

# The California Wellness Foundation

INFORMATION FOR GRANTSEEKERS





## THE MISSION OF THE CALIFORNIA WELLNESS FOUNDATION

The mission of The California Wellness Foundation is to improve the health of the people of California by making grants for health promotion, wellness education and disease prevention.

Guided by our mission, we pursue the following goals through our grantmaking:

- *to address the particular health needs of traditionally underserved populations, including low-income individuals, people of color, youth and residents of rural areas;*
- *to support and strengthen nonprofit organizations that seek to improve the health of underserved populations;*
- *to recognize and encourage leaders who are working to increase health and wellness within their communities; and*
- *to inform policymakers and opinion leaders about important wellness and health care issues.*



## WHAT WE MEAN WHEN WE TALK ABOUT “HEALTH” AND “WELLNESS”

The California Wellness Foundation was founded upon a vision to promote the health of the people of California by making grants for prevention. We believe that, rather than focusing on medical treatment, it makes more sense to *prevent* health problems that result from violence, teen pregnancy, poverty and other issues.

We begin by defining health as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. As the World Health Organization has noted, a healthy community includes characteristics such as a clean, safe physical environment and a sustainable ecosystem; the provision for basic needs; an optimum level of appropriate, high-quality accessible public health and sick-care services; quality educational opportunities; and a diverse, vital and innovative economy.

Wellness is a state of optimum health and well-being achieved through the active pursuit of good health and the removal of barriers, both personal and societal, to healthy living. It is the ability of people and communities to reach their fullest potential in the broadest sense.

### ADVANCING HEALTH AND WELLNESS IN CALIFORNIA

If good health is to be enjoyed by all Californians, changes are needed both on the individual level and on the societal level to address broad social, economic and environmental determinants of health.

We assume that individuals have a personal responsibility for their health. There is widespread agreement, for example, about the dangers of smoking and substance abuse, the importance of physical and emotional fitness, and the effectiveness of good nutrition. The Foundation encourages people to adopt behaviors that will improve their health.

But the pursuit of wellness is more than just an individual endeavor. For underserved communities, it can mobilize residents to reduce violence and teen pregnancy, confront environmental health hazards and open up new opportunities for youth. We believe the most successful approaches to change are those that develop the capacity of local leadership and institutions. Therefore, we provide grants for efforts that build on existing community strengths, emphasize the potential of each community and foster self-determination.

## A MULTIFACETED APPROACH

No one private foundation, no matter how large, can begin to address all of the factors that affect health across a state as complex as California. We must make choices about the most effective use of grant dollars and human resources.

Because we believe there is no single definition of “strategic philanthropy,” we are committed to funding work at several levels. At least half of our grantmaking each year is for *direct preventive health services*. Front-line health service providers face many challenges in a changing marketplace, which is why we encourage requests for core operating support.

We also fund *community action* in support of activities that are not necessarily linked to institutions, including self-help groups, local organizing groups and other forms of neighborhood-based health promotion. Integral to that work is support for *leadership* on local health issues, which can take many forms across California’s diverse communities.

Finally, we provide grants for *public policy* and *public education* with the understanding that systems and public funding priorities must also change if we are serious about encouraging societal investment in prevention.

In addition to grantmaking, we believe it is also possible to serve communities in other ways, whether through a referral or by simply serving as a good listener. In this way, we aim to be instrumental in the best sense of the word.



“A VISION TO PROMOTE THE  
HEALTH OF THE PEOPLE OF  
CALIFORNIA BY MAKING  
GRANTS FOR PREVENTION.”

“WE ENCOURAGE  
REQUESTS FOR CORE  
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BUT REQUESTS FOR  
PROJECT FUNDING ARE  
ALSO WELCOME.”



## THE CALIFORNIA WELLNESS FOUNDATION'S GRANTMAKING PROGRAM

The Foundation prioritizes eight health issues for funding and responds to timely issues or special projects outside the funding priorities. We encourage requests for core operating support, but requests for project funding are also welcome. Core operating support can be used to help underwrite the regular, ongoing health care, health promotion and disease prevention activities of your organization. Such funds can be used for ongoing organizational costs such as salaries for key administrative staff or operating expenses. Core support funds can also be used for strengthening organizational capacity through activities such as engaging in strategic planning, facilitating board development or developing information systems.

Each prioritized health issue is described below. For a list of recent grants and future updates, please visit our website at [www.tcdf.org](http://www.tcdf.org) or call the Foundation to request a copy of our newsletter, *Portfolio*.

