



Women Investing in Shepherd is a women's giving circle sponsored by the Shepherd University Foundation.

Nonprofit Letter of Inquiry

Overview

Women Investing in Shepherd (WISH) is offering two community nonprofit grants for 2026. Grants from WISH are made possible by the generosity of its members who are committed to high-impact philanthropy. Grants are voted on by the active membership on an annual basis.

WISH inspires, educates, and develops the amazing potential of women's philanthropy. Our high-impact grants to Shepherd University and the tri-state community affect positive changes, bring new funding resources, and make philanthropy accessible.

Letters of Inquiry (LOI) are requested as the initial step in the grant process. Submission of LOI does not guarantee formal consideration for funding. Only groups selected by the Grants committee will be invited to submit full proposals.

To receive funding from WISH, a project should be at least one of the following:

- *Response to urgent and critical needs*
- *Bold new venture; and/or*
- *New approach to ongoing challenges*

Eligibility

Nonprofit: To be eligible for a grant from the community nonprofit pooled fund, a grantee must be a 501 (c) (3) organization and provide services in the following counties: Jefferson, Berkeley, Morgan, and Hampshire counties in WV; Frederick, Loudoun, and Clarke counties in VA; and Frederick and Washington counties in MD.

Additional Requirements and Exclusions:

- The grant application stipulates that the organization must expend the full amount of the WISH grant in a time span of no greater than three (3) years (but beginning in the initial grant award year). **We will not consider grants for lesser amounts than the grant award being offered.**
- Applications from organizations that are part of a government agency (including public schools) will not be considered for a WISH grant.

- Applications from religious affiliated organizations that require religious activity or beliefs as part of the service or program requesting funding will not be considered for a WISH grant.
- A nonprofit organization that has previously been awarded a WISH grant must wait five years before applying for another WISH grant.
- Please do not submit any additional materials with the Letter of Inquiry. Any additional materials will be discarded.

LOI Due Date

All nonprofit LOIs must **be received by March 1, 2026** to be considered. If you would like to receive a word version of the LOI, contact Meg Patterson at mpeterso@shepherd.edu (recommended). You may also copy and paste the LOI fields into a separate document. **All fields are required to be completed in order and in totality to be considered as a complete submission.** Please e-mail one copy of the LOI, a copy of your IRS Determination letter, and all attachments to mpeterso@shepherd.edu. You will receive an e-mail confirming receipt of your LOI submission.

If you do not have access to email, you may print and mail the materials to:

Shepherd University Foundation
PO Box 5000
Shepherdstown, WV 25443

For questions, call Meg Patterson, Director of Donor Engagement and Strategic Initiatives, at 304-876-5021 or email mpeterso@shepherd.edu. Request for full proposals will be issued by the beginning of April. **If you are invited to submit a full proposal, the deadline for submission will be May 8, 2026.**

Grant Size

Each **nonprofit** grant award (2 each) for the 2026 cycle will be \$36,625. Applicants must show a need for use of the entire high impact amount in a time span of no greater than three (3) years.



WISH LETTER OF INQUIRY

Due March 1, 2026 to be eligible for consideration

Organization Name:

Project Name:

Project Description (50-100 words maximum):

Contact Person and Full Contact Information (email, phone, mailing address):

Project Area Category- Please select the WISH project area category that will be served by this project:

Regional Nonprofit Programs/Projects

<input type="checkbox"/> Arts and Culture	<input type="checkbox"/> Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Health and Wellness
<input type="checkbox"/> Community and Family	

Estimated number of people served by the project:

Estimated project budget (see attached example):

Names/Titles of staff, both full and part-time:

Names of any volunteer advisory/governing board members:

Estimated number of volunteers working on project:

If possible, annual volunteer hours:

Number of years organization has been in existence:

Potential Impact (500 words or less):

Please describe the critical need, ongoing challenge, or bold new venture that your project and organization seek to address, and how you plan to address this need. Describe the potential impact this investment of \$36,625 will have.

SAMPLE BUDGET

Expense Items (if needed, change expense item line to match your program)	Budget Year One	Budget Year Two	Budget Year Three
Fees			
Personnel Costs			
Supplies			
Related Program Costs			
Other			
Other			
<i>Total Estimated Expenses:</i>	\$	\$	\$

Income Sources (Please show allocation of full grant award amount)	Budget Year One	Budget Year Two	Budget Year Three
WISH Grant (\$36,625)			
Other (explain)			
Other (explain)			
Other (explain)			
<i>Total Estimated Income (Should equal expenses):</i>	\$	\$	\$