

# GTCF VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

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# Welcome to the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving!

## CEO Welcome

Dear Volunteer,

Welcome to the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. Thank you for your interest in volunteering for the Greater Together Community Funds (GTCF) Program.

This handbook was designed to give you background on the Foundation and provide a broad overview of ways you can support your community by volunteering with GTCF. We hope that you find this handbook helpful in answering questions while also giving you guidance through your volunteer experience.

We thank you for sharing your passion, expertise, and time to give voice to community solutions that can improve the quality of life for those in our region and across the state of Connecticut. We will strive to ensure your volunteer time is fulfilling and meaningful.

Sincerely,



Jay Williams  
President and CEO





## Section 2: Greater Together Community Funds Program Overview

The Greater Together Community Fund (GTCF) is a Foundation program that supports the communities in our region in taking ownership around the needs in their towns, encourages broad and inclusive civic engagement, and anchors the Hartford Foundation in each town. [Learn](#) more about the history and role of GTCF.

**Each town within the Foundation’s region has a volunteer GTCF Committee (committee) that is composed of town residents.** The committee is inclusive, representative, and reflective of all the residents of that community.

### GTCF Committees

The Foundation’s Greater Together Community Funds program takes a participatory philanthropy approach that involves community members and other stakeholders in the grantmaking process. The role of the GTCF committee is to design and lead a process to identify community needs; evaluate which needs will be funded through town GTCF grants; make grant recommendations to the Foundation; provide updates to the Foundation; publicize grants after Foundation approval; and assist in tracking available funds for grantmaking.

Committees must reflect the residents of the town; strive to have an odd number of members ranging from 5-15 members; and undertake their volunteer work in an inclusive way, helping prospective and current volunteers feel valued, involved, and respected for the perspectives, experiences, and ideas they bring. GTCF Committees have been forming and reforming since 2019. Some towns have well-established committees, and others are taking shape. **This handbook and guidelines apply to all committee volunteers, helping to clarify roles and responsibilities.**

GTCF committees are supported by the Foundation through [staff liaisons](#).

### Volunteer Requirements for GTCF Committees

Minimum requirements to volunteer on a committee include individuals:

- Who reside in the town they are looking to serve;
- are at least 14 years of age (anyone younger than 18 must gain parental/guardian consent through the [Parent/Guardian Permission Form](#));
- and agree to adhere to the [Foundation’s Policies](#) and guidelines in this Volunteer Handbook.

Candidates for elected office, elected officials, and their immediate family members may not serve on a committee.

**To learn about volunteering with GTCF or to nominate a community member**, email [communityfunds@hfpg.org](mailto:communityfunds@hfpg.org) or call 860-548-1888. **To start your GTCF volunteer journey, complete the online [volunteer application](#).**

## GTCF Grantmaking Process

The Greater Together Community Funds program is a program of the Foundation's Community Impact Department.

### **Organizations eligible to receive grants through the GTCF grantmaking process include:**

- Nonprofits within the Foundation's funding area with a 501(c)3 designation as a public charity or fiscally sponsored by a nonprofit with a 501(c)3 designation.
- Municipalities and religious organizations seeking support for non-religious purposes, that align with the Foundation's basic [eligibility requirements](#).

### **Annually, each GTCF committee determines how the committee will operate for that year, which includes:**

- Determining its grantmaking timeline, goals, and funding priorities.
- Determining the maximum amount of their current use funds to make available for grantmaking. **Note:** [Staff liaison](#) can support committees in determining their town's funding balances.
- Identifying how they will promote their committee's request for proposals (RFP) utilizing any RFP template or Grantmaking rubric provided by the Foundation.
- Sharing the GTCF Grant Application with prospective organizations and the Foundation outlining deadlines and processes to apply.
- Evaluating proposals using a Grantmaking Rubric.
- Making recommendations to the Foundation on which organizations to fund.
- Announcing grants to the grantee and the public after receiving the Foundation's final approval and guidance ([see Marketing guidelines](#))
- Allocating administrative funds after determining timeline and goals ([see Administrative Funds](#))

### **While each committee determines its grantmaking timeline and goals, committees should note:**

- The Foundation is the ultimate steward of the GTCF program. Nonprofits receiving a GTCF grant are grantees of the Foundation and not of the committee
- GTCF funds are the Foundation's assets, and all grantmaking must adhere to the Foundation's requirements
- GTCF Committees cannot rename or create separate programs or develop grantmaking initiatives in partnership with other entities.

