

FY26 Spring Grant Cycle

Black Hawk County Gaming Association

General Questions

Project Name*

This should reflect the specific request. It is what we will use in all our marketing materials along with your organization's name, so make sure it accurately portrays the project's main focus.

Character Limit: 50

Have you applied to BHCGA for this project in a past grant cycle?*

Choices

Yes

No

If you answered YES, what changes have been made to the project from the original application?

Note: Applications will NOT be considered more than twice.

Character Limit: 1500

Amount Requested*

Keep in mind that:

- Our Board prefers a shared funding approach and will not consider funding more than 50% of any capital project or 30% of any vehicle request.
- Capacity Building grants typically range from \$5,000 - \$50,000 (*average is \$19,919*).
- Out-of-County requests typically range from \$5,000 - \$50,000 (*historic average is \$24,185*).

Please ensure that the dollar amount requested aligns with our grant guidelines and is appropriately sized based on the project scope, impact, and the number of involved partners.

If you have any questions about how to "right-size" your request, feel free to contact our staff before submitting the LOI.

Character Limit: 20

Total Project Budget*

This should be specific to this project only. We are NOT asking for your organizational budget. Please only include costs pertaining to this initiative.

If you're applying for a phase of a construction project, include *only* the relevant financial details for that phase.

Character Limit: 20

Detailed Budget

Upload a detailed budget listing both the income and expenses expected for the project. We ask that you show if funding is identified, pending, or secured on the income side. On the expense side, please indicate how the BHCGA funds would be utilized. Remember, strong budgets are specific and include clear, complete information.

Feel free to use this template as a guide. It can be found on our website under Resources.

Tip: PDF files are best to ensure consistent formatting.

Bonus Tip: Your totals here should match the total project budget above.

File Size Limit: 2 MB

Project Start Date*

Please set realistic start and end dates for your project.

Note: Our Board is rarely "first dollar in", and the project cannot begin until the Board makes award decisions. This restriction includes purchasing any project-related items.

View our grant calendar and expected award dates here.

Character Limit: 10

Project End Date*

Most grants have a one-year deadline. Multi-year requests will only be considered in rare cases and require approval from the Executive Director.

If this date is not within one year of the expected award date, please reach out to staff before submitting the LOI to ensure you're applying in the correct grant cycle.

Character Limit: 10

Project Summary*

In 1-2 sentences, summarize the project and the primary use of the requested funds. Don't worry, there will be room to include details in the full description below.

Character Limit: 500

Staff Communication*

Our staff members are available to explain some of the unique rules and regulations we have as a Qualified Sponsored Organization (QSO). They're happy to discuss your project and help

determine if it's a good fit.

Have you met with staff to discuss this project?

Please note: We require applicants with requests over \$100,000 (\$50,000 for outside of Black Hawk County applicants) to set up a meeting with staff prior to submitting an LOI.

Choices

Yes

No

Organization Type*

BHCGA only funds government entities or nonprofit organizations with their own tax-exempt EIN. Unfortunately, we cannot provide funding to organizations using a fiscal sponsor.

Tip: This is a great time to ensure your organization's EIN is listed correctly under "Organization Info" above. We legally cannot move your project to the next phase without the tax ID being accurately listed and verified through GuideStar.

Choices

Nonprofit 501c3 or 501c19

Governmental unit (municipality, department, or school district)

Will the project take place in Black Hawk County?*

Choices

Yes

No

Outside of BHC Applicants

What county is the organization located in or where the project will take place?*

Please note that our primary focus area is Black Hawk County as per our contract with the Isle Casino Hotel Waterloo. However, we can allocate a maximum of 10% of funds to our surrounding counties, which is approximately \$300,000 total each year.

Choices

Bremer

Butler

Grundy

Other

If you answered OTHER, please list the county.

Note: Our Board will sometimes make exceptions for projects serving contiguous counties that also include streets in Black Hawk County within their city limits.

Character Limit: 40

City of Service*

Please list the city where this project will take place. If this is a joint effort between multiple cities, townships, or across an entire county, list the city of the main applicant.

Character Limit: 50

County Endowment Fund Leverage*

As per our contract with the Isle Casino Hotel Waterloo, BHCGA is restricted in how much is allocated outside of Black Hawk County (see above). Therefore, we require all applicants in Bremer, Butler, and Grundy counties to apply through their local community foundation for the **same project in the same calendar year** to leverage the additional money provided by the casino to non-gaming counties through the County Endowment program.

Learn more about the County Endowment Fund [here](#).

[Click here](#) to see the Affiliate Grant Cycles through the Community Foundation of Northeast Iowa.

Have you applied for funds with your local community foundation?

