



# Reporting Out: The Community Building Grant Program

Welcome to MaineCF's Community Building Grant Program Report. For the first time, we are sharing information about our grantmaking process and decisions to:

- Be accountable to our nonprofit partners, communities, and donors by showing what was funded
- Share what we saw and learned from applicants, including any trends and lessons learned
- Help nonprofits understand, through reporting and examples, how the program works.

We appreciate the time and effort MaineCF's nonprofit partners put into their grant proposals. Each proposal we receive increases our understanding of the needs in Maine. We wanted to repay this effort with more detailed information about the 2021 Community Building Grant Program.

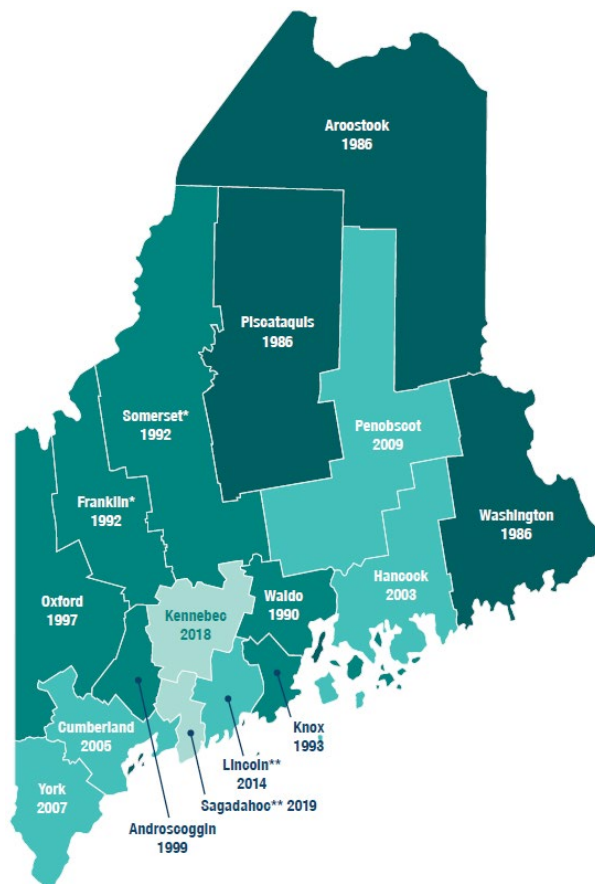
If you are not familiar with the Community Building Grant Program, please see the program information here: [Community Building](#). You can see a full listing of grant recipients from the past three years here: [Community Building recent grants](#).

Please note that this report focuses exclusively on the Community Building Grant Program and is not reflective of MaineCF's other grant programs. You'll find information on other grant programs and deadlines here: [Available grants and deadlines](#).

## How Community Building Grant Program Decisions Are Made

The Community Building Grant Program is administered through MaineCF's County and Regional Program involving 14 committees. Grant decisions are made by these county and regional committees, each comprised of eight to 12 local volunteer county advisors who use a permanent county or regional fund to provide support for nonprofits in their region.

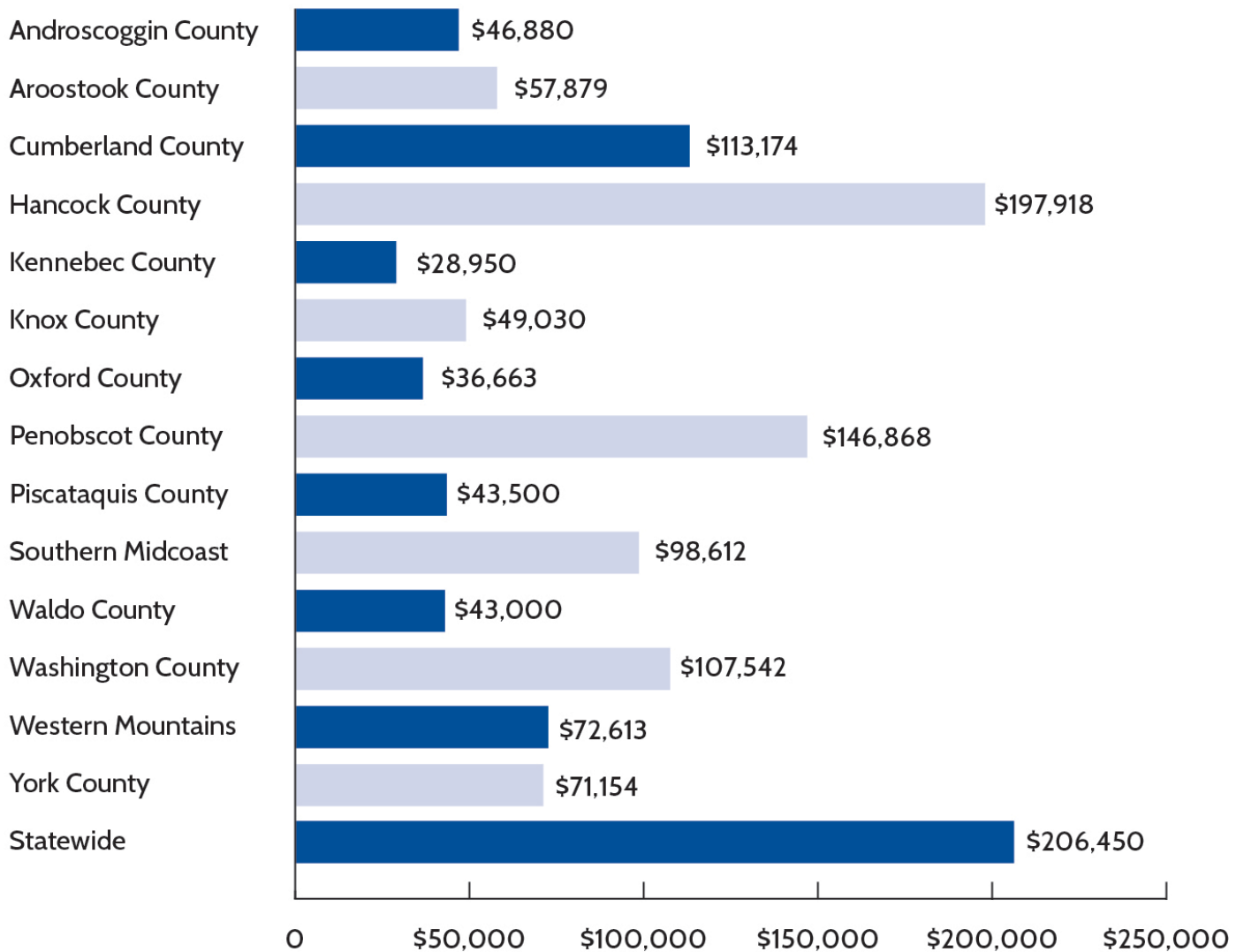
MaineCF launched its county and regional funds at different times over the past 35 years and fund sizes and grant budgets vary greatly due, in part, to the number of years a fund has been in existence as well as the number of annual gifts and bequests it has received. Some counties and regions also have additional related funds that committees distribute. The dual role of advisors is as grantmakers and builders of these philanthropic resources.



