



# Dixie Fire Grant Program Guidelines

## Rebuilding for a Stronger Region

### 2022

Recover. Rebuild. Revitalize.

The Wildfire Relief & Recovery Fund at North Valley Community Foundation supports the rebuilding and revitalization of communities throughout our region impacted by wildfire. Together with our collaborative funders American Red Cross, the Almanor Foundation, the Community Foundation of Northern Nevada, the Dixie Fire Collaborative, and Plumas Bank, we are working with nonprofit, government, philanthropic and private sectors to accelerate recovery and rebuilding to create a thriving, resilient and even stronger region after the Dixie Fire. Grants awarded through the Dixie Fire Grant Program may be funded by any one of the partnering funders or by a collaboration of two or more of the funders. These organizations may additionally accept applications and award funds for Dixie Fire response and recovery outside of the Dixie Fire Grant Program through their own programs or initiatives that are separate from this program.

We are particularly interested in projects and initiatives that serve the most vulnerable members of the community – those with the least resources and most needs, who have the most challenging time recovering. We also seek to fill gaps – providing shorter-term, catalytic funding that is not available elsewhere and has the potential to leverage longer-term ongoing support. We want to ensure that our investments leverage – but do not duplicate – other funding streams and lead to significant and measurable positive benefit for impacted households and the region as a whole.

We are honored to steward investments on behalf of a broad range of donors and will therefore design and implement the Wildfire Relief & Recovery Fund transparently, with accountability and in accordance with the principles of Partnership, Collaboration, Focus on the Most Vulnerable, Leverage, Impact and Sustainability.

## PROGRAM AREAS

### OVERVIEW

Before the Dixie Fire identified needs in Plumas County included housing, behavioral health, transportation, economic development and health and wellness needs encompassing schools, early childhood services, tribal members, elderly services, and healthcare. This grant program will focus on post fire unmet community priorities that include but are not limited to housing, capacity building, economic development and overall health and wellness. This program seeks to incentivize holistic strategies that include all three phases - relief, recovery, and resilience.

## **HOUSING**

Without safe, stable, affordable housing, victims of wildfires will be unable to move forward in their lives and access other vital services or contribute to the economic and social vibrancy of our communities. The lack of housing also impacts the ability of the region to attract the shorter-term workforce it needs for rebuilding and the longer-term workforce needed for provision of vital community services and diversified economic growth.

Pre-fire, there was a critical housing shortage in our region – in terms of both the number and type of homes available and the affordability of them. And with multiple wildfires destroying so much of our affordable housing stock – housing, particularly affordable housing, is cited as the number one issue in need of addressing throughout our communities.

We will work with the public, nonprofit, and private sectors to increase the supply of permanent housing, particularly affordable housing in our region. We seek to leverage our dollars through collaborative, strategic and systemic projects that tie together the diverse housing needs of our communities and build the capacity of the whole system to generate more housing, rather than focusing on individual housing developments or units.

Our investments will be data-informed, aligning with community-wide housing needs, priorities, and solutions.

1. While this data is still being collected and solutions identified, we will consider funding in the following areas and add more over time: Rapid re-housing and homeless prevention programs that help families stay in housing or obtain new permanent housing quickly such as housing navigators, landlord liaisons and short-term financial assistance.
2. Exploration and incentivizing of innovative housing solutions such as accessory dwelling units, home sharing and community land trusts.
3. Efforts to reduce construction costs and accelerate development and production such as off-site, panelized, and modular construction and construction training programs to increase the availability of qualified, local workers.
4. Initiatives or projects that provide tools or equipment to help communities recover from fire devastation (such as helping remove debris from properties) or provide services to protect the community from future fires (such as equipment for defensible space considerations).

## **HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

The level of outreach needed to support the communities impacted by wildfires is growing. Case management is how victims of wildfire gain access to a range of services by connecting survivors to professionals that have resources for support. After multiple fires, the level of individual and community trauma is greatly heightened while the availability of case management directing victims to services has been severely understaffed and underfunded. Providing a system that stands up organizations and agencies that provide case managers, direct assistance and disaster navigators is crucial to the recovery of our region.