## Fundraising and Soliciting Donations

While fundraising is the primary responsibility of the Foundation, committees can support fundraising specifically for their town's GTCF current use funds.

Committee members may tell the story of their fund and invite interested individual donors to **donate \$15.00 - \$5,000 through the Foundation's [online giving portal](#) using a credit/debit card**. For donations of more than \$5,000, prospective donors should be directed to the Foundation's [development team](#).

Donations are tax-deductible, and donors will receive an acknowledgment letter from the Foundation. The Foundation will also alert committees when a donation has been received.

Committees **may not raise funds** through fundraising nights, parties, and events, including but not limited to restaurant nights, bake sales, car washes, approaching businesses for donations, or similar activities.

To mitigate the actual or perceived conflict of interest, active committee members may not donate to GTCF. There is at least a one-year waiting period for community members who have donated to a town fund to join a committee as a volunteer. We encourage you to seek [support from the staff liaison](#) for inquiries regarding GTCF donations.

## Volunteer Expenses and Financial Support

Committees may incur some incidental expenses for materials and resources to aid in the work of grantmaking. The Foundation will provide an administrative budget (“Admin Funds”) for each committee to reimburse volunteers for these expenses. The amount of Admin Funds is determined by the Foundation annually and may not be carried over from year to year.

### Allowable Admin Fund reimbursable expenses include:

- Acts of Humanity, Annual \$100 limit on greeting cards or small gifts for committee members – birthday, death in the family, graduation, wedding
- Mailing services and supplies
- Marketing (advertisements)
- Meeting space fees for committee meetings, recruitment, information sessions, and grantee receptions. **Note:** Consult with the [staff liaison](#) for examples of free or low-cost spaces, such as libraries and town-owned public spaces, as well as for any certificate of insurance needs.
- Office supplies (paper, pens, name tags, certificates, tape, flier holders, thank you cards)
- Platform subscriptions (ZOOM, Survey Monkey, Canva, Calendly). **Note:** Before entering into an agreement for a subscription service, please contact the [staff liaison](#) for guidance and/or money-saving opportunities.
- Provisions for language accessibility
- Printing/Copying services and supplies
- Refreshments for both committee and public meetings
- Signage (posters, banners, fliers)
- Tables and tablecloths

### Expenses that are not reimbursable under Admin Funds include:

- Alcohol
- Gift Cards
- Items not listed above
- Any vendor contracts and/or lease agreements ([see Financial Actions Out of Scope for Committees](#))

For planning purposes, each committee should complete an administrative fund expenditure budget in January and share it with their [staff liaison](#) for guidance each year.



## Reimbursement for Admin Fund Expenses

For reimbursement through Admin Funds, volunteers may submit allowable expenses via email with receipts attached to their [staff liaison](#), who will review expenses before processing the reimbursement request. **For prompt reimbursement, please ensure receipts are submitted via email within 30 days of the expense.** To ensure receipts are applied to the correct year, the final deadline to submit receipts is December 15.

**For reimbursement of expenses not listed above, volunteers must seek pre-approval from the staff liaison.** The Foundation has the right to refuse reimbursement of expenses that are not allowed.

## Financial Support

The Foundation recognizes that there may be qualified community members eager to volunteer but whose economic situations do not allow them to incur expenses directly related to volunteer activities. In some cases, this includes committee members whose economic situations make it financially unfeasible to wait for reimbursement for expenses paid by the Admin Fund. Community members and/or committee members who identify with either of these situations are encouraged to consult privately and in confidence with the [staff liaison](#) to determine if the Foundation can assist with some or all incidental expenses necessary to fulfill their volunteer role.

