

FY26 Funding Guidelines

Who We Are

The Black Hawk County Gaming Association is interested in awarding grants that will make the Cedar Valley a stronger, better place to live, work, & play. **Our focus is to...**

- **Transform places and spaces**—Build better cities, neighborhoods, and communities in Black Hawk County.
- **Transform critical community services**—Help organizations build stronger skills, processes, & resources.

We accomplish this by investing in projects that demonstrate impact, need, & feasibility with a regional benefit.

Application Guidelines

All Letters of Intent (LOI) and applications are only accepted through our online application system.

Applications are due at 4:00 PM on the date listed for each grant cycle. Upcoming deadlines can be found on our website here: <https://www.bhcga.org/how-to-apply>.

Qualifications for Applicants

Applicants must be a governmental entity or nonprofit with a valid 501(c)3 or 501(c)19 status under the US IRS Code. The applicant's nonprofit status will be verified through GuideStar or a Determination Letter from the IRS. Applicants are not allowed to share or borrow nonprofit status from another organization. No distribution will be granted to any organization that has an employee, officer, or director who is a member of the Iowa Racing and Gaming Commission.

State Requirements

Since the Black Hawk County Gaming Association is a qualified sponsored organization, or QSO, we are subject to rules and regulations set forth by the Iowa Racing and Gaming Commission. Please understand this means sometimes we require additional documentation or information.

Funding Criteria

Applicants must be in Black Hawk, Bremer, Butler, or Grundy counties. However, our primary focus area is Black Hawk County as it is home to the Isle Casino. A maximum of 10% of funds can be allocated to the three remaining counties, which is approximately \$300,000 total each year.

Requests that will NOT be Considered:

- Endowment funds
- Political causes, candidate, or lobbying efforts
- Individuals, including scholarships, fellowships, or personal benefits
- Religious workshop, education, or proselytizing
- Debt incurred or purchases made prior to the award date
- Capital requests for more than 50% of the total project budget

Recommended Criteria to Strengthen Proposal:

- A strong preference will be given to organizations that connect their work to needs addressed in community, city, or county plans that were developed using data and public input.
- Applicants in our service area outside of Black Hawk County must apply to their local community foundation in the same calendar year for the same project prior to submitting a LOI to leverage County Endowment Funds.
- Government entities or nonprofits partnering with government entities should have a resolution or letter of support demonstrating commitment to the project from a member of the leadership team. Preference is given to applications that include financial support from the government entity.
- Applicants should adopt a collaborative funding approach. Additional sources of revenue should be well-established and secured prior to submitting a LOI. BHCAG often operates as “last dollar in.”
- Multi-year requests or consecutive year funding will be considered on rare occasions with approval from the executive director prior to submission. Most grants should be completed within one year.
- Preference will be given to grants that involved multiple active community partners.
- Before submitting a request for more than \$100,000, you must meet with BHCAG staff in person or virtually, preferably before the grant cycle opens for which you intend to apply.
- New applicants are strongly encouraged to meet with staff (in person or virtually) before the grant cycle opens to discuss eligibility requirements and unique regulations that are exclusive to QSOs.

Contact information

For questions about the application or grant process, please contact BHCAG staff.

Office phone: 319.433.1153

General email inquiries: info.bhcga@gmail.com

[Emily Hanson](#), Executive Director

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