While this program area is still being developed and solutions identified, we will consider funding in the following areas and add more over time:

1. Collaborative efforts to create a resource-informed system of care and disaster navigation in Plumas counties including planning, capacity building, training, and assistance identifying and securing ongoing revenue streams for implementation.
2. Capacity building for organizations and agencies that manage case workers and disaster navigators to work across sectors and broaden outreach.
3. Support for efforts to train, retain and recruit more case management and disaster navigator professionals to our region in order to increase access to direct assistance and support.
4. Identify local community-based organizations that can provide systematic programs to support simple unmet needs including housing and food insecurity, relocation and infrastructure needs.
5. Support individual and community trauma reduction.

## **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

While this program area is still being developed and solutions identified, we will consider funding the following areas, and more may be added over time.

1. Select historic landmarks considered symbols or symbolic of the recovery effort and/or commemorative projects.
2. Solutions providing gathering places for future fires or providing fire breaks in vulnerable areas based on expert reports.
3. Projects that are central to recovery, draw people together, inspire hope, or are commemorative in nature.
4. Projects which contain elements of resiliency, which are central to community spirit and recovery.

## **ECONOMIC RECOVERY**

Small business owners are the heart of a community, and we need to get them back on their feet. The Dixie Fire Fund will work to identify opportunities to provide a broad range of services to impacted businesses and to advocate for business recovery, resilience, and growth.

1. The importance of employment is central to the rebuilding and regrowth of the region. We would like to explore programs that can retrain workers to meet the current needs of the community.
2. Programs and projects that would draw visitors to Plumas County.
3. Projects that increase capacity by supporting additional personnel and training personnel. Key areas include grant writing, administer grants, accounting, bookkeeping, project management, and trauma-informed care.
4. Small business training, mentorship, counseling, and workforce development.
5. Programs that provide services to improve communication, connectivity and promote trauma healing such as wellness centers, youth after school care programs, telehealth services, and programs serving the elderly.
6. Collaborations or programs with chambers of commerce, economic development commissions, local government entities, certified development financial institutions and 501c3 nonprofits that are equipped to support small businesses with technical assistance, marketing campaigns, and workforce assistance programs.

## ELIGIBILITY

### **Tax Status**

Qualified applicant organizations include federal-and state-recognized tribes, unrecognized tribes with a fiscal agent, nonprofit organizations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, programs fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3), or units of local government (including public schools). Qualified entities include churches that serve congregations of at least 100 people and the proposed projects or programs that are not denomination specific and meet the specific criteria. Other organizations may also propose projects that meet the specific criteria but may be required to partner with a 501(c)(3) entity.

### **Non-Discrimination**

Organizations must offer programs and services without discrimination based on age, race, national origin, ethnicity, gender, physical ability, sexual orientation, political affiliation, or religious belief.

### **Geography**

Programs and projects must clearly benefit Plumas counties residents who have been directly and/or indirectly impacted by wildfires.

### **Use of Funds**

Our funds are deployed strategically where other sources of funding are not available. As much as possible, we leverage our grants by first tapping into federal and state aid programs and insurance. The project must not supplant public funding or fill gaps that the government and/or private insurance have committed to address.

### **Restrictions**

The Dixie Fire Grant Program will not consider grant requests for fundraising events, annual funds, endowment funds, political lobbying, individuals, or activities that are restricted to members of a faith community. Capital improvements such as new structures, repair of damaged structures, or acquisition of structures will generally not be considered except for possible short-term, low- or no-interest loans.

### **Frequency**

Eligible entities may not apply for more than one grant for the same program or project within a 12-month period.