## Financial Actions Out of Scope for Committees

As GTCF is a program of the Foundation, **GTCF Committees are not distinct and separate nonprofit organizations.** This means that committee volunteers may not make financial or contractual decisions on behalf of GTCF nor the Foundation. Financial actions that are prohibited for committee volunteers include but are not limited to:

- Opening bank checking or savings accounts for or on behalf of the Foundation and/or any GTCF Committee
- Negotiating, entering into, nor signing contracts with vendors of any kind on behalf of the Foundation and/or GTCF Committee

## Connecticut State Tax Exempt Number

**Volunteers may not directly utilize the Foundation's Connecticut Tax Exempt Number.** In some instances, the Foundation's state tax-exempt status can be beneficial in receiving nonprofit discounts and access to meeting spaces. In these instances, volunteers should contact the [staff liaison](#) for guidance in applying for discounts.

## Communication and Technology Tools

The Foundation takes both data security and communication between committees, grantees, and the Foundation seriously. To that end, the Foundation has developed consistent Google Workspace tools, including group communication, email, data storage, and meeting capabilities for committee use. Effective October 1, 2024, all GTCF committees will utilize these update tools by following the guidelines outlined in the [Google Workspace Memo](#).

## Section 3: Volunteer Lifecycle and Support

### Our Commitment

The Foundation acknowledges that volunteers contribute in unique ways, providing various levels of time and commitment and that their volunteerism can benefit the communities the Foundation serves, its staff, and the volunteers themselves. The Foundation values the contributions made by volunteers and is committed to involving volunteers in ways that are inclusive of a wide range of perspectives and experiences, supportive, and that enhance the Foundation's goals and volunteer experience.

**The Foundation recognizes its responsibility to provide appropriate volunteer training, support, and resources to perform volunteer positions in a successful, productive, and purposeful manner.**

### Volunteer Definition

Volunteering is an important expression of community involvement supported and encouraged by the Foundation. Anyone who donates their services under the direction and on behalf of the Foundation without compensation is considered a volunteer.

**Volunteers are not employees of the Foundation.** The role of volunteers complements but does not replace the role of paid staff. Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure paid staff are clear about the role of volunteers and to foster good working relationships between them.

### Administrative Volunteers

The Foundation defines administrative volunteers as committee members with administrative responsibilities. This includes volunteers recognized as committee chairs, co-chairs, and secretaries. Administrative roles are elected by committee members and approved/appointed by GTCF staff liaison. Review the position descriptions for committee chair, committee co-chair, and committee secretary, in our resources page [here](#). Committees must communicate with the staff liaison about any administrative role changes.

**Prior to performing volunteer administrative roles, the Foundation will review appointments and approve the appointment of qualified candidates.**

### Volunteer Coordination

All volunteers have a designated [staff liaison](#) who is paid staff of the Foundation or an appointed administrative volunteer to offer guidance and advice to help volunteers carry out tasks effectively. Designated [staff liaison](#) have responsibility for the development, management, and coordination of volunteer activity within the Foundation. There is a presumption of mutual support and reliability between staff liaisons and volunteers. Volunteers will be informed of whom to contact to receive support and direction.

The Foundation will provide every volunteer with resources through the entire volunteer lifecycle, including Recruitment, Selection, Appointment, Support, Training, Feedback, Appreciation, and Termination.

### Recruitment

GTCF volunteer opportunities will be promoted on the Foundation's [website](#). Targeted volunteer recruitment may also happen at the local level, with committee members recruiting community

members using an inclusive approach that ensures the volunteer committees are representative and reflective of members of their community. To support equitable recruitment practices, the Foundation will provide town profiles to assist committees in learning and understanding the demographics of their communities. Contact the [staff liaison](#) for support in recruiting committee members, including requests for town profiles.

