

# Neighbor of Choice Grants Program New Jersey

## Grant Application Guidelines for Non-Profit Organizations

### Overview

The New Jersey Neighbor of Choice Grants Program provides support for philanthropic initiatives that are consistent with Merck's strategic priorities and interests (see Section II) and that address critical community and quality of life issues. Grant applications are reviewed by a Selection Committee – an internal advisory committee to The Merck Company Foundation. The Committee meets semi-annually in the spring and fall to review proposals and make recommendations for grant awards to non-profit organizations in New Jersey.

Grant applications are evaluated on the basis of relevance to the mission and strategic interests of Merck and New Jersey's local communities. Consideration is also given to the overall quality and completeness of the proposal, as outlined in Section III.

**Deadlines: Proposals will be accepted between March 1 and March 31, and September 1 and September 30.**

The level of funding provided varies depending on the resources available and the volume of proposals received. Multi-year grant requests are not eligible for support, and therefore will not be reviewed. However, after a successful first year of program operations, organizations may apply for a 2<sup>nd</sup>, and up to a 3<sup>rd</sup> year of funding on an annual basis.

The Merck Company Foundation will consider funding requests up to \$50,000.

**Application information is provided in the following sections:**

- I. Eligibility Criteria
- II. Areas of Strategic Interest
- III. Proposal Format and Content
- IV. Submission and Review Process
- V. Reporting Requirements
- VI. Transparency

## I. Eligibility Criteria

Eligible applicants are not-for-profit organizations in New Jersey with interests and experience in health, human and social services, environment, and arts and culture.

The following organizations and projects are **not** eligible for support:

- Projects that directly influence or advance Merck's business (commercial) or marketing interests
- Individuals (including travel support for individuals to meetings) and for-profit organizations
- Political organizations, campaigns, and activities
- Fraternal/labor/veteran's organizations and activities
- Religious organizations or groups whose activities are primarily sectarian in purpose
- Organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, religion, age, national origin, veteran's status, or disability
- Capital campaigns and endowments
- Basic or clinical research projects, including clinical trials or other pharmaceutical studies
- Fund-raising events, such as benefit dinners/galas or sporting events
- Meetings/symposia/or conferences that do not have or are not associated with long-term program objectives
- Payment of staff salaries not aligned with a specific project or program
- Individual fellowship/tuition support for training purposes not part of a larger fellowship program

## II. Areas of Strategic Interest

The New Jersey Neighbor of Choice Grants Program will consider grant applications that identify and implement community projects/activities that address critical community issues.

## III. Proposal Format and Content

The proposal should not exceed **five** pages (not including attachments) and should clearly and succinctly provide the information described below.

Each proposal **MUST** include the following:

- 501 (c) (3) documentation
- List of Board of Directors/Board of Trustees
- Most recent audited financial statement
- Annual budget

### Applicant Information

- Each proposal must include the following information on the first page of the proposal:
  - Name of non-profit organization
  - Project Title and Amount of Request - **(please make sure to include "NJ Neighbor of Choice" in the project title)**
  - Name and title of project leader and principal participants
  - Name, address, telephone/fax numbers and e-mail address of contact person who will be responsible for grant stewardship and holds authority to sign on behalf of the organization.
- **Name of payee organization as it should appear on the grant check (the organization must be a U.S.-based 501 (c) (3) legal entity)**
- Brief list of major sources of financial support for the non-profit organization

### Project Description

- Purpose of the project, including project objective(s) and the population to be served
- Background and significance of the problem/issue that the proposed project will address
- Project plan: description of the project plan which includes how the proposed activities will address the specific issue/problem identified and meet the specified objectives
- Project implementation time table

### Project Budget and Justification

- **Detailed** project budget and justification that describes the cost components and associated activities.
- Other external sources of funding, if any; financial and/or other forms of support (e.g., "in-kind" support), if any, that the recipient organization is prepared to provide, or commit to the project for which funding is requested.
- *Please Note:* If a change in budget of 10% or more is required, then written approval must be obtain from Ingrid A. Novak, Assistant Vice President, The Merck Company Foundation (see contact information below.)

## Evaluation Plan and Dissemination of Results

- Specific, measurable outcomes to be achieved (impact)
- Description of the plan and methodology to monitor and evaluate the impact or outcomes of the project
- Description of how the program will be publicized (if applicable)
- Please indicate whether or not the organization plans to sustain the program and how, including an explanation of the additional resources needed to continue the program over time (e.g., financial, staffing, partners), how applicant expects to secure these resources to support this project in the future, and timetable for securing resources.

## IV. **Proposal Submission and Review Process**

The NOC Review Committee reviews proposals at its meetings in the spring and fall annually. The Committee will evaluate proposals based on the completeness of the information provided, as outlined in Section III, and individual merit of each proposal. We cannot provide technical critique of (or specific feedback on) proposals. We also cannot return submitted proposals.

Upon completion of Merck's review process, the applicants will be notified regarding the outcome of this review. The entire review and decision-making process **may take up to 8 weeks**. Applicants selected to receive a grant will be required to execute a Grant Award Agreement with The Merck Company Foundation.

During a given year, only one application will be considered from any individual organization. All proposals must follow the format and provide the information outlined in Section III of the guidelines. Proposals should be submitted online at [www.mercksupport.com](http://www.mercksupport.com)

Questions regarding the application process may be directed to: Ingrid Novak via email at [ingrid\\_novak@merck.com](mailto:ingrid_novak@merck.com)

## V. Reporting Requirements

Upon accepting a grant award, the recipient organization will be required to agree to use the funds in the manner and for the purpose(s) for which the grant is intended. The recipient/grantee also will be asked to agree to provide a final report within 12 months following receipt of the grant award.

Final reports should be **no more than 2-3 pages** in length and should include the following information:

- Description of project accomplishments, lessons learned and outcomes, including whether project/program objective(s) were achieved and, if not, why. Please report positive and negative outcomes.
- Account of how the grant funds were spent (line item budget).

## VI. Site Visits

Site visits may be undertaken if required/as necessary, and organizations would be notified in advance of any such visit.

## VII Transparency

Merck & Co., Inc.<sup>1</sup> has made a commitment to disclose publicly its grants or contributions, including those made by The Merck Company Foundation, to third party organizations. In accordance with this commitment, The Merck Company Foundation will report information about recipients of Neighbor of Choice Grants such as the name of the grantee, a brief description of the program/project, and the amount of the grant award. The Merck Company Foundation plans to update this information periodically and post this information on [www.merck.com](http://www.merck.com).

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<sup>1</sup> Merck & Co., Inc. operates as Merck Sharp & Dohme (MSD) in most countries.