## SELECTION CRITERIA

Projects and initiatives will be evaluated by the following selection criteria, and priority given to those that most strongly meet the following criteria:

### **1. Vulnerable Populations**

Multiple studies have shown that disaster recovery is not equal and that vulnerable populations have greater needs, fewer options, and longer recovery timeframes. Projects will be prioritized that target lower-income households, particularly those that include seniors or children; individuals with physical, cognitive, and emotional disabilities; and populations that lack access to federal or state recovery resources or reside in isolated areas with limited services.

## **2. Dixie Fire Connection**

Projects that directly benefit those most impacted by the Dixie Fire will be prioritized.

## **3. Demonstrable Impact**

The project's approach (design, delivery, and staffing) is tailored to meet the specific needs of the target population(s) and has a reasonable timeline for implementation. Projects that result in significant outputs and outcomes – either through addressing a broad range of the community's needs and/or resulting in an enduring positive impact for individuals and households – will be prioritized.

## **4. Collaboration**

Projects that partner with other organizations and stakeholders to maximize impact and minimize duplication are desired. Organizations with strong track records of collaboration will be prioritized.

## **5. Organizational Capacity**

Applicants need to demonstrate their capacity to implement the proposed project in terms of leadership, staffing expertise and financial health.

## **6. Leverage and Sustainability**

The project is supported by a diversity of funding sources and/or has the capacity to leverage additional sources. It is financially feasible with a realistic and viable strategy for sustainability through other ongoing sources.

## **GRANT FUNDING AMOUNTS**

In general, grant awards will range from \$10,000 to \$100,000 and range in duration from one to three years. Amounts above this range may be considered by invitation only.

*Grant requests larger than 25% of the applicant organization's annual operating budget will come under additional scrutiny to ascertain the organization's financial strength and its ability to deliver on the project while maintaining existing operations.*

## **ALLOWABLE EXPENDITURES**

Proposed grant budgets may include project staff and consultants and other programmatic expenses needed to plan and implement the programs and provide the proposed services. Grant budgets may also include the costs associated with outreach, intake and evaluation. Administrative costs of up to 10% of the grant amount will be considered.

## **GRANT REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL AWARDED GRANTEEES**

### **1. Grant Agreement**

Upon approval of your application, you will receive a formal, legally binding grant agreement, which will require your signature. This will include the final scope of work, timeline for outcomes, grant budget, the reporting schedule and other legal assurances.

## **2. Monitoring and Evaluation**

Grantees are required to submit annual reports on project progress and financial expenditures. Please note that timely grant reports will assist the committee in fulfilling its stewardship responsibility to our donors and the community.

## **3. Grant Payments**

The grant installment will be paid upon execution of the grant agreement.

## **4. Public Acknowledgment of Grant**

Must be coordinated with NVCF and consistent with the guidelines provided in the grant agreement. Contact David Little, Executive Vice President of Communications, at [dlittle@nvcf.org](mailto:dlittle@nvcf.org) with questions.

## **GRANT PROPOSAL APPLICATION PROCESS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION**

### **1. Dixie Fire - Small Grant Program**

Eligible organizations that are seeking \$10,000 or less in funding for qualified programs may apply to the Dixie Fire Small Grant Program. This process requires applicants to upload a complete project budget showing sources of income for the proposal as well as all projected expenses. Applicants must also provide a certificate of liability insurance.

### **2. Dixie Fire - Large Grant Program**

Eligible organizations that are seeking more than \$10,000 for a qualified program must apply to the Dixie Fire - Large Grant Program. This process requires applicants to upload a complete project budget showing sources of income for the proposal as well as all projected expenses. Applicants must also provide a certificate of liability insurance. Note: Any proposal that is requesting \$50,000 or more must contact an NVCF program officer prior to submitting. Proposals of \$50,000 or more that have not been vetted by an NVCF program officer will not be considered until a program officer has been in communication with the applicant.

## **CONTACT**

If you have questions regarding the grant application process or the guidelines, please email us at [grants@nvcf.org](mailto:grants@nvcf.org).