Darwin Curtis Fund Grants for Projects that Promote the Sport of Curling

2020-21 Grant Cycle

The Darwin Curtis Fund was established to “support and encourage participation by the general public in the sport of curling, as, for example, to provide or maintain public curling facilities and to provide equipment, instruction and supervision, either alone or in conjunction with others such as public park or recreation districts.” The U.S. Curling Association has been selected to administer the Darwin Curtis Fund grant program on behalf of The Chicago Community Trust for the 2020-2021 grant cycle. The application period for grant consideration is now OPEN. Please read through the details below for more information on the application process.

Eligible Entities
Eligible entities are not-for-profit organizations, designated by the Internal Revenue Service as holding 501 (c)(3) status, that have an established track record of promoting and increasing public participation in the sport of curling. Only applications from organizations with 501(c)(3) status at the time of application will be considered for funding.

Eligible Programs
- Projects that can demonstrate success in increasing the number of participants in the sport of curling
- Projects that encourage populations not traditionally exposed to curling to participate in the sport

Preference will be given to
- Projects that encourage diversity in participation
- Projects that encourage lifelong participation
- USCA member or affiliated organizations
- Projects that are not part of the normal cost of doing business

Size/number of grant awards
- A total of $25,000 is available to be awarded during the 2020-21 cycle
- Grant applications ranging from $1,000 to $25,000 will be accepted
- Total number of grants awarded will be determined by the Selection Panel; historically grants awarded tend to fall within the $1,000-$7,000 range
GRANTING PROGRAMS & CRITERIA

The Darwin Curtis Fund grant program offers two (2) granting programs: Growth & Development and Bricks & Mortar

A) GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

1) Growth & Development Grants are awarded to successful applications with the potential to **grow the sport in the community**. The following programs are examples of projects considered eligible:
   i) Recruitment of new customers;
   ii) Retention of current customers;
   iii) Training of novice / intermediate curlers including youth, juniors, or adults; and
   iv) Awareness / marketing campaigns that will promote the sport.

**Note:** Applications for funding are not restricted to the above. The USCA is constantly looking for new ideas to improve the sport. We encourage you to be creative.

2) Growth & Development Grants require a commitment from the applicant of at least 50% of the total cost of the project. The applicant’s 50% portion can include third party funding (e.g., municipal grants) or value-in-kind contributions. Proof must be provided as to the monetary value of any non-cash commitment.

3) The Growth & Development Grant application **must include a detailed action plan with timelines describing in detail how your project will benefit the sport of curling and describing the lasting impact this project will have in your community / region.**

The action plan should include:
   i) The overall objective of the plan.
   ii) The steps necessary to achieve your objective.
   iii) The timelines for each step including the person(s) in your organization responsible. Action plans should deal in specifics with tangible results.
   iv) Membership / customer numbers in the past two (2) years /seasons.

As an example, we will not accept a statement saying: “**We want to increase membership.**” We will, however, consider applications stating: **“We will recruit 16 new youth curlers for our junior training league”** followed by the steps you will take to recruit those 16 new players.

4) The action plan must also include a **detailed budget**, including the amount requested from the Darwin Curtis Fund, and the source of the applicant’s portion (can be a recorded motion of your Board).

5) Growth & Development Grant applications **must include** copies of the applicant’s last two (2) annual **Revenue versus Expense** statements (one (1) page each) **AND** the most
recent one (1) page Balance Sheet (if available). Organizations that are not stand-alone “businesses” (i.e., arena-based curling clubs) should at minimum, submit relevant, curling-specific financial information.

6) 50% of the approved Darwin Curtis Fund grant will be released immediately to successful applicants upon receipt from The Chicago Community Trust. The balance will be released upon receipt of the final report. Failure to submit the final report by the deadline of May 20, 2021 will result in the forfeiture of the balance. The unspent dollars will be applied to the next funding cycle.

7) Successful applicants will not be eligible to reapply for funds until the year following the close of the next grant cycle (i.e., successful applicants may apply every other year).

B) BRICKS & MORTAR

1) Bricks & Mortar Grants will be awarded to applicants based on capital acquisitions necessary to build the business of curling at the community level. The following are examples of projects considered eligible:
   i) Refrigeration equipment; i.e. compressors, chillers, condensers;
   ii) Ice area; i.e. de-humidifiers, heaters, monitoring equipment, scrapers;
   iii) Renovations; i.e. accessibility; or
   iv) New construction; i.e. new dedicated ice facilities, another sheet of ice.

Note: applications for funding are not restricted to the above.

2) Bricks & Mortar Grants require a commitment from the applicant of at least 50% of the total cost of the project. The applicant’s 50% portion can wholly include third party funding (e.g., municipal grants), volunteer hours committed to the project, or value-in-kind contributions. Proof must be provided as to the monetary value of any non-cash commitment. For example, you may propose to replace the floor in the facility and members will remove the sand floor instead of the contractor. This is an acceptable volunteer contribution.

3) Bricks & Mortar Grant applications must include details describing how your organization affects the sport of curling in your community.

