



## Bay Area News Group Share the Spirit Grant Program Overview

### **PURPOSE:**

The Share the Spirit campaign's purpose is to 1) illuminate the needs of residents in our community; 2) generate interest and awareness of nonprofit service agencies and encourage civic philanthropy; 3) provide funding for programs that serve East Bay children, individuals, and families.

### **GRANT PROGRAM OVERVIEW:**

The Share the Spirit program has been helping people and organizations in our community for more than two decades. Beginning by Thanksgiving Day and continuing through early January each year, the Bay Area News Group publishes a series of Share the Spirit stories illustrating specific community needs and offering East Bay Times readers a direct opportunity to make donations.

The funding for Share the Spirit is raised by donations from readers in response to articles in the Bay Area News Group member media outlets. Readers' donations allow Share the Spirit to grant funds to support needs like therapeutic equipment for children with autism, computers to help homeless people look for jobs and housing, sleeping bags for the homeless, holiday gifts for children in foster care, and much more in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.

Organizations eligible for grant funding are 501(C)(3) nonprofits, schools, and other public entities located in or serving the communities in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.

To be considered, grantees will:

- Grantees will use Share the Spirit funds to enhance the winter season or enrich the on-going necessities of life for their program participants during October, November, December, and/or January 2020-21.
- Grantees must provide individual and organizational topics for use in developing stories for Bay Area News Group media outlets. If selected for a story, Grantees must cooperate with News Group personnel and reply in a prompt and collaborative manner. Most stories will be created during OCTOBER even though they may not be published immediately. Organizations that are not responsive to reporters will be ineligible for funding in the subsequent year.
- Share the Spirit grantees will be required to articulate a significant positive program impact for Alameda and Contra Costa Counties.
- Share the Spirit grantees will represent a wide diversity of programs, populations, and geographic areas with emphasis on youth, families, and seniors across both counties served. (Note: Services must be provided, and funding expended in one or both of these counties regardless of agency location.)
- Any nonprofit applicant must be a 501(c)(3) organization in good standing (EIN, IRS letter or equivalent for public entity). An active GuideStar/Charity Navigator profile is strongly recommended.
- Grantees must have capacity to manage the grant and the receipts/accounting required.
- For repeat applicants to be eligible, applicant must have met all previous year due dates for returned forms and met all grant requirements.



### **STORY TOPIC AND PUBLICATION:**

Applications must contain a specific topic for a feature story for publication in the East Bay Times for the Share the Spirit campaign. A story in the East Bay Times (and other Bay Area News Group media) about your organization is an additional and extremely valuable benefit of being selected as a Share the Spirit Grant recipient. This publicity can do much to raise awareness of your program and organization, and the needs of the community.

*Not all grant recipients will be selected for a story - due to space limitations - but all applicants must be willing and able to provide story topics.*

- Cooperation with Bay Area News Group reporters is essential. If selected for a story, the representative from your organization provided in your application will be contacted and **prompt, courteous** response is necessary. Time is required to coordinate for the interviewee, reporter, and photographer to meet the publication date, so delayed response can mean that the reporter will select a different organization to be profiled. This is especially important for 2021 as the pandemic is still impacting interactions.
- Most activity for stories – reporter contact, interviews of clients, photography, etc. -- will take place in **late September, October, and early November**, even if a story may not be published until December or January. Applicants should plan to have story subject person(s) available in October. ALL grantees must have an organization contact available throughout the month of October to coordinate with journalists. IF selected for a story about a date specific event, the story may still be created in October, with a photo taken later.
- Stories with personal interviews of a past or current program participant/beneficiary/client are helpful in bringing social issues to light and appealing to readers. Please secure consent from your interview subject prior to applying if possible. We understand that some may not be willing to share personal stories and have a photograph in the newspaper for privacy or other concerns.  
*However, strong consideration will be given to applications with willing interview subject(s).*
- Applicants should summarize their story topics in the space provided on application. Applicants should not use external links to expanded content except in the field provided for links.
- One application per organization is advised. The application has space for at least 2 story topics.
- Selecting quality story topic: A good story needs to be compelling, unique, emotional, and relatable. For samples of previous stories visit story archives: <http://www.sharethespiriteastbay.org/stories/>.
- The best topics are timely and relevant. For 2021, Share the Spirit will consider all submissions and is looking for stories that touch on current issues and events, including but not limited to: meaningful stories about residents of Alameda and Contra Costa Counties and how they are affected by or responding to systemic racism - improving inclusiveness, deconstructing traditional systems to improve equity, etc.; COVID19 - impact, recovery, changes to/new services offered, public safety, etc.; houselessness and the issues for those in our area who are unsheltered; community voices - adding to advocacy, education, collaboration on current issues, celebrating diversity and equity.



