



CHARTER RESPONSIVE GRANT OPPORTUNITY
CULLEN FOUNDATION

Cullen Foundation Overview

- The Cullen Foundation is an independent, private foundation dedicated to significantly enhancing education for students in grades PreK-12 and advancing theatre and performing arts for Erie County, New York.
- The Foundation was created by the late John S. “Jack” Cullen. His estate provided the funding for the foundation.
- This is the third time we have opened the Responsive Grant Cycle to Charter Schools.
- Cullen’s responsive grant cycle is open to Education and Performing Arts organizations **that meet our minimum eligibility requirements** as described on our website: www.thecullenfoundation.org

Grant Priorities

- The goal is to help charter schools address specific areas of need that will help make meaningful academic progress under the following areas
 - Academic Proficiency
 - High School Graduation
 - College Readiness
 - Academic Growth
- Areas we support are
 - ❖ ELL/ESL services
 - ❖ Out of school time programming (including summer bridge programs)
 - ❖ Student enrichment
 - ❖ Other
- Grantees are expected to set ambitious goals and objectives for this grant that should be targeted, measurable, and ambitious.
- If awarded, grantees will make themselves available for walk-throughs and site visits during the life of the grant

Highlights on Process

- We screen and make declinations through the LOI.
- Grants are awarded for one year, for amounts of \$10,000-\$70,000.
- Receiving the maximum \$70,000 request amount will occur when we feel the school has a clear understanding of its challenges, an efficacy-based justification for how it intends to address those challenges, and systems in place to make the program work.
- Each school completing a full application receives a site visit from Cullen staff and oftentimes Trustees. Use this opportunity to demonstrate the details of your proposal. We recommend that leadership teams, including relevant board members, attend and participate. Please plan accordingly for the meeting and be prepared for multiple questions.

Grant Application Basics

- ✓ Our deadlines are clear. You will not receive special reminders or extensions for the LOI and Application deadlines.
- ✓ Proofread your grant before you submit it. Poorly written submissions make for difficult reading, reflect negatively on your organization, and may affect the outcome of your request.
- ✓ We read all grant applications – expect a lot of questions.
- ✓ We may ask you for additional information leading up to or after your site visit. Please follow-up promptly.

Deadline Tips

- ✓ All submissions must be deemed complete by Cullen staff prior to the 5 pm deadlines of January 25th (LOI) and February 22nd (Application).
- ✓ We strongly advise submitting at least 2-3 days in advance so that staff can review and verify completion accurately and sufficiently.
- ✓ Office hours are available in early January to discuss your project concept, please consider signing up for them.
- ✓ If information is missing (i.e. if the submission is incomplete), it will be sent back to the applicant to be completed in its entirety prior to the 5 pm deadline. If the necessary changes are not made and the application is not resubmitted to our site by 5 pm, the application will not be accepted.

Highlights of the LOI

The LOI is the introduction to your project and determines eligibility. Key questions include:

- ✓ **Need**
- ✓ **Purpose**
- ✓ **Evidence based**

We may also ask you to complete a comprehensive academic and non academic data sheet. If there are other areas of performance you'd like to include you have space to describe them in the application.