## 2021 Community Building Summary

In the 2021 cycle, our county and regional committees distributed **\$1,320,323** to **178** nonprofit organizations. Nearly half--47%--of proposals received funding and the average award was \$7,286.

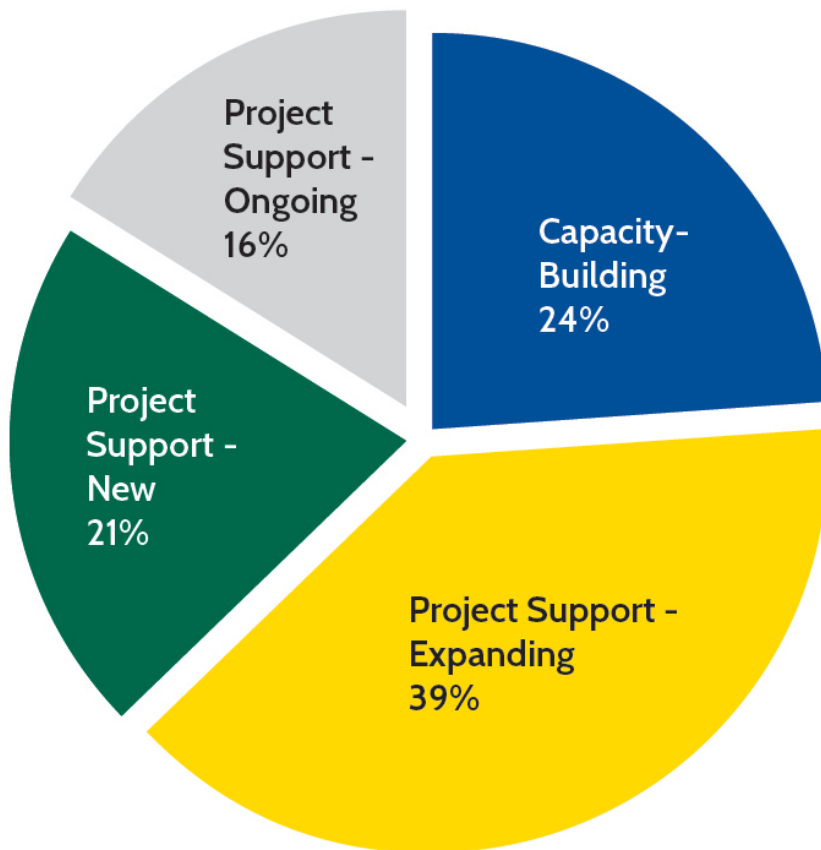
### Grants by County or Regional Committee



## Types of Support Granted

The Community Building Grant Program offered different types of support. Capacity-building grants funded activities that would make organizations stronger, more efficient, or more effective. Project grants supported new, expanding, or ongoing projects or programs. Committees have no preference on which type of grant is supported.

