

Grant Application and Management Standard Operating Procedure (SOP)

Montezuma Valley Volunteer Community Service Organization (MVVCSO)

Effective Date: June 28, 2025

1. Introduction

Grants are a vital source of funding for MVVCSO, enabling the organization to deliver essential services to the Ranchita community. This SOP ensures that MVVCSO's grant processes are efficient, transparent, and aligned with the organization's mission, values, and legal obligations. It provides a step-by-step guide for identifying, applying for, and managing grants while ensuring community involvement and compliance with all relevant laws and regulations.

2. Purpose and Scope

This SOP outlines the procedures for identifying, applying for, and managing grants at MVVCSO. It applies to all grant-related activities and is designed to:

- Ensure grants align with MVVCSO's mission and community needs.
 - Comply with the 2025 bylaws (particularly **Article XIV**), California corporate codes, the Nonprofit Integrity Act (NIA), IRS 501(c)(3) requirements, and the Unruh Civil Rights Act.
 - Serve MVVCSO's Northstars of community focus, transparency, inclusivity, and serving all members.
 - Involve the Grant Committee and incorporate community input at every stage.
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3. Roles and Responsibilities

The following roles are involved in the grant process:

- **Grant Committee:**
 - Research and identify grant opportunities.
 - Draft and submit grant proposals with community input.
 - Manage awarded grants, including reporting and compliance.
 - **Treasurer:**
 - Review grant budgets and financial reports.
 - Ensure financial compliance with grant terms and IRS 501(c)(3) regulations.
 - **Community Engagement Committee:**
 - Facilitate community input sessions for grant planning and feedback.
 - **Board of Directors:**
 - Approve grant applications over \$10,000 or those involving new programs.
 - Review grant reports to ensure alignment with MVVCSO's mission and strategic goals.
 - **Grant Manager:**
 - A designated individual (e.g., a committee member or staff) responsible for overseeing specific grants, ensuring compliance, and managing reporting.
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4. Grant Identification

4.1 Research and Evaluation

- The Grant Committee regularly reviews grant databases (e.g., Foundation Directory, Grants.gov), attends funder webinars, and networks with other nonprofits to identify opportunities.
- Potential grants are evaluated based on:
 - Alignment with MVVCSO's strategic plan and community needs.
 - Capacity to manage the grant's requirements.
 - Compliance with IRS 501(c)(3) and California nonprofit laws.

4.2 Community Needs Assessment

- Before pursuing a grant, the Grant Committee collaborates with the Community Engagement Committee to assess community needs through public forums, surveys, or focus groups.
 - Input is documented and used to ensure grants address local priorities, supporting the community focus Northstar.
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5. Community Input

5.1 Gathering Feedback

- For each potential grant, the Community Engagement Committee gathers input from Ranchita residents via:
 - Quarterly public forums (in-person or virtual).
 - Mailed or digital surveys (with paper options for non-digital residents).
 - Focus groups with underserved populations (e.g., seniors, disabled individuals).
- Feedback is summarized and incorporated into grant proposals to ensure inclusivity and community relevance.

5.2 Reporting Back

- The Grant Committee provides updates on grant activities at public forums and through community bulletins, ensuring transparency and ongoing community involvement.
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6. Grant Application Process

6.1 Proposal Development

1. **Identify Opportunity:** The Grant Committee identifies a grant aligned with MVVCSO's goals.
2. **Draft Outline:** The Committee creates a proposal outline, including project description, budget, and timeline.
3. **Incorporate Community Input:** Feedback from community assessments is integrated into the proposal.

4. **Write Full Proposal:** The Committee drafts the narrative, ensuring it reflects community needs and MVVCSO's mission.
5. **Budget Review:** The Treasurer reviews the budget for accuracy and compliance.
6. **Internal Review:** The Grant Committee reviews the entire proposal for quality and alignment.

6.2 Approval

- **Board Approval:** Applications over \$10,000 or involving new programs require Board approval via majority vote.
- **Documentation:** All approvals are recorded in Board minutes, per **Article IV, Section 3D**.

6.3 Submission

- The Grant Committee submits the application by the funder's deadline, ensuring all required documents are included.
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7. Review and Approval

7.1 Internal Review Criteria

- All grant applications are reviewed by the Grant Committee for:
 - Mission alignment.
 - Financial feasibility.
 - Community support.
 - Compliance with funder requirements.

7.2 Board Involvement

- The Board reviews and approves applications that:
 - Exceed \$10,000.
 - Introduce new programs or significant changes to existing ones.
- The Board ensures grants do not create conflicts of interest or private benefit, per IRS 501(c)(3) and the Conflict of Interest Policy.

8. Grant Management

8.1 Grant Setup

- Upon award, the Grant Committee assigns a Grant Manager to oversee the project.
- A separate account or budget line is established for grant funds, tracked by the Treasurer.

8.2 Financial Tracking

- The Treasurer monitors expenditures to ensure they align with the grant's purpose and budget.
- Restricted funds are used solely for their intended purpose, with no private benefit, per IRS 501(c)(3).

8.3 Reporting

- The Grant Manager prepares and submits required reports to the funder, with copies to the Board.
- Community updates are shared at public forums or through newsletters, promoting transparency.

8.4 Compliance

- The Grant Committee ensures all grant terms are met, including non-lobbying and non-discrimination clauses, per California law and the Unruh Civil Rights Act.

9. Compliance and Ethics

9.1 Legal and Ethical Standards

- All grant activities must comply with:
 - Funder requirements.
 - MIVCSO's Code of Ethics and Conflict of Interest Policy.

- California corporate codes and IRS 501(c)(3) regulations (e.g., no private benefit, no lobbying with grant funds).
 - The Ethics Committee investigates any suspected misuse or ethical violations.
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10. Documentation and Record-Keeping

10.1 Grant Files

- For each grant, maintain a file with:
 - Application and award documents.
 - Budgets and financial reports.
 - Correspondence and reports.
 - Community input documentation.
- Files are stored securely and accessible to the Board and Voting Members upon request (Article VII, Section 1).

10.2 Retention

- Records are retained for seven years or as required by law, then securely destroyed.
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11. Training and Support

11.1 Annual Training

- Staff and volunteers involved in grants complete annual training on this SOP, grant compliance, and ethical standards.
- Training is provided in accessible formats (e.g., in-person, virtual, written).

11.2 Support

- The Grant Committee Chair provides ongoing support and resources, including access to grant management tools (e.g., spreadsheets, calendars).
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12. Review and Update of SOP

- The Grant Committee and Board review this SOP annually to ensure compliance with laws and best practices.
 - Updates require a majority Board vote and 30 days' notice to Voting Members (Article VIII).
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13. Compliance with Legal Standards

- **2025 Bylaws:** Aligns with **Article XIV** and **Article VI, Section 1B**.
 - **California Corporate Codes:** Ensures responsible governance and financial oversight.
 - **Nonprofit Integrity Act (NIA):** Supports transparency through public reporting of grant activities.
 - **IRS 501(c)(3):** Ensures grants serve the public good without private benefit.
 - **Unruh Civil Rights Act:** Guarantees non-discriminatory grant programs and processes.
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14. Alignment with MVVCSO Northstars

- **Community Focus:** Grants are driven by community needs and feedback.
 - **Transparency:** Grant activities are publicly shared and accessible.
 - **Inclusivity:** Programs are designed for all community members, with accommodations.
 - **Serving All Members:** Grants prioritize underserved groups and equitable access.
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This SOP ensures MVVCSO's grant processes are transparent, inclusive, and legally compliant, supporting the organization's mission to serve the Ranchita community with integrity and accountability.