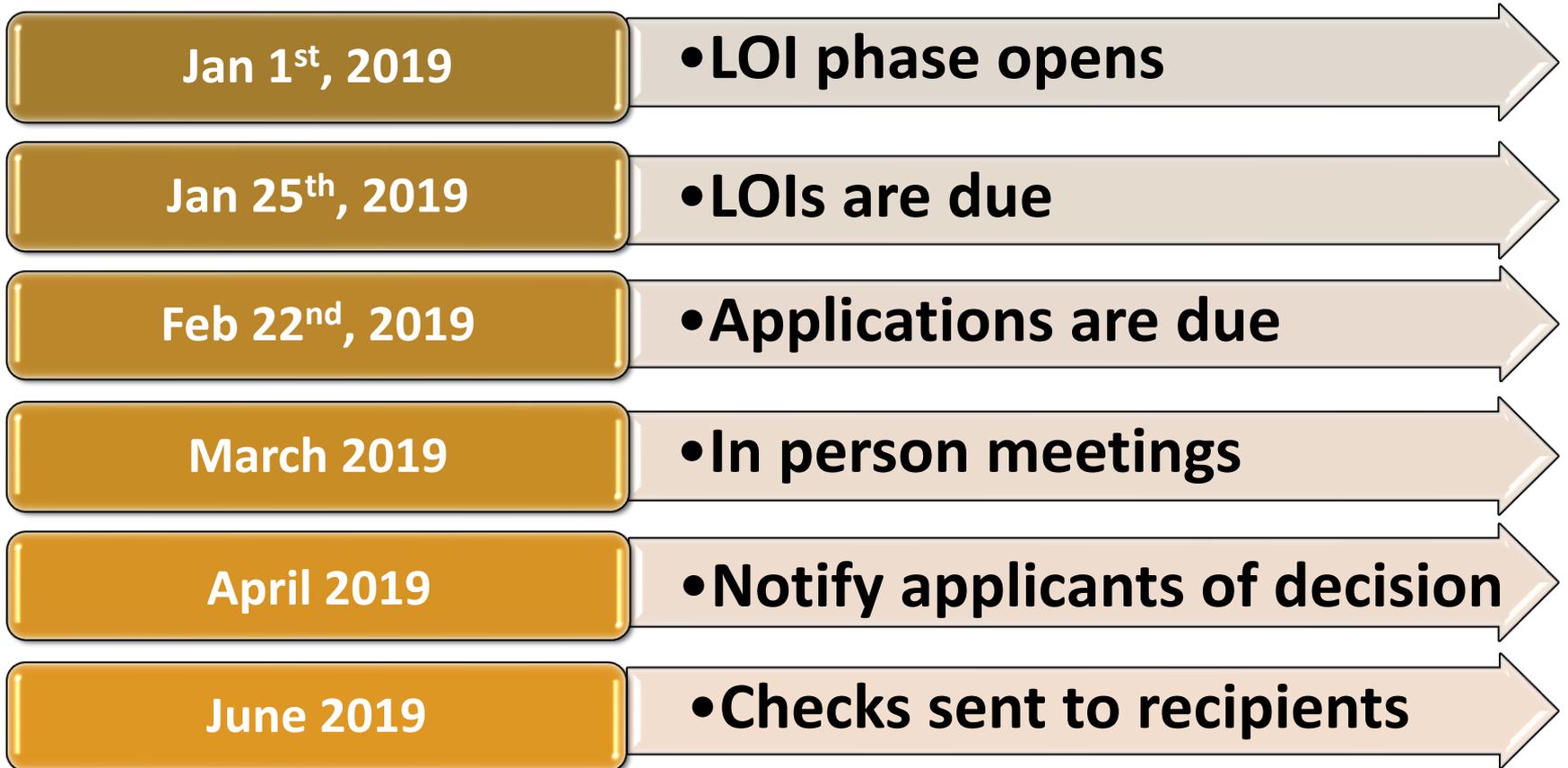
A successful LOI will qualify your organization for the application phase which is open on a rolling basis.

Application Considerations

- Special consideration is given to evidence-based programs with a focus on academic outcomes:
 - ✓ Clearly state the outcomes and set realistic outcomes- we appreciate true progress even if that is incremental.
 - ✓ Clearly define how you will work towards achieving your outcomes, how and when you evaluate being on-track to meeting the outcomes, and what the iteration process looks like if you're off-track.
 - ✓ Piloting programs are eligible when the program is research based and verified (the What Works Clearing House is a good repository for evidence based programming) and when the grantees demonstrate that healthy organization structures and systems are in place for the program to succeed.
- We are interested in schools that are open, reflective, learn from challenges and take every opportunity to improve.

Cullen strongly recommends you use the office hours and review the “grant writing tips” on our website to understand what we expect from strong grant applications.

Key Dates – Winter 2019 Cycle



Application Portal - Foundant

- We utilize *Foundant*
- All LOIs, applications, contracts and reports are submitted online

1. From the “Apply” page on our website, click the link under “Apply Online”
2. If you do not already have an account with us, you will create one by clicking “Create a New Account” on the login page; you’ll enter a user name (email) and create a password
3. Login to Foundant; you’ll be on the “Applicant Dashboard” -- hit “Apply” on the top of the page – select Winter 2019 Grant - Charter Responsive Grant to begin your LOI.
4. Enter the access code “Charter”.

Start an LOI; Move on to Your Application; Manage your Request

Your Foundant “Dashboard” is where you will manage your Request and all follow-up items with Cullen Foundation (contract, reports, etc.)

- ✓ Work on the LOI and save your work as you go. You may want to write your application in Word and copy and paste it into Foundant.
- ✓ Be aware of word count limits.
- ✓ You can start your Application once your LOI is submitted and approved by Cullen staff.
- ✓ Remember to proofread- avoid typos, jargon, and repetition- i.e. put together a well written request.

Tips for Applicants

- ✓ Submit the proper financial information
- ✓ Be sure the Project Budget is comprehensive; and consider using the Budget Narrative
- ✓ Avoid jargon and explain your project clearly -- succinct responses are encouraged
- ✓ Review the grant writing tips on our website
- ✓ Proofread multiple times before submitting
- ✓ Contact us with any issues you experience or questions you have—the earlier the better
- ✓ Do not wait until the last day to submit!
- ✓ Be prepared for a lot of questions from us at your site visit.

Contact Us

If you have questions during the process, please feel free to contact us

Cullen Foundation

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