

Summit Cares Charitable Giving Grant Program Grant Guidelines



Giving Guidelines:

These guidelines are designed to help make applying for a grant from Summit Natural Gas of Maine (SNGME) easy and transparent. All submitted applications will be reviewed by a panel of local SNGME team members and formally approved by the SNGME Legal team.

Summit Natural Gas of Maine is committed to supporting nonprofit organizations that strengthen the communities we serve. Grants are awarded based on the project's value to residents within our service area, alignment with our community giving priorities, availability of funds, and the quality and clarity of the application submitted.

These guidelines are for informational purposes only and do not constitute a legally binding commitment. Grant awards and processes are subject to change at the discretion of Summit Natural Gas of Maine and Summit Utilities.

Program Focus Areas

Summit Natural Gas of Maine invests in organizations and initiatives that meaningfully support one or more of the following priority areas:



Basic Human Needs

Programs that support food security, housing stability, emergency assistance, and other essential needs for vulnerable populations.



Environmental Stewardship

Initiatives that protect natural resources, promote sustainability, and enhance environmental education.



Community Enrichment

Programs that create a sense of belonging and vibrancy in our communities. From cultural programs to recreational activities, we invest in initiatives that bring joy, connection, and growth to everyday life. By fostering inclusive, dynamic spaces, we help communities become places where everyone feels welcome and inspired to contribute.



STEAM Education

Programs that expand access to science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics education for students and educators.

Eligibility Requirements

To be considered for funding, applicants must meet all the following criteria:

- Be a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
- Operate within the SNGME service area
- Deliver programs that directly benefit residents in our local service communities.

SNGME's charitable giving grant program generally does *not* fund:

- Organizations that practice discrimination
- Event sponsorships, tickets, or tables
- Sports teams
- Staff salaries or general operating expenses
- Educational institutions, including K-12 schools, school districts, colleges, and universities
- Volunteer fire departments
- Payment of utility bills

Grant Review Process

Applications are evaluated by a panel of SNGME team members who live and work in the regions they review. Final approval is provided by SNGME Legal to ensure compliance and alignment with corporate policy.

Grant decisions are based on:

- Alignment with SNGME focus areas
- Quality, clarity, and vision of the proposed project
- Demonstrated community need
- Feasibility, impact, and measurable outcomes
- Availability of charitable funds during the grant cycle

What Makes a Strong Application

A strong application clearly communicates:

1. Focus Area Alignment

Your project should directly support one or more of our four giving pillars: Basic Human Needs, Community Enrichment, Environmental Stewardship, or STEAM Education.

2. Service Area Alignment

Programs must serve communities within the Summit Natural Gas of Maine footprint, ensuring that investments directly benefit our customers and neighbors.

3. Defined Community Need

Clearly explain the challenge or issue your project addresses and how your organization is uniquely positioned to deliver impact.

4. Opportunities for Employee Engagement

Proposals that incorporate meaningful volunteer opportunities for SNGME employees—especially during the work week—are strongly encouraged. SNGME employees receive paid Volunteer Time Off (VTO), and we prioritize projects that strengthen local engagement.

5. Achievable and Measurable Goals

Set realistic objectives and outline how success will be measured. Include expected outcomes, beneficiary demographics, and any evaluation tools you plan to use.

Funding Levels & Use of Funds

Grant award ranges typically fall between \$5,000-10,000, with an emphasis on supporting immediate program needs, not administrative overhead or capital expenses.

Funds must be used within the granting year unless otherwise approved.

Application and Decision Timeline

While dates may vary by year, typical cycles include:

Application Window: Early April – mid May

Review Process: May – June

Award Notification: July

Applications are accepted online through the SNGME/Summit Cares Grant Application portal. Applicants will receive a confirmation email when the application has been submitted.

Evaluating Programs and Projects

All grant recipients are required to provide a follow-up report. This will be an online form sent to you approximately 6 months after the grant is awarded. You will be asked to share any outcomes, metrics, and successes.

Contact Information

Applicants are encouraged to reach out with questions before applying.

SNGME/Summit Utilities Community Affairs Team

Email: communityaffairs@summitutilities.com
