



Community Advisory Board
Community Improvement Grant
2023 Application Form

Project Name: Bags of Love Program
Requested Grant Amount: \$ 2,500
Other Funding Sources: \$ 11,000
TOTAL Project Cost: \$ 44,120
Project Physical Address: 6550 Railroad Avenue, Forestville, CA 95436
Group or organization: Food For Thought
Nearest cross street: Railroad Avenue & Forestville Street
How did you hear about the Grant Program? City of Santa Rosa CAB website
What is your CAB area? (Check one)
Property Owner (see page 3 for all requirements):
Food For Thought Non-profit org
Contact Person responsible for Grant Application:
Tom Lennon TomL@FFTfoodbank.org 707-887-1647 x 114
6550 Railroad Avenue Forestville, CA 95436

GRANT SCOPE: This Application Packet describes the intended use of the requested Grant funds to complete the Project identified above and the elements listed in the Project Budget. I declare under penalty of perjury, under the laws of the State of California, that the information contained in this Application Packet, including required attachments, is accurate.

Print Name Tom Lennon Signature [Handwritten Signature]
Title Grants Manager Date 06/22/2023

Food For Thought



healing with
food+love

6550 Railroad Avenue
Forestville, CA 95436
(707) 887-1647

FFTfoodbank.org

1. Describe your project, including objectives and goals, and explain how your project will meet these goals.

Food For Thought (FFT) provides lifesaving nutrition support to people facing food insecurity and serious medical conditions in Sonoma County. Founded during the AIDS crisis in the 1980s, over time we have expanded our range of services and we now support over 5,000 food-insecure people annually, providing more than 330,000 meals to people facing a range of different conditions and situations, including homelessness, cancer, HIV, diabetes, pregnancy, and congestive heart failure. Lack of access to healthy food is a social determinant of poor health outcomes, and our evidence-based approach recognizes the essential role of proper nutrition in significantly improving health outcomes and reducing healthcare costs. As part of the Food is Medicine movement, we are committed to delivering effective, compassionate nutrition care to those in our community who need it most.

The goal of this grant is to provide healthy meals to seriously ill people who are experiencing homelessness in Santa Rosa. We know that many people facing homelessness also experience serious barriers to nutrition services. These barriers can include lack of transportation or kitchen facilities and cognitive or mental health challenges. To meet this critical need in our community, our Registered Dietician designed the Bags of Love program, which reaches Sonoma County residents who are homeless and seriously ill. At FFT, we feel that Bags of Love is a particularly important program during this current period of extremely high costs of living in our area, a problem that can quickly force people into homelessness and hunger.

Through the Bags of Love program, we provide bags of food that are appropriate for homeless peoples' particular circumstances. Each bag is compact, shelf-stable, and contains the equivalent of 11 meals. Bags contain healthy, ready-to-eat food that does not require equipment to prepare, such as crackers and peanut butter and pop-top cans of fruit, meat, and soup, as well as disposable utensils and napkins. We deliver the bags to health centers and homeless outreach agencies across Sonoma County, including Santa Rosa Community Health clinic locations and Face to Face Sonoma County AIDS Network. The staff at these agencies vet client eligibility and distribute the bags directly to clients. This innovative program overcomes barriers and provides dignity and nourishment, while also acting as an incentive to members of the homeless community to receive medical and other social services from our partner agencies.

In 2022, FFT distributed 2,460 bags of food to agencies in Santa Rosa, and we expect to provide more than 2,000 over the course of 2023.

One recipient of the program told us that he would "probably starve" without getting regular Bags of Love.

2. What is your outreach plan? Please also explain how your project will be open and accessible to the community.

We currently collaborate with a dozen health and homeless service agencies countywide to distribute food through the Bags of Love program, including six sites across Santa Rosa. We work closely with our partners to ensure they have the bags of food they need to serve their patients and clients. These partner organizations share the same values as FFT, namely compassion, respect, inclusion, and cultural responsiveness.

The food we provide to our partner agencies serves as an incentive to clients to receive other social services. Your support will not only help our clients, but will also help accomplish the health and human services outcomes of our program partners across Santa Rosa. In these ways, your support for this program can have an amplifying impact on wider community health issues in the longer term.

3. Describe the community support for your project.

What organizations, neighborhood associations, non-profits, residents, etc. are involved in the project? What roles are they playing and how collaborative is the project? What other support exists for your project?