Upon recruitment, every volunteer candidate must **complete the online GTCF [volunteer application](#)**.

## Selection

Volunteers are selected based on their qualifications for the volunteer position, ability to perform necessary duties, and willingness and availability to participate in required training. To ensure all volunteers and prospective volunteers have equal access to activities and opportunities, we affirm our commitment to diversity in recruiting, selecting, placing, and recognizing volunteers.

During the selection process, GTCF committees will engage volunteer candidates in a short interview to gauge interest. After being selected for a volunteer role, candidates must complete the [online Volunteer Agreement](#) agreeing to follow the Volunteer Handbook and the volunteer policies and procedures identified within.

## Placement

Prospective volunteers may be selected, appointed, and placed in a volunteer role by Foundation staff, or an administrative volunteer designated by the Foundation. The Foundation has ultimate responsibility and authority in all volunteer decisions including volunteer recruitment, selection, and placement.

Every attempt will be made to place volunteers in positions that match their skills and interests and the needs of the Foundation and the volunteer. For candidates who cannot be placed in their preferred role, the needs of the Foundation will take precedence over the needs of the individual. **Committee members may volunteer for a maximum of six years total which includes any years of service as an administrative volunteer.**

## Position Descriptions

Each volunteer role has a written volunteer position description that defines the position's specific duties and responsibilities, qualifications, required training and term of appointment. A complete listing of volunteer position descriptions and the volunteer agreement may be found on the [GTCF resources webpage](#). Volunteers will receive a copy of their volunteer position description upon appointment.

## Support

**The Foundation will support all volunteers in their roles in the following ways:**

- Provide ongoing support through a designated contact person ([staff liaison](#) and/or administrative volunteer) to answer questions and/or give direction.
- Provide additional support for newly formed committees or reforming; facilitating meetings as needed.
- Assist with guidelines on grantmaking, community building, committee outreach, and civic engagement.
- Assist committees in establishing and following inclusive processes and decision-making.
- Provide required training.

- Assist with conflict mediation.
- Offer learning and networking opportunities.
- Provide safety guidelines for working with youth 14 and over and other vulnerable populations.
- Give marketing tools and guidance.
- Maintain and monitor town funds and grantmaking.
- Approve grants, provide grant award letters to grantees, and disburse funds.
- Support reimbursement of [allowable committee Admin Fund expenses](#)

## Training and Development

The Foundation values volunteer learning as a method to ensure informed, equitable, and inclusive grantmaking activities within the GTCF program, as well as an opportunity for volunteers to continue their personal development. To foster peer learning and sharing, the Foundation will create opportunities for committee members to come together to learn and build relationships across town committees.

New volunteers will be introduced to the Foundation and volunteer roles and given access to the [Volunteer Policies](#), this Volunteer Handbook, and position descriptions and other program resources and materials.

Preparation or training is required for most volunteer roles and will be discussed upon placement. Volunteers will be properly briefed about the activities to be undertaken and given the necessary information to fulfill their volunteer position. Refusal or inability to participate in the required training can result in a volunteer's release from, or non-appointment to, a position.

## Feedback

In the spirit of continual learning and improving the GTCF program, the Foundation staff may periodically assess GTCF Committee community impact with the purposes to:

1. Review structure and performance of the committee within their community
2. Review community impact in terms of number of grants awarded and balances within the town's immediate or current use funds and/or Admin Funds
3. Determine additional support committee members may request and/or require

Foundation staff may also assess individual volunteer experience with the purposes to:

1. Review volunteer's performance in their volunteer position
2. Give an opportunity to provide feedback to the Foundation
3. Determine the volunteer's interest in continuing in the position or exploring other options

## Reappointment

Reappointment of all volunteers may be made by either an administrative volunteer designated by the Foundation and/or Foundation staff. Reappointment is contingent on acceptance of position accountabilities, expectations, and time commitment as outlined in the volunteer agreement. **The Foundation has the right to refuse reappointment.**

## Recognition

The Foundation values the contributions of its volunteers and recognizes their service through various avenues. Volunteers may be recognized formally and informally by the Foundation or within their committee or group structure.

