

Borrego Valley Endowment Fund Allocation Committee

Focus Areas & Evaluation Criteria

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Borrego Valley Endowment Fund (“the Fund”) has expanded its purview beyond its traditional, exclusive focus on healthcare in Borrego Springs. Consequently, the Fund now receives grant requests from individuals and organizations attempting to address many of the current and future needs of our community. Recognizing that addressing all the needs of the community is beyond its financial capability, the Fund has made a strategic decision to focus its resources on those proposals designed to create maximum beneficial impact that is community-wide, self-sustaining, and enduring.

Although its current endowment is restricted to funding healthcare related initiatives, the Fund seeks to facilitate philanthropy in eight additional Focus Areas that are of critical importance to our community. A designated gift to the Fund for any Focus Area will enable support for grants in that area.

Focus Areas

The Fund recognizes that creating maximum beneficial impact for the entire community means addressing the region’s largest challenges. Although there are many ways to group the region’s largest challenges, many of which are interrelated, the Fund has identified nine Focus Areas that define categories for proposals the Fund would like to support. One may think of these Areas of Interest as “buckets” into which any number of proposals may fit. They are:

- Healthcare
- Children
- Seniors
- Education
- Community Development

- Water Availability
- Air Quality
- Governance
- Biodiversity

Evaluation Criteria

The Fund's Allocation Committee has developed criteria by which proposals will be evaluated. The first three criteria are mandatory, meaning any proposal that does not meet these criteria will be excluded from further consideration. They are:

- Priority to the Fund
- Affordable
- Non-duplicative

The remaining criteria are used to determine the degree to which a proposal achieves The Fund's goals and values of 1) enduring, community-wide impact, 2) creating self-sustaining benefit, 3) capitalizing on the region's existing assets, 4) doing no harm, and 5) producing objective measures of benefit. The specific criteria are:

- Community-wide Benefit
- Enduring Benefit
- Self-sustaining
- Capitalizing Geographic Assets
- Capitalizing Cultural/Scientific Assets
- Do No Harm
- Measurable

As the largest and oldest philanthropic institution in the region, the Fund recognizes it is uniquely positioned to support the strategic development of Borrego Valley for decades to come. By turning its attention to the region's greatest challenges, by using its resources in a focused, disciplined manner, and by holding fast to its vision of Borrego Springs as a happy, healthy, sustainable desert community that serves as the gateway to the largest state park in California, the Fund will fulfill its original mission of promoting health—now in the broadest sense of the word—in the Borrego Valley.

Borrego Valley Endowment Fund Allocation Committee

Definitions of Mandatory Criteria

Fund Priority: The Fund maintains a list of Areas of Interest, which it believes captures the most important challenges facing the community and the region. This list is reviewed and updated annually by the Board of Trustees. Additionally, the Board of Trustees annually prioritizes these Areas of Interest and specifies which Areas will be eligible for funding during each year-long funding cycle.

Affordability: The Fund only invests in those proposals that fit within its annual budget for grant making. The Board of Trustees, using a 5-year rolling average of the Fund's performance, determines this budget annually.

Non-Duplicative: The Fund only invests in those proposals that are non-duplicative of existing efforts by other individuals, organizations, agencies, etc. in the community.

Borrego Valley Endowment Fund Allocation Committee

Definitions of Evaluation Criteria

Community-wide Benefit:

The Fund invests in those endeavors intended to create benefits on a community-wide or regional scale. Examples of community-wide or regional impact would include 1) proposals affecting the delivery of healthcare in the region, 2) proposals affecting the economic development of the region, 3) proposals affecting the governance of the region, and 4) proposals affecting the environmental health of the region.

Questions to consider:

- A) What community-wide benefit does the program seek to create, and in which Area of Interest?
- B) Do all segments of our community stand to benefit?
- C) Are there segments of our community that will not benefit from, or will be harmed by, the proposed project?
- D) Does this proposal address an issue of explicit interest to the community?
- E) Does the proposal integrate with key governmental agencies?
- F) Does the proposal have institutional support from key non-profits, regulatory agencies, and/or academic institutions?

Enduring Benefit:

The Fund invests in those endeavors intended to create benefits that will extend beyond the timeframe of the initial grant. Such proposals may create circumstances that promote future beneficial development. Examples of benefits enduring beyond the timeframe of the grant would be 1) those proposals that result in vibrant, sustainable, and self-sustaining economic development, 2) those proposals that result in improved health status, happiness, and wellbeing of the community, 3) those proposals that result in a more informed, inclusive, and democratically engaged community. In each of these examples, the proposal is viewed as creating the circumstances for future beneficial development.

Questions to consider:

- A) What is the enduring benefit the program seeks to create?
- B) What is the timeframe of the grant?
- C) What is the timeframe of the enduring benefit beyond the initial grant that the project proposes to create?
- D) How will the proposal create circumstances that will promote future beneficial development?
- E) How will the benefits of the proposal be projected into the future?

