

THRIVING COMMUNITIES

GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES



Effective: January 2026

The Thriving Communities Grant Program is designed to promote economic development, support vibrant community life, and provide equal access to basic necessities. All grant recipients must be located within Norfolk Southern territory. Grants are awarded for specific projects and programs only, not for general operating support.

To be eligible, an organization must meet the criteria below:

- Qualifies as a public 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code as listed in the IRS Master File
- Operate and be located within NS network (Note: Organizations closest to our track will receive priority during review. Organizations should generally be within 30 miles of our main line).
- Align with [Our Focus Areas](#): Sustainability, Workforce Development, or Thriving Communities.

Applications must include the following:

- A valid Federal W9 Form (rev. March 2024)
- A valid 501(c)(3) determination letter from the IRS
- A valid contact email address & phone number for questions regarding grant
- Short overview of the organization (major achievements, recent accomplishments, impact, and major donors)
- Board of Directors listing
- Budget for program or proposed project
- Full year operating budget

Applications will not be accepted from:

- Organizations not in the NS territory
- Organizations requesting general operating support (i.e., funding requests for salaries, overhead, rent or utility expenses)
- Organizations requesting funding for projects that involve Norfolk Southern property (including leased property)
- Organizations that do not have a 501(c)(3) public charity status
- Organizations that have a written policy or a history of discrimination against individuals because of their race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, or veteran status
- Individuals or organizations established to help individuals
- Religious affiliated organizations that do not support the community at large or discriminate based on religion type
- Fraternal organizations
- Political or lobbying organizations
- Fundraising events, telethons, races, or benefits
- Amateur, civic, or professional sports or athletic organizations, clubs, or activities
- Organizations whose programs have an international and/or national scope
- Civic leagues or Chambers of Commerce
- Referral or consulting agencies and organizations