### **STORY TOPIC AND PUBLICATION (cont'd):**

- Selecting the interview subject: There are many factors to consider when choosing one of your program participants or graduates or volunteers for an interview. The reporter will coordinate with your organization to make sure that the person feels comfortable and that the story covers suitable subject matter.
  - Confidentiality will need to be considered. For the most part, it is preferred to have **an interviewee who is willing to share their story, and their image and identity.** This makes the topic more real and relatable. You can trust that the reporters will be compassionate and professional. We understand that some organizations may have strong considerations around confidentiality. In those cases, some accommodations may be possible to withhold names. Ultimately, it would help to select a person without those confidentiality considerations.
  - It is important to have a good photo opportunity. Typically, this will be scheduled at same time as the interview opportunity, but not always. A good photo includes many elements. It is helpful to have an **action-based photo versus a static composition.** In other words, a photo of a person completing a physical task or at play is more interesting than a posed, seated photo. A professional photojournalist will be taking the photo, but preparation can help the photo be more evocative.
  - Assess your interviewee's capacity to participate. They should have some time to allot to the interview and ability to articulate how your program or assistance has helped them personally. There should also be thought given to the safety and security of the location and people in attendance.

### **ADDITIONAL/EXTENDED MEDIA:**

- The overall reach of the individual stories and overarching campaign can spread lasting impressions of nonprofit work and community needs. Grantees can share all the East Bay Times stories with their networks, while tagging the East Bay Times to amplify the reach.
- Some sample posts, tweets, and emails are available in the media kit provided to grantees on the Share the Spirit website.
- Citation matters - please attribute work, articles, and names appropriately.
- Permission matters - confirm client consent to social media posts prior to use.
- Please view the Share the Spirit MEDIA KIT and other information at  
<https://www.sharethespiriteastbay.org/grant-info/>.

### **ADMINISTRATION:**

The program is administered by the Bay Area News Group. As the program administrator, the News Group manages the application/proposal process, distribution of grant funds, and reporting forms for recipient agencies. The Bay Area News Group maintains the website for the program, and provides donor pledge processing, reporting and receipt accounting for all donations, and has a Community Projects director to serve as a bridge between non profit agencies and the Bay Area News Group in developing effective story content.



## **FUNDING:**

- Project funding is raised by donations from readers in response to articles in the Bay Area News Group member media outlets. Funds raised each year are distributed during the next funding season.
- Approximately 30- 40 grants of approximately \$3,000-15,000 each will be made
- Grants will be awarded to nonprofit organizations in Alameda and Contra Costa counties and no other counties.
- Application or program questions can be submitted through the website  
<https://www.sharethespiriteastbay.org/questions/>. Additional FAQ's are posted on the site  
<https://www.sharethespiriteastbay.org/answers-to-questions/>

## **IMPORTANT DATES:**

See annual calendar posted on Share the Spirit website (<https://www.sharethespiriteastbay.org/grant-info-2/>). We recommend using the website for current information throughout the year.

**July 1, 2021 or sooner** – Grant Application Materials posted. **Applicants should review parameters and overview thoroughly before applying.**

**August 1, 2021, 8 a.m.** – Grant application portal access opens

**August 16, 2021, 12:00 p.m.** – Grant application portal closes (there is a cap of 80 applications accepted. Portal would close sooner if capacity reached before 8/16)

**October 1, 2021 or sooner** – Funds distributed/Grantees notified

**September - October 2021** – Grantees selected for story publication; those selected will be contacted by Bay Area News Group staff – ALL grantees must have an organization contact available throughout the month of October to coordinate with journalists.

**November 2021 – January 2022** – Share the Spirit features published in East Bay Times

**February 5, 2021 – by 12:00 p.m. (noon)**– Post-Grant Final Reports due



#### **PROGRAM HISTORY:**

The Share the Spirit Program has been assisting East Bay residents for more than 25 years. Started by the Dean and Margaret Lesher family and the Bay Area News Group, the program has deep roots in the community. The scope of the program was expanded by the News Group and Volunteer Center of the East Bay in recent years, and from 2016 to 2020 underwent more upgrades and expansion, including a dedicated website and digital application process, by the News Group and the former administrative partner, the Contra Costa Crisis Center. Beginning in 2021, the Bay Area News Group will manage the program in tandem with its South Bay sister program at The Mercury News, Wish Book, which has been supporting communities since 1983.

#### **INFO & LINKS:**

If after visiting the Nonprofit Information page, including FAQs from applicant section, on the Share the Spirit website and after reading the grant overview, grant parameters, and media guidelines ([www.sharethespiriteastbay.org](http://www.sharethespiriteastbay.org)), you have questions, you may submit those questions to the project coordinator via the website ( <https://www.sharethespiriteastbay.org/questions/> ) or email [sharethespirit@bayareanewsgroup.com](mailto:sharethespirit@bayareanewsgroup.com) . We will post answers to questions on the website for all applicants to view. This Q & A section is also a good place to learn more details.

Thank you for your interest!