Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

About the Grant

1. What is the purpose of the Community Impact Micro Rural Grant?

The grant supports projects that improve quality of life in rural Southwest Florida by addressing community challenges and their root causes. Funded projects should demonstrate measurable short-term results while building toward lasting, system-level impact.

2. What does "system-level change" mean?

System-level change means improving how a community's organizations, resources, and services work together to address the root causes of problems. This could include changing policies, strengthening partnerships, or improving how funding and information are shared. Strong proposals should explain how the project will create lasting improvements that benefit the broader community beyond the individuals directly served.

3. Are direct-service programs eligible?

Direct-service activities are welcome, especially when they also lay the groundwork for longer-term community improvements. Applicants should explain how their project could help identify or reduce barriers, strengthen partnerships, or improve how services are delivered. Projects are not expected to achieve full system-level change during the grant period, but should describe how small, practical steps could contribute to lasting impact.

Eligibility

4. Who is eligible to apply?

Eligible applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Nonprofit organizations that are tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3)
- Public or private colleges and universities
- Governmental entity, State agency, or County Health Department
- Applicants must be located in and/or primarily serve residents of Charlotte, Glades, or Hendry counties.
- Eligible organizations must have an established governing body appropriate to their organizational structure.
- Organizations must conduct business without discrimination on the basis of race, gender or gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, national origin, or religious affiliation.

- Organizations applying for funding must apply using their own legal organizational status.

5. Can multiple organizations submit a joint application?

The guidelines encourage partnerships and collaboration; however, applications must be submitted by one eligible organization using its own legal organizational status. Applications submitted through a fiscal sponsor or on behalf of another organization are not eligible.

6. Can an organization apply if it serves multiple counties?

Yes. Organizations may serve one or more of the three eligible counties, provided they are located in or primarily serve residents of Charlotte, Glades, or Hendry counties.

7. Are fiscal sponsors allowed?

No. Applications submitted through a fiscal sponsor or on behalf of another organization are not eligible.

8. Are public and private colleges eligible to apply?

Yes. Public and private colleges and universities are eligible to apply, provided they meet the eligibility requirements and the proposed project aligns with the Community Infrastructure Coalition system-level indicators and the published review criteria.

Note: Colleges and universities should submit the required application materials that are appropriate to their organizational structure. If a requested document, such as an IRS determination letter or Form 990, does not apply, applicants should provide comparable documentation.

Project Focus

9. What issue areas are eligible?

Projects must primarily align with one of these Collaboratory Coalition system-level indicators:

- Prenatal Care 1st Trimester
- Uninsured Population under age 65
- Behavioral Health Workforce: Percentage of Community Need Met
- Housing and Transportation Affordability

- Food Environment Score
- Percentage of Residents with Access to High-Speed Internet
- Kindergarden Readiness Rate
- High School Graduation Rate
- Skilled Workforce Rate

10. Can my project address more than one issue?

Yes.

Applicants must identify one primary indictor.

Applicants may also identify other Collaboratory system-level indicators that apply to the project and describe how the project will influence those indicators.

Secondary indicator alignment does not receive separate points in the scoring rubric and is not required for a project to receive the maximum score.

11. Does my project have to be new?

No.

Both new and existing projects are eligible if they meet the eligibility requirements and align with the purpose and focus of the Micro Rural Grant.

Projects will be evaluated using the published Scoring Rubric and Award Selection Process.

Funding

12. How much funding is available?

Up to eight grants of up to $5,000 will be awarded.

13. How long is the grant period?

The award period is 12 months.

14. How will grant funds be distributed?

Grant funds will be paid in a single payment.

15. Is matching funding required?

No. Matching funds are not required, but applicants are encouraged to describe additional funding, partnerships, in-kind support, or other resources that will strengthen the project and support long-term sustainability.

16. Can grant funds be used for administrative expenses?

Yes. Administrative, indirect, and overhead expenses may be included but cannot exceed 10% of the total grant request.

Ineligible Requests

17. What types of activities cannot be funded?

The grant does not support:

- Political campaigns
- Lobbying or similar activities
- Advancement of a particular religion or faith

Application

18. When does the application open?

The application opens on October 12, 2026.

19. When is the application due?

Applications must be submitted by November 13, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. EDT.

20. Will late applications be accepted?

The guidelines specify a firm application deadline. Applicants should plan to submit before the deadline.

21. Can I submit additional documents after my application?

Applications should be complete when submitted. Supplemental materials will only be reviewed if specifically requested by Collaboratory staff.

22. When will award decisions be announced?

Collaboratory anticipates notifying the selected applicant by mid-December.

Application Questions

23. What should applicants be prepared to describe?

Applicants should be prepared to provide information about:

- Their organization and mission
- The proposed project
- Project goals and activities
- The primary indicator the project will address
- How the project will influence the selected indicator
- Data demonstrating the need for the proposed work
- Measurable short-term outcomes and anticipated system-level outcomes
- Underlying conditions, barriers, policies, practices, or systems contributing to the issue
- How the project will influence or change those conditions
- How community members informed project development and will continue to participate in implementation and evaluation
- How project impact will continue beyond the grant period
- Partnerships, funding sources, policies, practices, or structures that will help sustain the work
- How the project will leverage additional funding, partnerships, volunteer support, or other community resources
- Partnerships or cross-sector collaborations involved in the project and how they will contribute to lasting community impact
- Additional Collaboratory system-level indicators that apply to the project, if applicable, and how the project will influence those indicators
- Required organizational supporting documents

24. What kind of data should applicants include?

Applicants should provide relevant Southwest Florida data demonstrating the need for the proposed work.

The data should help establish the need connected to the primary indicator selected in the application.

Collaboratory recommends applicants review the foundation's Coalition dashboard as a potential source of relevant information.

Community Engagement

25. Why is community engagement important?

Community engagement is important because the people most affected by the issue have firsthand knowledge of the problem, and their input ensures the project addresses real community needs.

Partnerships

26. Are partnerships required?

Partnerships are not listed as an eligibility requirement.

The application asks applicants to describe any partnerships or cross-sector collaborations involved in the project and explain how those partnerships will contribute to achieving lasting community impact.

Partnerships are highly encouraged as they can demonstrate the capacity to create broader community impact.

Sustainability

27. What does Collaboratory mean by sustainability?

Applicants should explain how the project's impact will continue beyond the funding period.

The application asks applicants to identify the partnerships, funding sources, policies, practices, or structures that will help sustain the work.

Applicants should also explain how the project will leverage additional funding, partnerships, volunteer support, or other community resources.

Review Process

28. How will applications be evaluated?

Collaboratory staff will review eligible applications using the published review criteria. Please reference the Scoring Rubric and Award Selection Process.

29. Who selects the grant recipient?

Collaboratory's staff will evaluate and score eligible proposals and select the grant recipient using the published Scoring Rubric and Award Selection Process. Collaboratory will finalize the award and notify the selected applicant.

30. Does previous participation in Collaboratory programs improve my chances of receiving funding?

No. Participation in Collaboratory coalitions, programs, or initiatives does not guarantee funding.

31. How should applicants use the budget template provided?

Applicants should use the provided budget template to prepare and submit their project budget. In the **Notes** section, applicants should include a brief description of each expense.