Where Local Good Grows
Hendricks County Community Foundation

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Hendricks County Community Foundation Launches $1 Million "Moonshot" Grant Opportunity to Fund Transformational Community Project

The Hendricks County Community Foundation (HCCF) has announced a rare, one-time "Moonshot" Grant Opportunity, inviting local leaders and organizations to dream boldly and propose transformational solutions to the county's most significant challenges. Made possible through a $3 million Community Support grant from Lilly Endowment Inc.'s GIFT IX initiative, HCCF has set aside $1 million to fund a single, visionary project or program capable of changing the trajectory of Hendricks County. On Thursday, July 30, over 100 community and nonprofit leaders gathered at MADE at Plainfield for the official launch of the grant program and to learn more and explore potential collaborations.

"We know that meaningful, lasting change requires bold thinking, strong partnerships, and the courage to pursue ambitious ideas," said Eric Hessel, HCCF Vice President of Programs. "We are challenging our community to ask: 'If you had $1 million, how would you make our community better?' Whether that means creating new systems, removing longstanding barriers, or building community-wide infrastructure, we want to support a vision that gives everyone in Hendricks County the tools to build a stronger future together."

The initiative invites proposals for projects spanning one to three years, with implementation beginning between March 2027 and January 2028. While HCCF intends to award the full $1,000,000 to a single proposal, it reserves the right to fund a combination of proposals totaling the full amount. This flexible grant opportunity can support programmatic expansion, capital investments, or operating expenses tied directly to the project. Eligible applicants include 501(c)(3) nonprofits, government entities, park districts, and collaborative coalitions serving Hendricks County. Cross-sector collaboration is strongly encouraged, as non-collaborative, single-organization proposals will not be prioritized.

Interested organizations must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) to HCCF between August 12 and September 15, 2026. Following committee review, invited applicants will submit full proposals between October 28, 2026, and January 26, 2027, leading to a final grant announcement in March 2027.

"This opportunity is about far more than funding—it is about possibility," said William Rhodehamel, President and CEO of HCCF. "We are grateful to Lilly Endowment Inc. for making this historic investment available to our community and we look forward to partnering with local visionaries to turn an ambitious idea into a lasting legacy for Hendricks County."

Nonprofit leaders and community partners interested in submitting a Letter of Intent are encouraged to contact Eric Hessel, Vice President of Programs, at eric@hendrickscountycf.org or 317-268-6240 to discuss their concept. To review the full Request for Proposals (RFP) and submission guidelines, visit the Community Foundation's website at www.hendrickscountycf.org/for-nonprofits/apply-for-a-grant/moonshot-grant.

Moonshot Grant Lunch & Launch Event

The Mission of the Hendricks County Community Foundation: To be a trusted community partner in understanding needs, aligning resources, and empowering people to address today's priorities and create lasting impact. Our vision is Hendricks County as a place where everyone has the opportunity to have a fulfilling life and the tools they need to build a stronger future together. The Community Foundation manages assets of over $40 million in a collection of funds created by individuals, families, businesses and organizations for charitable purposes. In 2025 the Community Foundation gave over $2.35M in grants to charitable organizations and scholarships to local students. For more information, call 317-268-6240 or visit **www.hendrickscountycf.org**.

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