

## The Eco-Living Fund Application Guidelines

**(Optional) Letter of Inquiries are accepting on a rolling basis**

**Full Proposal opens – Tuesday, September 1, 2026**

**Deadline for Submission of Full Proposal— Wednesday, September 30, 2026**

The *Eco-Living Fund* is a donor-advised fund based at the Charlottesville Area Community Foundation. The donor to the fund, who wishes to remain anonymous, reviews proposals on an annual basis and makes funding recommendations to the Governing Board of the Charlottesville Area Community Foundation.

The *Eco-Living Fund* supports efforts to steer the daily life habits of people and the performance of buildings, products and services away from environmentally unsustainable practices, and toward zero-footprint or net-positive impact on the natural world. Funded projects:

- 1) are not designed to simply improve the environmental-friendliness or sustainability of a particular building or facility. Instead, they are designed to permanently change many, many buildings' performance and/or people's daily life habits to be better for the planet; ***and***
- 2) have specific, concrete actions which have quantifiable results of people living and/or buildings, products or services performing more sustainably; ***and***
- 3) are designed, tracked, documented, and reported in ways that they can be showcased to serve as positive change models for other organizations and communities; ***and***
- 4) (bonus which is particularly encouraged though not required) result in people, businesses or institutions saving money.

Successful proposals will include **all of the first three (3)** of the above characteristics, not just one or two of them.

Among the pool of applications received, winners will be those that have the greatest bang-for-the-buck: the greatest number of people permanently changing their daily life habits, and/or the greatest number of buildings, products or services getting their consumption of resources reduced, per grant dollar. Preference will be given to those projects that have quantifiable results, that is, results that can be numerically verified and measured.

Examples of relevant projects include leveraging funds from this grant in ways that result in water or energy systems of numerous houses or buildings being replaced with efficient ones; or that result in people exercising (walk, bike) instead of driving; and/or awareness or education on public policies which would achieve the goals of this fund. These are examples only and do not represent the full scope of grant applications that will be considered.

Grant requests up to \$7,000 will be considered. Applicants must be tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organizations or government agencies. Grants are limited to projects in the CACF service area which includes Charlottesville and counties of Albemarle, Buckingham, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, Nelson and Orange.

**Applicants are welcome to submit an *optional* initial 1-page Letter of Inquiry (LOI),** if an applicant has a question as to whether a project in mind could meet the goals of this fund. The donor will provide feedback and suggestions regarding information to include in the full proposal that ***may*** increase the possibility of the proposal being funded. Submitting a Letter of Inquiry ***does NOT guarantee, however, that a proposal will be funded.*** Letters of Inquiry should be submitted via email to Megan Donovan, Program Manager at [mdonovan@cacfonline.org](mailto:mdonovan@cacfonline.org) by August 15<sup>th</sup>.

**The deadline to submit a full proposal for the *Eco-Living Fund* is September 30, 2026.**

Applications should be submitted via the CACF grantee portal.

All grant recipients will be asked to document their efforts, including a 1-page summary sheet to serve as models for other communities and organizations to consider following. A report on the project's spending, accomplishments, and impact will be required upon its completion.

Questions and inquiries may be addressed to [mdonovan@cacfonline.org](mailto:mdonovan@cacfonline.org).