insights from our nonprofits in focus groups, one-on-one conversations, leadership development programs, collaborative mechanisms, and technical assistance; and
- Community priorities that have bubbled up through our initiative work.

TTCF staff identified eligible nonprofits from these sources, obtained board approval, met with co-funders, and processed **unrestricted grants**. This methodology provided an equitable review of past grantees and ensured we weighed our resources based on a historical track record with the nonprofits.

3. What about new or emerging nonprofits that haven’t worked with TTCF before?

New and emerging nonprofits are encouraged to participate in Give Back Tahoe to begin partnering with TTCF and enhance their organization's community visibility and connection. See below.

4. What is the key grantmaking timeline?

September 29 - October 3, 2025: TTCF notifies grantees of awards.

October 1 - November 1, 2025: Give Back Tahoe Nonprofit registration opens.

December 2 - December 31, 2025: Give Back Tahoe Giving Season.

5. I just received a community grant check from TTCF. What can I use it for?

Nonprofits may use the unrestricted funding to serve their missions as they see fit. The only request is that grant dollars be used to benefit the people and place of our region, or capacity building for the organization. There are no formal reporting or evaluation requirements, but we intend to keep in touch and always want to hear about your challenges and successes.

6. Will there be competitive grant cycles in the future?

While TTCF anticipates moving away from the annual competition in the future, **2025 is a transitional year.** We plan for continuous learning alongside our stakeholders, peers, and sector leaders. With built-in feedback loops with nonprofits, co-funders, donors, and community members, we will improve and iterate our thinking and process.

Nonprofits must register for Give Back Tahoe to be eligible for 2026 Community Grants. Even if you don't plan to actively fundraise on this platform, TTCF relies on www.givebacktahoe.org to maintain a current catalog of regional nonprofits to share with donors, fundholders, and volunteers. This provides us with invaluable community-level and sector information to serve our region.

Important Give Back Tahoe dates:

- **October 1 - November 1:** Nonprofit registration at www.givebacktahoe.org
- **November 1 - November 27:** Webinars and technical assistance
- **December 2 - December 31:** Give Back Tahoe Giving Season!

7. What is Give Back Tahoe, and why is it important now?

Give Back Tahoe (GBT) refers to two things:

- (1) www.givebacktahoe.org: A year-round online portal on which any eligible nonprofits serving North Tahoe - Truckee can register, build and update their own pages, share their missions, drive donations, and connect with volunteers.
- (2) **Give Back Tahoe Giving Season:** Since 2014, TTCF has hosted the annual Give Back Tahoe Giving Season, raising nearly \$4 million for local nonprofits. Any eligible

nonprofit is invited to register and fundraise. Community members and TTCF fundholders use the platform to learn about the different missions they can support with donations and volunteer hours.

Free of charge to nonprofits, TTCF provides print/digital/broadcast marketing, technical assistance, and webinars to help nonprofits succeed.

8. Can I apply to the Queen of Hearts Women's Fund grant cycle this year?

No, the Queen of Hearts Women's Fund (QHWF) grantmaking will return to its roots in Spring 2026. The TTCF team will work with the QHWF supporters. Stay tuned.

9. How does a nonprofit build a trust-based relationship with TTCF?

TTCF stays close to our nonprofit sector and builds trust-based relationships over time with our nonprofit partners through:

- Give Back Tahoe,
- TTCF-hosted trainings like the Nonprofit Board Governance Series,
- Technical assistance and capacity-building opportunities,
- Working closely with TTCF's initiative work, and
- Working in collaboration through TTCF and regional collaborative mechanisms, etc.