## Release

Volunteers may need or want to resign from the volunteer position prior to the end of their appointed terms. The Foundation requests the volunteers resign by written notification to the appointed administrative volunteer and Foundation [staff liaison](#).

**A volunteer can only be released from their position by Foundation staff.** Administrative and/or committee members may not release other volunteers from their positions. If a volunteer is released from their role, the [staff liaison](#) will contact the committee's administrative volunteers and provide guidance.

**The Foundation may release a volunteer for any reason, at its sole discretion, including but not limited to:**

- Any breach of the GTCF Volunteer Agreement
- Failure to complete training/onboarding required for the volunteer position
- Failure to comply with Foundation policies
- Exhibiting harmful behavior and/or harassment to other committee members, Foundation staff, and/or grantees
- Inability or failure of the volunteer to complete the requirements for the position
- Misappropriation of funds
- Providing false, incomplete, or misleading information on the GTCF Volunteer Application
- Restructuring or elimination of volunteer positions

## Section 4: Hartford Foundation Volunteer Policies

The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving maintains a series of policies that help ensure our mission, core values, strategy, and norms align with our vision to be a high-impact organization and further our commitment to the Greater Hartford region and its residents. Volunteers are expected to be familiar with [policies relevant to Foundation volunteers](#).

**A policy is an established position that must be followed.** Policies provide consistency of actions, give directions, and minimize the need for risk management. Difficulty or inconvenience in carrying out a policy's requirements shall not be used as an excuse for not adhering to the policy. Only the Foundation may make, change, or adapt the policies pertaining to volunteers. GTCF volunteers may not make, change, or adopt policies.

### Confidentiality Statement & Protection of Confidential Information Policy

As a volunteer of HFIG, you will have access to information that is considered confidential and proprietary in nature and as such must be held in confidence. Volunteers are asked to review the [Confidentiality Statement & Protection of Confidential Information Policy](#) when they join the GTCF Program and acknowledge their understanding and agreement with a signature of the GTCF Volunteer Agreement

### Conflict of Interest Policy

The Foundation's Conflict of Interest Policy, Guidelines and Disclosure Form are intended to provide guidance regarding perceived or actual conflicts of interest and ensure that organizations with which our staff or GTCF volunteers are affiliated outside the scope of their engagement have no unfair advantage or even the appearance of such an advantage in seeking opportunities at the Foundation. Each year, you will be asked to review our [Conflict of Interest Policy](#) and disclose any potential conflicts.

### Nondiscrimination Policy

The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving does not discriminate against any person or group of people based on their race, color, creed, age, gender identity, or any other group, status, or characteristics. Volunteers are expected to review, understand, and follow the [Nondiscrimination Policy](#).

### Whistleblower Policy

The Foundation is committed to lawful and ethical behavior in all activities. Employees, volunteers, consultants, vendors, and any other agents of the Foundation are asked to review the Foundation's [Whistleblower Policy](#) and Procedures for guidance on their reporting responsibilities and information on the handling of reported violations, protection against retaliation, and the confidentiality of any disclosed information.

## Section 5: Hartford Foundation Volunteer Guidelines

This section includes volunteer support guidance on conflict resolution, marketing and communications, and speaking with the media.

### Conflict Resolution

The Foundation has an established procedure for managing conflicts between volunteers. **Every volunteer may expect attention to their concerns and a fair resolution of the complaint without fear of jeopardizing their volunteer status.** The initiation of the procedure to resolve the conflict will not restrict the Foundation from taking appropriate action, if necessary.

### Conflict Resolution Procedure

#### Step 1

Those in conflict are encouraged to try to resolve the matter informally amongst themselves. Volunteers may contact their [staff liaison](#) for guidance and support with self-resolution, if necessary. It is expected that most if not all, situations will be resolved through informal conferences and communications at this step.

