



Request for Proposals (RFP) to Elaine Jones Safety Net and Capacity Building Fund

Napa Valley Community Foundation (NVCF) invites proposals for one-year, unrestricted general operating support from nonprofit organizations that provide essential safety net services to Napa County residents from the Elaine Jones Safety Net and Capacity Building Fund (“the Fund”). Proposals are due by 5:00 p.m. on October 28, 2026.

This proposal is for an unrestricted General Support grant. In addition to financial support, NVCF will provide Capacity Building assistance through expert-led training and technical assistance. Participation in the Phase One Capacity Building Intensive is a required condition of accepting a General Support grant. There is no separate application for Capacity Building support, and Capacity Building funds will not be awarded directly to grantees. Instead, NVCF will invest in technical assistance provided to participating organizations. Additional details are provided on page 3 of this RFP.

About the Fund

The Elaine Jones Safety Net and Capacity Building Fund supports established nonprofit organizations that have been helping Napa County residents meet essential needs and remain healthy, safe, and stable. The Fund was created in response to a difficult operating environment: public funding reductions and shifts, rising costs, and growing community need. In FY27, NVCF expects to award approximately \$1 million to \$1.2 million in general operating support to help preserve a strong, responsive safety net.

We recognize that organizations closest to communities often understand needs, barriers, and effective responses best. These grants are intentionally unrestricted so grantees can use funds where they are most needed to sustain services, retain staff, respond to changing conditions, and strengthen their organizations.

Grant Amounts

Napa County organizations with an operating budget of:

- \$1 million to less than \$3 million: up to \$50,000
- \$3 million to less than \$5 million: up to \$75,000
- \$5 million to \$10 million: up to \$100,000

Awards will be based on community need, the organization’s role in Napa County’s safety net, financial circumstances, and funds available.

Who Is Eligible

Applicants must meet all of the following requirements:

- Be a 501(c)(3) public charity and meet [NVCF’s general grant eligibility requirements](https://www.napavalleycf.org).
- Provide direct safety net services in Napa County. Eligible services include childcare assistance; economic stability; disability assistance; food security; healthcare access; legal support; mental health and behavioral health; rental and housing assistance; and support for survivors of abuse.

- Have an annual Napa County operating budget between \$1 million and \$10 million. Organizations serving multiple counties may use a clearly identifiable Napa County budget if local operations have meaningful programmatic and operational autonomy.
- Have a substantial and established role in Napa County's safety net. In general, at least half of the organization's work, as measured by its operating budget, should consist of eligible safety net services. Organizations serving multiple counties must demonstrate that their Napa County operations are substantial, established, and clearly identifiable within their overall budget and programming.
- Have a track record of providing safety net services as defined above in Napa County for at least the previous five years.
- Be experiencing increased demand for services, reduced or uncertain revenue, rising operating costs, or other significant financial pressures that affect the organization's ability to sustain essential services in FY27. Applicants should describe these challenges and provide financial information that helps demonstrate their impact.

What We Won't Fund

- Requests from individuals or organizations that are not eligible 501(c)(3) public charities.
- Organizations whose work falls primarily outside the safety net services described above.
- Organizations that have not already been providing safety net services in Napa County for at least five years.
- Capital campaigns, endowments, scholarships, research, fundraising, or regranting requests.
- Public, private, or nonprofit K-12 schools, preschools, colleges/universities, or related programs, except eligible childcare assistance programs.
- Government entities or houses of worship.
- Program-specific requests and/or requests to launch new programs in Napa County.

Please note: If your organization does not meet the eligibility for this grant, but is providing services in Napa County, we are happy to learn more outside of this grant program. NVCF has multiple grant opportunities outside of this program, and most are run on a by-invitation basis. Visit our [website](#) to learn more about how to contact us and the process.