Choices

Yes

No

I plan to apply before the BHCGA award date this grant cycle.

Proof of Application to Local Community Foundation

Upload a copy of your application to the community foundation or a copy of the letter received acknowledging either an award or denial of the request. **This is required before the award date.**

Tip: *PDF files are best to ensure consistent formatting.*

File Size Limit: 2 MB

Project Description*

Share more details about the project. We want to know your clear plan of action and what you seek to accomplish.

Tip: *If you're invited to the full application, we'll ask more questions about the need, impact, and feasibility of the project. This is your chance to describe the project overall; help us have a clear understanding of what you intend to do.*

Character Limit: 2500

Are you ready to continue to Acknowledging Requirements?*

Choices

Yes

No

Black Hawk County

Grant Request Type*

BHCGA offers two grant categories for applicants in Black Hawk County: **Capital and Capacity Building.**

Below are the descriptions of each category, as defined by BHCGA:

Capital Requests

Goal: To support projects that build better cities, neighborhoods, and spaces in Black Hawk County, Iowa.

What do we mean by capital?

Capital requests involve investments to build, expand, or improve the physical assets of an organization or community.

- Project sizes and scopes vary based on community impact and the number of partners involved.
- Typical awards for equipment or facility improvements range from **\$40,000 – \$50,000**.
- Large-scale construction projects often receive **\$250,000 – \$500,000**.
- Requests **over \$500,000** must clearly demonstrate alignment with a community, city, or county plan developed using public input and data. These are awarded rarely—**only one to two per year**.
- Our board prioritizes **improvements to physical spaces**. Vehicle requests are rarely approved and should be discussed with BHCGA staff before applying.
- Preference is given to spaces that are **inclusive and publicly accessible**.

Capacity-Building Requests

Goal: To help organizations in Black Hawk County strengthen their internal operations and better serve the Cedar Valley.

What do we mean by capacity-building?

*Capacity-building grants help organizations grow in effectiveness, addressing key needs and reaching the next level of **operational, programmatic, financial, or organizational maturity**.*

- Most awards range from **\$5,000 – \$50,000**.
- These grants are intended to support **one-time investments** that help organizations “level up.” They are **not** designed to fund ongoing operations or programs.
- If your request includes support for staff time or benefits, please **consult with BHCGA staff** to ensure alignment before submitting your LOI.
- To explore ideas and best practices, we recommend reading:
 - National Council of Nonprofits – What is Capacity Building?

- o Grantmakers for Effective Organizations – Capacity Building

Is this project for a Capital or Capacity-Building Request?

Choices

Capacity Building
Capital Project

BHC Capacity-Building Project

City of Service*

List the city where the project will take place. If this is a joint effort between multiple cities, townships, or across the entire county, list the city of the main applicant.

Character Limit: 50

Project Description*

Share more details about the project. What area of capacity are you seeking to develop? What activities will you undertake to complete the project? We want to know your clear plan of action.

Tip: *If you're invited to the full application, we'll ask more questions about need and impact. This is your chance to describe the project overall.*

Character Limit: 2500

Are you ready to continue to Acknowledging Requirements?*

Choices

Yes
No

BHC Capital Project

City of Service*

List the city where the project will take place. If this is a joint effort between multiple cities, townships, or across the entire county, list the city of the main applicant.

Character Limit: 50

Project Description*

Share more details about the project. We want to know your clear plan of action to build upon, add to, or improve the physical assets of your organization or community. How will this enhance important places and spaces in Black Hawk County?

Tip: *If you're invited to the full application, we'll ask more questions about need and impact. This is your chance to describe the project overall.*

Character Limit: 2500

Are you ready to continue to Acknowledging Requirements?*

Choices

Yes

No

Acknowledgements for all Applicants

Funding Criteria*

Please **initial** to indicate you've read, understand, and meet all of the BHCGA funding criteria.

If you're unsure, contact staff **prior** to submission.

Character Limit: 10

IRGC Requirements*

As a QSO, we operate under rules and regulations set forth by the Iowa Racing and Gaming Commission (IRGC), which is different from other funders. Please understand this means we sometimes require additional documentation or information, especially when it comes to financial reporting.

Please **initial** to indicate your willingness to provide staff with information as requested.

Tip: *If your organization does not have financials regularly reviewed/approved by a Board, you may not be a good fit for our funding. If you're unsure, please contact staff prior to submission.*

Character Limit: 10

Public Materials*

We ask that everything submitted is accurate to the best of your ability and that you understand that it might be shared externally, even before the award date.

Please **initial** to indicate you've read and understand everything submitted is accurate and could be shared publicly.

Character Limit: 10