#### Step 2

When volunteers are unable to resolve a complaint through self-resolution, a volunteer should address their concern to their [staff liaison](#) for guidance on resolution. The staff liaison will document the situation and go through the GTCF staff protocol to resolve GTCF volunteer conflicts which details the steps that must be followed to resolve the conflict.

#### Step 3

If a final resolution has not been met after following the steps, the volunteer(s) may request a meeting with the Foundation's [GTCF strategy lead](#).

### Marketing & Communications Guidelines

The Foundation encourages volunteers to take ownership of their fund and recognizes that logos, marketing tools, and sharing on social media are important factors in promoting each town's unique activities.

Committees can select their logo from the Foundation's designated GTCF templates and promote committee activities utilizing the Foundation's brand standards and approved marketing tools.

Committees will receive marketing assets, including flyers, social media language, and [press release templates](#).

Some committees have created and/or used social media to promote their town's GTCF committee activities. Creating new social media platforms, including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter/X, Pinterest, Instagram, Tumblr, Snapchat, and TikTok, was paused in October 2024, and **new accounts may not be created**. For existing social media platforms, at least one [staff liaison](#) and one active committee member must be an "owner" of the account(s), and all created social media accounts should be clearly identified as belonging to a particular GTCF committee and state they are maintained by volunteer(s) and are not the official site of Foundation.

Social media tools are a powerful way to increase awareness, support, and a sense of community for a town's GTCF grantmaking. When using these tools and identifying as a volunteer for the Foundation's GTCF program, discretion should be used to protect the credibility of the Foundation, GTCF program, and our partner organizations. Volunteers must always comply with the existing [confidentiality policy](#), including when posting to social media. Volunteers should avoid creating an impression that views expressed on social media are anything other than personal opinions.

Each town has its own unique [webpage](#) on the [Foundation's website](#). Volunteers may request updates to their town's webpage through their [staff liaison](#). Webpage updates will be reviewed by the Foundation staff prior to posting and **may take up to two weeks to complete**. Updates not consistent with [brand standards](#) or the Foundation's goals will not be approved. **Volunteers may not make GTCF town-specific websites.**

## Speaking on behalf of the Hartford Foundation and/or GTCF Committee

Speaking with the media (television, radio, print, blogs, podcasts, etc.) can be an exciting opportunity to engage community members in the Foundation's GTCF grantmaking program. This guidance on speaking/engaging with media is to ensure that the Foundation's messaging is consistent and aligns with our mission and strategic goals.

Committees may utilize press releases as opportunities to build awareness of the GTCF program, recruit new volunteer committee members, call for RFPs, and share grants awarded. Committee members shall complete the Foundation's press release form and forward it to the Foundation for approval and review. After receiving feedback and approval from the Foundation, the committee may then share the press release with local media outlets.

**Speaking with or reaching out to media outlets directly is managed at the Foundation level.** If a committee would like to engage media outlets, the first step is to contact their [staff liaison](#), who will connect them with the Foundation's communications staff, who will work directly with committee volunteers and the media. Volunteers are not official spokespeople for the Foundation and/or the GTCF program. Volunteers are encouraged to promote GTCF program work in formal and informal settings, which do not include media interviews. Volunteers should consult with their [staff liaison](#) on any ideas or potential invitations to speak and spread awareness about GTCF.

If volunteers are approached to comment on their volunteer responsibilities with the Foundation and/or the GTCF program by a media outlet, they shall inform their [staff liaison](#) and seek guidance on next steps which may include referring the media outlet to the [GTCF strategy lead](#) and/or marketing team for comment; partnering with the GTCF strategy lead on media interviews; or other actions.



## Section 6: Additional Resources and Support

We know that starting a new volunteer role can be challenging, and there are many things to learn, including a new language. **This volunteer handbook and policies are a place to start your volunteer journey, and the Glossary is a place to learn new terms.** And know you are not alone. Your [staff liaison](#) and administrative volunteers are here to support you and help you engage in your town's GTCF Committee.