Funding Priorities

NVCF will consider the full financial and organizational context of each applicant. Priority may be given to organizations that:

- Fill an important or difficult-to-replace role in Napa County's safety net, particularly for residents and communities with fewer resources or greater barriers to essential services.
- Are experiencing significant financial loss, revenue uncertainty, reimbursement challenges, rising costs, and/or increased demand that threaten their ability to sustain essential services.
- Can clearly describe the consequences for Napa County residents and the broader safety net if services are reduced, delayed, or eliminated.



Preference may be given to nonprofits that have demonstrated a willingness and ability to adapt to changing circumstances. We recognize that organizations have different levels of capacity and resources to pursue these strategies and will consider their efforts in context.

NVCF recognizes that financial resilience does not look the same for every organization. We will consider an organization's resources, funding model, community role, and access to public and philanthropic funding in context rather than rewarding (or not rewarding) organizations simply for having larger reserves, more sophisticated systems, or greater fundraising capacity.

Required Capacity Building Participation

General Support and Capacity Building are two essential parts of NVCF's Elaine Jones Safety Net and Capacity Building program in 2026/2027. The Capacity Building element will consist of two phases:

Phase One is a two-day Capacity Building Intensive.

Phase Two consists of three separate technical assistance tracks. Phase Two tracks will each be three to eight months long, beginning in February 2027, and will focus on these three discrete (but related) areas:

1. Medi-Cal/CalAIM service provision and billing
2. Operational efficiencies from shared resources to potential mergers
3. Deeper Board engagement from recruitment to governance.

NVCF believes that immediate financial support and longer-term organizational capacity are both essential to maintaining a strong safety net. Beyond helping individual organizations navigate current financial challenges, this initiative aims to strengthen Napa County's safety net as a whole by bringing nonprofit leaders together to learn, share challenges, and explore opportunities for greater collaboration, stronger governance, more sustainable revenue, and more efficient use of limited resources. Our goal is not to prescribe exact solutions, but to help organizations build the capacity and relationships needed to continue serving Napa County residents over the long term. For this reason, **participation in the Phase One Capacity Building Intensive is a required component of accepting a General Operating Support grant.**

The Intensive will be held January 28-29, 2027, at Napa Valley Community Foundation, and applicants should hold those dates now. The Executive Director (and/or equivalent senior leader) and Board Chair (and/or another designated Board officer) are expected to participate fully in both days. Because effective organizational change requires engagement from both staff and Board leadership, their participation is an important part of the program. The Intensive is designed to help each grantee assess its financial and organizational pressures, build on capacity it has already developed, and identify concrete opportunities to strengthen long-term sustainability. The two days will include expert education, peer learning, and individualized assessment focused on organizational sustainability and operational efficiency, including governance, revenue and reimbursement opportunities, shared services, strategic collaboration, restructuring, and other approaches where relevant.

Participation in the Intensive does not require an organization to agree in advance with any particular diagnosis or solution, but it does require active and good-faith engagement in the process.



Following the Intensive, NVCF and its consultants will invite a limited number of organizations to participate in Phase Two, which will provide more intensive, individualized technical assistance in one or more areas at no cost to your organization. Selection will consider organizational needs, interest, readiness, and the potential for meaningful impact. Participation in Phase Two is voluntary and subject to available resources; not every interested organization will be selected.

How to Apply

Submit a brief proposal narrative addressing the questions below, along with the required attachments, by **October 28, 2026**, to GrantsTeam@napavalleycf.org. Please answer as briefly as possible; concise responses are welcome, and applicants may use existing materials where they directly answer a question.

We aim to make this process accessible. Applicants are encouraged to contact Julia DeNatale, Chief Impact Officer, at julia@napavalleycf.org or 707-254-9565 x16 before submitting if they have questions about eligibility or fit.

Funding Decisions and Reporting

NVCF may request additional information or a conversation if needed to understand an application; applicants do not need to anticipate every possible question in the written proposal. Funding decisions will be communicated no later than **November 13, 2026**.

Grantees will submit a brief final report before the end of the grant period. Reporting will focus on how funds were used, meaningful changes or results, what the organization learned, and emerging needs. NVCF will not require grantees to attribute community-level outcomes solely to this grant.