These should include:
   i) How you recruit new customers;
   ii) A description of how you deliver customer service;
   iii) Your membership / customer numbers in the past two (2) years / seasons; and
   iv) Rationale of how this purchase will positively affect your business/potential for long-term success.
Your explanation must deal in specifics with tangible examples. The Grant Selection Panel will not accept a statement saying, “We will close if we don’t get the money.”

4) Applications for funding for the purchase of any equipment requiring ‘energy’ to operate should also include any predicted efficiencies/savings.

5) Bricks & Mortar applications must include copies of the applicant’s last two (2) annual Revenue versus Expense statements (one (1) page each) AND the most recent one (1) page Balance Sheet (if available). Organizations that are not stand-alone “businesses” (such as arena-based curling clubs) should, at minimum, submit relevant, curling-specific financial information.

6) The application must include at least two (2) estimates from a reputable contractor/supplier on the contractor/supplier’s letterhead.

7) Full funding will be released to successful applicants upon proof of completion of the work. Proof will include copies of signed, paid invoices and photos of the acquisition. Failure to submit the report by the deadline of May 20, 2021 will result in the forfeiture of the grant. The unspent dollars will be applied to the next funding cycle.

8) Successful applicants will not be eligible to reapply for funds until the year following the close of the next grant cycle (i.e., successful applicants may apply every other year).
TIMELINES

THE FOLLOWING TIMELINES ARE CRITICAL. APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE STATED DEADLINE. ADDITIONALLY, FULL OR PARTIAL FUNDING WILL BE REFUSED TO SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATES WHO DO NOT MEET THE FINAL REPORT DEADLINES.

1) DEADLINE - 5:00 p.m. CDT, Monday, JUNE 1, 2020
   Link to Application: bit.ly/darwincurtisapp20-21

2) July 15, 2020 – USCA Grant Selection Panel forwards recommendations of successful applicants to The Chicago Community Trust, holder of the Darwin Curtis Fund.

3) October 2020 – The Chicago Community Trust Executive Committee reviews and acts upon the grant recommendations from the USCA Grant Selection Panel. Once grants are approved, the USCA will release 50% of the funding for awarded grants.

4) May 20, 2021 – Final reports outlining the successful completion of work for the Growth & Development and Bricks & Mortar grants must be submitted to the USCA by this deadline for the release of any funds due. Final reports may be received at any time during the period of approximately January 1, 2021 to May 20, 2021. Assuming the report meets all obligations, funds will be sent within 3-4 weeks of receipt of report.

5) June 5, 2021 – Any unclaimed funds will be returned to USCA for the next funding cycle.
GENERAL INFORMATION

Basic information you should know before submitting an application:

1) You may apply in one (1) grant category only: Growth & Development OR Bricks & Mortar.

2) The Grant Selection Panel realizes that applications will vary in their complexity and detail. You are advised not to just send a quote for a new piece of equipment, or a request for funds simply to “get more curlers.” The Panel will be looking at how your facility affects the sport in your community. They will also be looking for potential for growth and long-term success. The more “proof” you are able to submit showing how deserving your organization is to receive this grant is important.

3) The Grant Selection Panel will consist of approximately four to five individuals plus the USCA Growth & Development Manager. The Panel will meet annually between the application deadline and the due date for forwarding recommendations to The Chicago Community Trust. Any contact with the Panel will be made through the USA Curling Staff. The decisions of the Grant Selection Panel are final pending confirmation by The Chicago Community Trust.

4) Criteria Assessment – The Grant Selection Panel members will base their decisions on the following criteria:
   i) Project meets the spirit and purpose of the Darwin Curtis Fund as outlined on the first page of this document (e.g., projects that encourage diversity in participation, projects that encourage lifelong participation).
   ii) Request for funding is in the appropriate range as outlined.
   iii) Project budget containing proof of self-funding of the applicant’s 50% share (proof can be a motion of the applicant’s Board of Directors).
   iv) Action Plan (Growth & Development Grant) with steps that can be measured. Assessment will be based on the projected and attainable impact on the sport in the community. The size of the community will be taken into consideration.
   v) Bricks & Mortar applications will be assessed on need and the impact statement.
   vi) USCA membership or affiliation.
   vii) Finally, creativity will also be considered in the assessment.

5) If deemed successful, your application may be used by the USCA to promote creativity, innovation, and the Darwin Curtis Fund within the media and U.S. curling community.

6) Applications requesting funding for salaries, ice rentals, utility or tax bills, high performance, or championship related expenses will not be considered and will be returned as incomplete.
7) Regardless of who submits the application, the President or Chair of your Board of Directors must support the application.

CONTACT INFORMATION

U.S. Curling Association, Attention:

Steven O’Keefe, Manager, Growth and Development

Address  U.S. Curling Association
          5525 Clem’s Way
          Stevens Point, WI  54482

Telephone  1-888-287-5377, ext. 203
E-mail  steven.okeefe@usacurl.org
Website  http://www.teamusa.org/USA-Curling/Clubs/Member-Programs/Darwin-Curtis-Grant-Program

PARTICIPATION STATEMENT
The USCA reserves the right, and your participation in the program implies consent, to share general information about curling facilities or Member Association success stories resulting from a Darwin Curtis Fund grant. The USCA will not, however, divulge financial or personal information connected to these success stories when issuing press releases, web blogs, or any other public communication vehicles without prior consent.