In 2021, we saw the following distribution of support:



### Capacity Building: Moving Training Online

During the pandemic, the Independence Association, a Brunswick-area social service agency that assists adults and children with disabilities in living full and inclusive lives, saw its workforce shrink considerably. The challenges of balancing family needs, including remote schooling, with work increased their turnover to almost 50%. Part of the problem was the inability to provide flexible options for the intensive required training for direct support professionals and case managers. With a capacity-building grant from MaineCF, the Independence Association plans to move core initial and advancement trainings to an online library for staff to access anytime. This effort will also save the agency money over the long term while freeing up human resources staff to focus on employee retention and advancement.

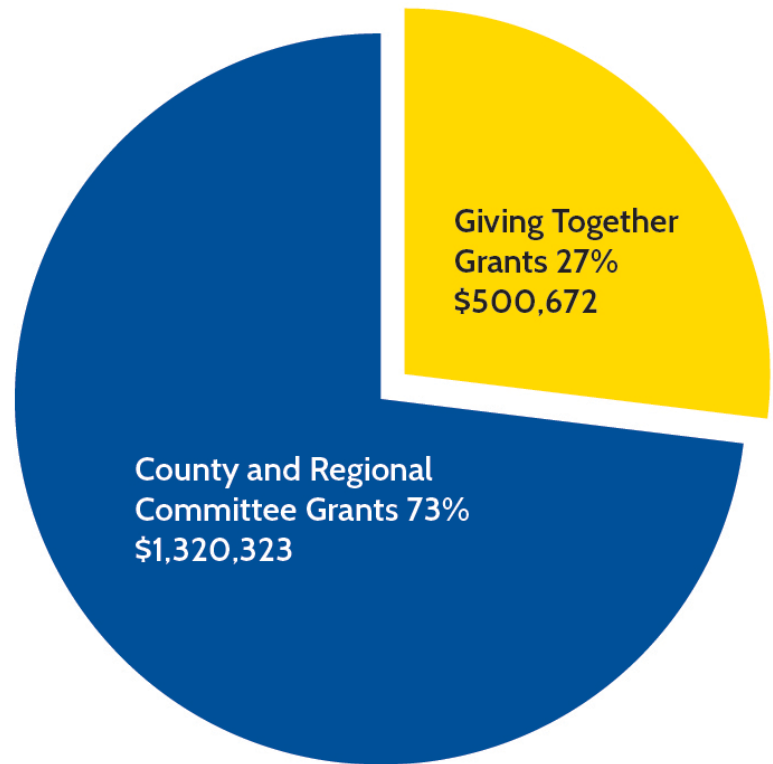
### Project Support: Meeting Expanding Needs

The pandemic stretched the Rockland District Nursing Association's ability to provide in-home nursing services to predominantly low and moderate income older residents of seven Knox county towns. With access to medical facilities limited or unsafe, requests for visits went up 20% and staffing was strained. A grant from the Knox County Fund will add nursing hours, build sustainability throughout the organization, and help clients remain safely at home.

## Giving Together: How Donors Support Proposals

In addition to the grants awarded by county and regional committees, applicants to the Community Building Grant Program may receive funding through our Giving Together program. Giving Together allows donors with donor-advised funds to review and fund proposals that meet their interest areas, whether geographic or subject. In addition to helping donors meet their charitable goals and learn about new organizations or projects, this connection allows MaineCF to fund more proposals.

In 2021, donor-advised funds made 89 grants that accounted for one-quarter of all proposals funded through the Community Building Grant Program. In addition to enabling more grant funding, the Giving Together program helps connect more donors and organizations and opens up potential for future support.



### ***Giving Together: Growing Regional Resources***

A major benefit of Giving Together is the ability to support areas where county and regional funds are smaller. In 2020, a new anonymous donor-advised fund was established at MaineCF with an interest in Franklin County, specifically the Farmington area. In 2021, it fully funded two proposals totaling \$20,000 through Giving Together. This resource made a huge difference to the Western Mountains Committee, which had a grant budget of \$70,000.

## Funding Themes

Issue area	Number of grants
Education	105
Arts, Culture, Humanities	89
Civil Rights, Social Action, or Advocacy	66
Food, Agriculture, or Nutrition	27
Housing or Shelter	26
Human Services	26
Health Care	25
Animal-Related	21
Diseases, Disorders, or Medical Disciplines	18
Employment	18
Environment	6
Mental Health or Crisis Intervention	5
Youth Development	2
Public or Social Benefit	1
Recreation and Sport	1

Community Building Grant Program applicants may indicate up to three issue areas they intend to address through their organization or project. It's important to note that this information is provided by the applicant and may differ from how others might see their work.

The top issue areas in both requests and grants in 2021 were: arts, culture, and the humanities; education; and civil rights, social action, and advocacy. Here is the distribution of issue areas across all funded grants. Because each grantee could select up to three issue areas, there may be more than one issue area per grant.

It's important to note that the issue areas of grants correspond percentage-wise to the issue areas of proposals; there is no preference for a certain issue area.

**It's our hope** that this report helps you understand more about the Community Building Grant Program, what we saw in 2021, and how our donors support the process. Any changes to the grant program for 2022, along with details for informational webinars, will be available on our website after November 15.

We are always looking to improve our grantmaking and welcome your feedback. Please send any comments to [grants@mainecf.org](mailto:grants@mainecf.org).