About Elaine Jones

Elaine Maria Jones (1953-2024) was a champion for local nonprofits who devoted countless volunteer hours to improving the quality of life for all residents of the Valley. Among other roles, she was a Board member of the UpValley Family Centers and the St. Helena Hospital Foundation and served on committees for Napa Valley Community Foundation and Collective Napa Valley. Even as she bravely battled the recurrence of cancer, she fully participated in guiding the work of the organizations with which she was associated. With a unique combination of creativity, humor, and fundraising skills, she poured her passion for helping others into every endeavor and leaves behind a legacy of community service that may go unmatched for years to come.

About Napa Valley Community Foundation

Napa Valley Community Foundation works side-by-side with local donors and nonprofits to tackle the most important challenges the Valley faces. Now celebrating 32 years of service to the community, the Foundation has distributed more than \$120 million in grants to improve the quality of life for residents of the region and currently serves as the philanthropic partner to thousands of individuals, families, nonprofit agencies and corporations in Napa Valley and beyond. To learn more, visit napavalleycf.org.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Please answer the five questions below in a Word document [suggested limit: three pages]. Bullets are welcome. We're looking for information that helps us decide, not polished grant writing.

1. Organization & Request Snapshot

Organization name, Tax-ID/EIN, primary contact, amount requested, and a brief description of your role in Napa County's safety net.

2. Safety Net Role & Community Need

- What essential services do you provide, and who relies on them?
- About how many Napa County residents do you serve each year? Please share any demographic data you track.
- What gap would open up, or what would be hard to replace, if you had to reduce services?
- Has demand, or the needs of the people you serve, changed significantly?

3. Financial Context & Use of Funds

- What financial pressures or uncertainties do you face in FY27, such as funding cuts, rising costs, or reimbursement challenges? Please explain how these challenges affect your organization and, where applicable, point to supporting information in your attached financial documents. If there are other circumstances not clearly evidenced in your financial documents, please explain here.
- How would this general operating support grant help your organization sustain essential services, respond to financial pressures, or adapt to changing community needs?

4. Partnerships & Board Engagement

- Describe your most important collaborations with Napa County nonprofits, government agencies, and other partners and how these relationships help you serve the community. NVCF may contact these partners as part of our review.
- Describe your current working relationship with your Board. How does your Board currently support your organization's financial health, strategic direction, and long-term sustainability? Are there areas where greater Board engagement or support would be helpful?

5. Sustainability & Capacity Needs

- Looking 12-24 months ahead, what are the most significant challenges or opportunities affecting your organization's ability to sustain essential services?
- What changes, adaptations, or partnerships have you already pursued or are considering?
- Which organizational capacity issues are most critical to sustaining services and where would additional expertise, resources, or organizational capacity make the greatest difference? Examples include Board governance and recruitment, Medi-Cal/CalAIM billing or other revenue development, financial or data systems, shared back-office infrastructure, strategic partnerships, restructuring, or merger exploration. What would you need to make meaningful progress?

Required Attachments

Please provide the documents listed below to help us understand your organization's financial circumstances, including changes in revenue, operating costs, and other pressures affecting sustainability. We recognize that some challenges, such as known future funding reductions or anticipated increased demand for services based on subsidy reductions, may not yet be reflected in financial statements. Please clearly demonstrate what you can in the financial documents and explain any other circumstances in your proposal narrative.

1. Current operating budget, with year-to-date actuals through the most recent month available. Organizations that operate outside Napa County should also include a Napa County budget or a reasonable allocation showing the scale of local operations.
2. Budget-to-actual statement for the most recently completed fiscal year.
3. Most recent audited financial statements, or year-end financial statements if no audit is available.
4. Up to two additional years of financial documents, if needed, to show funding losses or rising expenses.
5. Most recent IRS Form 990, if it isn't readily available publicly.
6. Current Board of Directors list, including members of Board committees.