### Support

Questions? Feedback? Not sure where to get started? Email [communityfunds@hfpg.org](mailto:communityfunds@hfpg.org), or call, 860-548-1888. Thank you, and welcome; we're glad you're here!

### Connect with Us

The Foundation offers various ways for people to connect with us, learn about our work, and get involved.

To keep up-to-date on our work and important stories affecting our region, follow us on social media, including [Facebook](#), [Twitter/X](#), [Instagram](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [YouTube](#). Subscribe to our [monthly newsletter](#) to keep informed about our work. Read about our latest grants and initiatives on our [News page](#), and learn about our organization by reading our latest [reports and publications](#).

We want to hear from you; please [share](#) your feedback on how to improve our community.

## Glossary of Terms

### 501(c)(3) Organization

501(c)(3) is a U.S. Internal Revenue Code tax designation for nonprofit organizations. Organizations that meet the 501(c)(3) requirements are exempt from federal income tax. The IRS recognizes more than 30 types of nonprofit organizations, but only those that qualify for 501(c)(3) status can say that donations made to them are tax deductible. GTCF grants are awarded to 501(c)(3) organizations. Entities without a 501(c)(3) designation may work with a 501(c)(3) for eligibility. Committees should contact their staff liaison for guidance in these situations before recommending a grant.

### Community Foundation

Community Foundations are tax-exempt, not-for-profit grantmaking public charities dedicated to improving the lives of people in a defined geographic area. They bring together the financial resources of individuals, families, and businesses to address community needs and support effective nonprofits in their communities. The [Hartford Foundation for Public Giving](#) is a community foundation.

### Grantmaking Rubric

A grantmaking rubric is an analytical tool that aids in objective decision-making. The GTCF grantmaking rubric will help committees evaluate and compare requests for proposals (RFP) that nonprofits submit for funding. The grantmaking rubric provides a systematic, transparent, simple tool to inform and record decisions. Each proposal is assessed and captured using the same rubric, which ensures fairness and equity in evaluation.

### Greater Together Community Funds Committee

The Foundation's Greater Together Community Funds program takes a participatory philanthropy approach that involves community members and other stakeholders in the grantmaking process. The role of the GTCF committee is to design and lead a process to identify community needs; evaluate which needs will be funded through town GTCF grants; make grant recommendations to the Foundation; provide updates to the Foundation; publicize grants after Foundation approval; and assist in tracking available funds for grantmaking.

### **Participatory Grantmaking**

Participatory grantmaking is the practice of ceding grantmaking power to the very communities affected by funding decisions. In action, participatory grantmaking uplifts these communities by giving them the agency to decide who and what they fund. By centering affected communities in the grantmaking process, participatory grantmaking shifts unequal power dynamics inherent in philanthropy to those directly impacted from a values-based and equity-centered approach.

### **Request for Proposal (RFP)**

A Request for Proposal (RFP) is a formal invitation to nonprofit organizations asking them to submit detailed proposals for specific funding opportunities. All GTCF committees utilize RFPs to announce they are accepting grant proposals specific to their towns. RFPs represent opportunities for nonprofits to present their projects and potentially receive funding in return. The RFP template includes background information on the GTCF program; eligibility for receiving GTCF grants; proposal requirements; criteria for consideration; and other information specific to the GTCF town committee's process including deadlines for submission and contact information.

### **Staff Liaison**

A staff liaison is a paid staff member of the Foundation who works with and supports GTCF volunteer committee members providing training and guidance. Committee members seeking information or support from the Foundation should contact the staff liaisons who will answer inquiries directly or act as a conduit to other Foundation departments.

### **Volunteer**

A person who performs a service or other undertaking willingly and without pay is a volunteer. Anyone who donates their services under the direction and on behalf of the Foundation without compensation is considered a volunteer.