### DIVERSITY IN THE HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Grants that address the issue of diversity in the health professions are commonly given to organizations that provide pipeline programs, scholarships, outreach and retention programs, internships and fellowships and loan repayment programs for ethnic minorities that are underrepresented in the health professions. Careers in medicine, nursing, public health and other allied health professions are included. Organizations that support leadership development for people of color in the health professions are also eligible for funding. In addition, the Foundation funds organizations that provide information about the California health care workforce to policymakers and opinion leaders. **Beginning June 1, 2008 through September 30, 2008, no letters of interest addressing this issue will be accepted.**

### ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

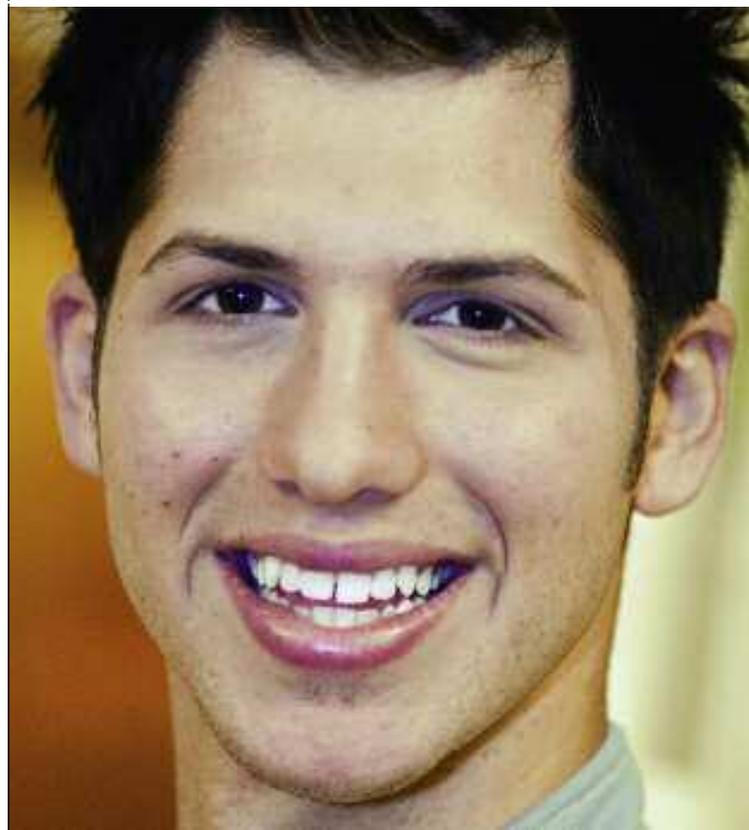
Grants that address the issue of environmental health are commonly given to organizations that provide environmental health education and awareness activities; community organizing to promote environmental health; screening and testing for exposure to environmental toxins; leadership development; and collaborations such as partnerships between public health departments and community-based health programs to improve environmental health. The Foundation also funds efforts to inform policymakers and opinion leaders about improving environmental health issues.

### HEALTHY AGING

Grants that address the issue of healthy aging are commonly given to organizations that provide clinical preventive services, falls prevention programs, food and nutrition programs and in-home support. Also funded are organizations that support relationships between youth and older adults through activities such as intergenerational volunteering and mentoring. In addition, the Foundation funds agencies that inform policymakers and opinion leaders about healthy aging, as well as organizations that provide leadership development programs for seniors.

### MENTAL HEALTH

Grants that address the issue of mental health are commonly given to organizations that provide services for transition-age youth (ages 16-23) — with a focus on those in, or exiting from, foster care and on runaway/homeless youth. In addition, the Foundation funds organizations that provide leadership development programs for mental health professionals, as well as organizations that inform policymakers and opinion leaders about the health/mental health issues of transition-age youth.



### TEENAGE PREGNANCY PREVENTION

Grants that address the issue of teenage pregnancy prevention are commonly given to organizations that provide outreach activities for reproductive health care, access to contraceptive services, and comprehensive programs for pregnant teens. An emphasis is placed on funding peer-provider clinics and other reproductive health organizations that work with high-risk, sexually active, underserved teen populations. The Foundation also funds organizations that provide leadership development activities for reproductive health care workers and organizations that inform policymakers and opinion leaders about the issue of teen pregnancy.

### VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Grants that address the issue of violence prevention are commonly given to organizations that provide services for youth (ages 12–24) including mentoring programs, gang intervention programs, reentry programs, community-based violence prevention programs and after-school programs. An emphasis is placed on funding organizations that work with at-risk youth, including gang-affiliated and previously incarcerated youth. Grants are also made to organizations that provide leadership development activities to those working in the field of violence prevention, as well as organizations that inform policymakers and opinion leaders about the public health aspects of violence against youth.

### WOMEN'S HEALTH

Grants that address the issue of women's health are commonly given to organizations that provide reproductive health care, prenatal care, community-based comprehensive health care services, HIV/AIDS programs for women of color, case management, and supportive housing for homeless women. Priority is given to organizations that create welcoming environments for women in underserved communities. The Foundation also funds organizations that provide leadership development activities for women and those that inform policymakers and opinion leaders about the issue of women's health. **Beginning June 1, 2008 through September 30, 2008, no letters of interest addressing this issue will be accepted.**



“CORE OPERATING  
SUPPORT CAN BE USED  
TO HELP UNDERWRITE  
THE ACTIVITIES OF YOUR  
ORGANIZATION.”



### WORK AND HEALTH

Grants that address the issue of work and health are commonly given to nonprofit organizations that provide health care services to farm workers, in-home health workers, garment workers, day laborers and other low-income workers. Worker centers that provide culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate services, such as health education and access to health care for low-wage workers, are also prioritized for funding. In addition, the Foundation funds organizations that provide leadership development programs for low-wage workers, as well as organizations that inform policymakers and opinion leaders about the issue of work and health.

### SPECIAL PROJECTS

Each year, the Foundation sets aside a pool of dollars to respond in a timely fashion to opportunities that fit our mission but are outside the eight health issues prioritized for funding. The Foundation places an emphasis on grants to support and strengthen safety net providers of health care, help low-income consumers understand and navigate the health care system, and to inform policymakers and opinion leaders about health care issues affecting the underserved. The Foundation also provides funding to address the health care needs of the California/Mexico border population, the urban homeless, and culturally appropriate programs for underserved ethnic populations.

“TO PRESENT A  
GRANT REQUEST, AN  
ORGANIZATION SHOULD  
FIRST WRITE A ONE- TO  
TWO-PAGE LETTER  
OF INTEREST.”



## HOW TO APPLY FOR A GRANT

### APPLICATION PROCESS

To present The California Wellness Foundation with a grant request, an organization should first write a one- to two-page letter of interest.

**Please note that submissions beyond two pages will not be accepted.** The letter should describe the organization’s mission, activities and operating budget; the region and population(s) served; the total funds requested from the Foundation; and how the funds will be used. If you are requesting project funding, please include the project’s goals, leadership and duration. Your letter will be processed most accurately if you clearly indicate the TCWF funding priority for which you want your request considered (for example, healthy aging, mental health). No application form is needed, and formal proposals are not accepted at this preliminary stage.

Foundation staff will review letters of interest on an ongoing basis and notify prospective applicants of the results normally within three months. Those encouraged to submit a proposal will receive further guidance at that time.

### ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

With rare exception, the Foundation funds nonprofit organizations that are exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and that are not private foundations as defined in IRC Section 509(a) or are public charities as defined in IRC Section 170(b)(A)(vi). The Foundation also funds government agencies. *The Foundation does not fund Section 509(a)(3) Type III non-functionally integrated supporting organizations.*

Grants are not generally awarded for annual fund drives, building campaigns, major equipment or biomedical research. Activities that exclusively benefit the members of sectarian or religious organizations are not considered. The Foundation does not provide international funding or fund organizations located outside the United States.

Letters of interest should be directed to:  
Director of Grants Management  
The California Wellness Foundation  
6320 Canoga Avenue, Suite 1700  
Woodland Hills, CA 91367

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The California Wellness Foundation is an independent, private foundation created in 1992. To learn more about the Foundation, visit our website at [www.tcdf.org](http://www.tcdf.org) or call to request a copy of our newsletter, *Portfolio*.

## HEADQUARTERS

6320 Canoga Avenue, Suite 1700

Woodland Hills, CA 91367

(818) 702-1900 phone

(818) 702-1999 fax

## BRANCH OFFICE

575 Market Street, Suite 1850

San Francisco, CA 94195

(415) 908-3000 phone

(415) 908-3001 fax

## WEBSITE

[www.tcdf.org](http://www.tcdf.org)

The   
**California Wellness  
Foundation**

*Grantmaking for a Healthier California*

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Woodland Hills, CA 91367  
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