Self-sustaining:

The Fund invests in those endeavors that demonstrate an ability to become self-sustaining. This is in contrast to requests for funding for which the Fund is the only foreseeable source of funding. Examples of self sustaining projects include: 1) supporting the creation of a self-sustaining healthcare delivery corporation, 2) supporting the creation of self-funded non-profits focused on economic or community development, 3) supporting scientific endeavors designed to be the foundation upon which

further, self-funded scientific activity would be built.

Questions to Consider:

- A) What plan is in place for this activity to become self-sustaining?
- B) How feasible is the plan for becoming self-sustaining?
- C) How likely is this proposal, if successful, to attract other funding sources? What are those potential sources?
- D) What is the level of community support for the proposal?
- E) Does the proposed project coordinate with key governmental agencies?
- F) Is there institutional support, e.g. non-profits, NGO's, academic institutions, for the project?
- G) Does the proposal provide the Fund with an exit strategy?

Capitalizing on Geographic Assets:

The Fund invests in those endeavors that capitalize on AND preserve the Borrego Valley's unique geographic location and character, i.e. a small, rural community surrounded on all sides by 1000 square miles of protected wilderness that is a UNESCO designated Biosphere Reserve, a candidate for World Heritage Designation, a part of the University of California's Reserve System, the location of the only active rift valley in the Western Hemisphere, and one of the most biologically diverse ecosystems on the globe.

The Fund believes these geographic assets are key drivers of the region's economic engine—tourism, currently estimated at \$40M/year. As such, these drivers of economic activity must be developed and preserved as “the goose that lays the golden egg.” Examples of such endeavors that both capitalize and preserve these assets include 1) International Dark Sky Designation, 2) the creation of a Stewardship Council based

on the principles of Geotourism, 3) pursuit of World Heritage Designation for the region, and 4) the regionally-focused research activities of the UCI Steele-Burnand Anza-Borrego Desert Research Center.

Questions to consider:

- A) Which geographic asset(s) does the proposal address?
- B) How does the proposal enhance the asset(s)?
- C) How does the proposed project build upon AND preserve the geographic asset(s)?
- D) What degradation, if any, of the geographic asset(s) can be reasonably expected from this proposal?
- E) What mitigation for degradation of any asset is proposed?

Capitalize on Cultural/Scientific Assets

The Fund invests in those endeavors that build upon AND preserve the region's rich cultural and scientific heritages. The Fund believes these cultural and scientific assets are distinguishing characteristics of the region that will play an ever-increasing role as key drivers of eco- and cultural-tourism, forming the economic base of the region.

The region's cultural history of human habitation extends from First Nations, through Spanish exploration and American annexation, to Midcentury Modern Architecture. Our scientific heritage is based upon the unusual biodiversity of our climatically diverse geography as well as tectonic forces that give rise to the only rift valley in the Western Hemisphere and to some of the youngest and steepest mountains on Earth. These cultural, geographic, and tectonic factors form the underpinnings of our Biology, Paleontology, Geology, Archeology, and Cultural History.

Questions to consider:

- A) Which cultural or scientific asset(s) does the proposal address?
- B) How does the proposal enhance the asset(s)?
- C) How does the proposed project build upon AND preserve the cultural/scientific asset(s)?
- D) What degradation, if any, of the cultural/scientific asset(s) can be reasonably expected from this proposal?
- E) What mitigation for degradation of any asset is proposed?

Do No Harm:

The Fund invests in those endeavors that promote meeting our region's human needs equitably, without harming the environment, and without sacrificing the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Examples of activities that demonstrate this do-no-harm principle are: 1) the Valley's current efforts to achieve sustainable yields from our only water source in an equitable manner for generations to come, 2) community efforts to develop economically in such a way as to not degrade those characteristics of the community that drive our primary industry—tourism.

Questions to consider:

- A) Does the proposal operate within the constraints of "Do no harm?"
- B) What are the envisioned environmental impacts of the proposal?
- C) Does the proposed project create or mitigate harm to the environment?

- D) Does the proposed project facilitate or impair the ability of future generations to meet their needs?

Measurement:

The Fund invests in those endeavors that provide objective measures of proposed benefit(s). In its determination to “do good,” the Fund realizes that only through objective measurement will it be possible to determine if in fact the Fund has achieved its goals.

Evaluating the performance of proposed projects requires collecting and analyzing data that determines whether the overall objectives and intermediate goals are being met. Such data indicates the efficiency, effectiveness, and the impact of the project. Objective monitoring of the project informs decisions about improving, continuing, or discontinuing the project.

Questions to consider:

- A) How is the benefit of the project to be measured, i.e. what data will be collected?
- B) How does the data collected relate to the benefit produced by the proposal?
- C) Who is responsible for collecting and analyzing data?
- D) How often, where, by whom, and to whom will reports be made?
- E) Who will own the data?