



#### CONTACT

**Mandy Miller**  
Manager of Strategic  
Philanthropy

info@dradubuque.com

## 2025 Core Grant Application

### Core Grant Overview

The DRA Core Grant program supports projects that align with People Attraction – focusing on population growth, retention, and tourism.

Key details include:

- Application requests for up to \$50,000
- Preference given to projects that incorporate capacity building alongside material purchases
- Funds are provided upon acceptance of the grant award, with mandatory follow-up reporting within 12 months
- Requests for multi-year funding will be considered
- Coaching opportunities are available through the DRA and community partners throughout the grant cycle

### Key Dates

Application Available: Monday, May 5

Application Deadline: Friday, May 16

Grant Award Announcement: Tuesday, July 22

### Grant Focus

Applications should align with the mission of **People Attraction: Population Growth, Retention and Tourism**. This supports the DRA's mission of fostering social, economic and community betterment while reducing the burden of the City of Dubuque and area government. It also reflects our vision of being a dynamic community resource, acting as a catalyst to enhance the quality of life and financial well-being of the tri-state community.

### Capacity Building

Historically, the DRA primarily funded material items. However, in 2022, we shifted our approach to prioritize applications that include capacity building alongside material purchases.

### **What is Capacity Building?**

Capacity building is the process of developing and strengthening the skills, processes, resources, and strategies that organizations and communities need to adapt, grow and thrive in a rapidly changing world.

Examples of capacity building activities:

- Planning Activities: Organizational assessments, strategic planning, and creating development plans/strategies.
- Donor Development: Marketing and communications, online donor portals, and enhancements to the donor experience.
- Strategic Relationships: Strengthening relationships with professional advisors and nonprofit partners.
- Internal Operations: Improvements to donor database, financial management systems, volunteer management, and organizational websites.
- Professional Development: Staff, contractor, or affiliate volunteer attendance at regional or national conferences, or participation in local or online training.
- Financial Audits: First-time audits that open additional funding opportunities for the organization.
- Organization Marketing: Website creation/design, marketing materials, and tools to help promote the organization externally.

### **Coverage Area**

The DRA's geographic focus is the tri-state area, with an emphasis on Dubuque and its contiguous counties—Clayton, Delaware, Jackson, and Jones in Iowa; Grant, Lafayette, and Iowa counties in Wisconsin; and Jo Daviess County in Illinois.

### **Eligible Organizations**

Eligible nonprofit organizations are encouraged to apply for a grant. Each application is reviewed on a case-by-case basis, with a focus on advancing the goal of **People**

**Attraction: population growth, retention, and tourism.**

Applications are welcome from organizations across all sectors, including:

- Arts & Culture
- Civic & Community Development
- Education
- Emergency Services
- Health & Human Services
- Recreation
- Veterans

### **Eligibility**

If you received a DRA Mission or Core Grant award in 2024, that application must be closed out, meaning your project/program has been complete as outlined in your application and your Grant Summary Report has been submitted PRIOR to applying for a 2025 grant.

- Applicants must be a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization with a 501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), 501(c)5, 501(c)6, 501(c)(7), 501(c)(8), 501(c)(10), or 501(c)(19) designation from the Internal Revenue Service or a unit of political subdivision (e.g., Conservation Districts).
- Organizations cannot share or borrow a 501(c) status with another entity. The name on the application must match the name on the IRS-issued letter.
- Each 501(c) or equivalent tax-exempt organization is limited to one application.

- Individual schools, churches, and volunteer fire departments will not need a 501(c) letter, as they are either exempt by law or fall under a blanket exemption due to municipal affiliation.
- Cities, villages, towns and counties are limited to one application. A statement of support from the city or county administrator endorsing the project must be included with the application.

### **School Eligibility**

- School applications must be submitted through the district office. If no district office exists, the application must be approved by the school principal or administrator.
- Each school district should submit one application encompassing all schools within the district.
- For school districts such as Dubuque Community Schools, Western Dubuque Community Schools, Holy Family Schools, Maquoketa Community School District and Monticello Community School District, a single application should be submitted on behalf of the entire district. While individual school projects will be considered, applications that benefit the district as a whole are encouraged.
- If an affiliated organization is applying on behalf of the school, the organization must hold its own 501(c) status. Additionally, a letter from the principal or administration must be included, stating that the school or district does not intend to apply and confirming that the organization is applying on their behalf.

### **Limitations**

The DRA Core Grants will **NOT** fund:

- Capital campaigns
- Political causes, candidates, or lobbying efforts
- Individuals, including scholarships and personal benefits
- Debt repayment or purchases made prior to the 2025 calendar year

### **Scoring Criteria**

Grant applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- **Alignment with the DRA Mission:** Does the program/project support People Attraction (population growth, retention and tourism)?
- **Alignment with Organizational Mission:** How well does the project align with the applicant organization's mission?
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI):** Is there a clear plan for incorporating DEI into the program/project?
- **Nature of Need:** Is the project unique, or are similar initiatives already being implemented by other organizations?
- **Partnerships & Collaboration:** Does the project involve partnerships with other organizations or groups to achieve its goals?
- **Overall Impact:** What is the overall impact on the community, and is the project sustainable beyond the initial grant funding?

## **Recognition of Funding**

To ensure proper acknowledgement of DRA funding, organizations are expected to follow established recognition guidelines. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Press Release announcing the grant award and its impact
- Social Media Post highlighting the project and DRA's contribution
- Logo Lock-up incorporating the DRA logo in promotional materials
- Signage displayed at the project site or event to acknowledge DRA support

*All questions related to the Core Grant Program should be directed to [info@dradubuque.com](mailto:info@dradubuque.com).*