We currently work with the following partners to distribute Bags of Love in the City of Santa Rosa:

- Santa Rosa Community Health - Caritas
- Santa Rosa Community Health – Dutton
- Santa Rosa Community Health - VIDA
- Santa Rosa Community Health – Pediatric Clinic
- Santa Rosa Community Health - Vista
- Face to Face Sonoma County AIDS Network

Our community partners screen their patients/clients for housing and food insecurity and their ability to access healthy food based on their overall physical and mental health. When a patient/client is identified as being in need of food assistance, a caseworker or healthcare provider will then offer them food through FFT's Bags of Love program.

In the words of Mary, who works at one of our partner organizations, "FFT's Bags of Love is such a thoughtful program. Providing nutritious meals in a way that is accessible is a wonderful way to connect and build trust with people. While providing a man with a bag of food, our nurse noticed that he had a large growth on his face. She suspected that it might be cancer. Due to the bond they had formed, she was able to convince him to let her take him to a doctor who provided treatment. We have Bags of Love on hand in our street outreach van. Being able to offer healthy food to someone suffering from malnutrition on the spot makes a big difference."

4. Is there ongoing maintenance required for your project? If so, what is the plan for maintenance and who is going to be responsible?

While this program does not require physical maintenance such as repairs, it does require funding to allow us to purchase the food and utensils that we distribute to our unsheltered clients. The successful delivery of this program requires ongoing communication with our partner agencies to ensure that they have sufficient bags on hand to meet the weekly needs of their clients/patients. When a partner agency requires more bags of food, our food bank staff and volunteers pack and deliver more to their site, meaning that our work continues throughout the year. At FFT, we are fortunate to have an experienced Development team who will continue to research and apply for sources of funding for the Bags of Love program in order to ensure financial sustainability for the program and ongoing support for our clients.

5. Projects should reflect environmental consciousness regarding materials, energy, and conservation. Please describe how your project will meet this goal.

FFT has a proven commitment to environmental sustainability and this commitment runs through our programmatic activities. In addition to municipal recycling and compost, we also compost the majority of our food waste in our onsite organic permaculture garden. We installed a 30kW solar array on our building in 2005. We do not use bottled water, we purchase recycled paper bags, and we limit our use of plastics wherever possible, while also making use of reusable or compostable plates and utensils at our events. In general, we try to make the greenest choices whenever possible.

6. Please provide a brief statement on how you will keep project participants safe during implementation (e.g. social distancing protocols, gloves, masks, etc.).

As we work closely with healthcare centers in order to deliver this program, we follow all public health measures that those facilities have in place, including strict food safety protocol and adherence to any city, county, or state health requirements and recommendations that may be in place at a given time.

7. Project Budget: Grant requests may not exceed \$2,500. Please explain how the requested funds will be used, how the cost estimate was determined and the status of matching funds. This section is supplemental information to the Cost Estimate Form.

All funds acquired through this grant would be designated specifically for direct program costs of the Bags of Love program in the City of Santa Rosa, specifically the purchase of food. We arrived at the cost estimate per bag based on the cost of all the food included in the bag (crackers and peanut butter and pop-top cans of fruit, meat, and soup, disposable utensils and napkins). Funding from the City of Santa Rosa Community Advisory Board would allow us to purchase food for 177 Bags of Love to distribute to homeless individuals in Santa Rosa. Within the last twelve months, we have secured the following additional funding for the Bags of Love program: \$9,000 from the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and \$2,000 from the Russian River Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence.



PROJECT NAME: Bags of Love Program

Cost Estimate: List all features, amenities, supplies and plans (Add or delete rows as needed)

Cost Estimate		Requested Funds	Match
Salaries/Wages (In-kind only)			
	Staff time - 480 hours at \$28/hour	N/A	\$13,440
Contracted Services			
Materials/Supplies			
	Purchased food for Bags of Love - \$14.09 per bag x 2,000 bags	\$2,500	\$28,180
Printing/Reproduction			
Rentals			
Other			
Total Requested Grant Amount		A. \$2,500	
Total Matching Funds			B. \$41,620
Total Project Cost (A+B)		\$44,120	

Other Funding Sources:

Funding Sources	Date Committed	Amount
Russian River Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence	4/12/2023	\$2,000
Sonoma County Board of Supervisors	12/5/2022	\$9,000
Total		\$11,000