

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

With every swipe of a Local Heroes affinity debit card, Gesa members earn funds designated for grants in that card's Local Heroes category (Firefighters, Healthcare Workers, Law Enforcement, Educators, and Veterans). The Gesa Local Heroes Grant Program awards these funds to eligible organizations across the state that support Local Heroes in regions where Gesa is active. Applications are accepted annually in June for awards ranging up to \$50,000. The funding amounts each year are dependent on the total funds raised the prior year through the Local Heroes affinity debit cards. Gesa's Community Foundation reserves the right to partially fund grant applications. Grants are awarded annually in September.

## ELIGIBILITY

To qualify for a Local Heroes grant, an organization must provide proof that the requested project funds will support a Local Heroes population (Firefighters, Healthcare Workers, Law Enforcement, Educators, and Veterans) in a Gesa community. A Gesa community is defined as a county where Gesa has a physical location. Currently, these include the following counties:

- Benton
- Chelan
- Clark
- Franklin
- Grant
- Grays Harbor
- King
- Kitsap
- Kootenai
- Lewis
- Pacific
- Pierce
- Snohomish
- Spokane
- Thurston
- Walla Walla
- Whitman
- Yakima

Grants will not be awarded for the following:

- Activities, groups, or events not in a Gesa community
- Administrative expenses
- Projects whose primary purpose is religious or political
- Organizations where funds would be used for the purpose of building assets or capital
- Sponsorship requests that benefit or fund a single individual's participation in an event or activity
- Requests that benefit a private, for-profit business or private business owner

## APPLICATION DETAILS

Each year, applications open in mid-June and close on the last day in July. The application will be available exclusively on [gesa.com](https://gesa.com). All applicants, whether selected or not, will be notified of decisions by the end of September. The number of awards varies each year depending on the availability of funding and the amount of each request. Applications may be partially funded at the discretion of the Gesa Community Foundation board. Applicants will be selected based on the following criteria:

- Thorough and complete application
- Connection to Local Heroes population(s)
- Established need for funding
- Anticipated impact

Grant recipients may be asked to submit photos (as applicable) and a narrative report within one year of receiving the funds.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What are the eligible Local Hero populations?**

Gesa Credit Union's Local Heroes affinity debit cards recognize Firefighters, Healthcare Workers, Law Enforcement, Educators, and Veterans.

### **What types of programs does the Local Heroes Grant Program fund?**

The Local Heroes Grant Program funds projects and initiatives that support Local Heroes populations identified as: Firefighters, Healthcare Workers, Law Enforcement, Educators, and Veterans. This might include equipment, training, or program support for fire departments, healthcare facilities, police departments, schools, and organizations that work with firefighters, healthcare, law enforcement, educators, and Veterans.

### **Where does the funding come from?**

Every time a Gesa member swipes their Local Heroes affinity debit card, Gesa Credit Union donates to the fund for that card's Local Heroes category held at the Gesa Community Foundation. Funds accumulate over the course of a year and are disbursed annually by the Gesa Community Foundation. Total amounts given are dependent on debit card usage, so some Local Heroes categories may have more available funds than others.

### **How does Gesa decide which grants to fund?**

The Gesa Community Foundation Board of Directors, made up of Gesa team members and community members, work together to evaluate each grant request. The Gesa Community Foundation uses the following criteria as a guideline for decision-making: connection to a Local Heroes population, financial need, and anticipated impact.

### **When will I know if my organization was selected for a grant?**

Applications are accepted annually starting in June with decisions finalized by September of each year.

### **What is the application timeline?**

Applications are accepted annually starting in June with decisions finalized by September of each year.

### **My grant wasn't funded. Can I apply again?**

Yes! Eligible organizations can apply annually whether you are awarded funding or not.

### **Who can I contact if I need more information?**

You can inquire about your grant status and request information by emailing [localheroes@gesa.com](mailto:localheroes@gesa.com).