



During 2019 and 2020, the WRWF Grants Committee leadership and dozens of team members took a deep dive into evaluating our grant-making process. Their work included collecting and discussing member input, researching best practices for collective giving, examining funding impacts, identifying community needs and more.

In large part these efforts were initiated by results from the WRWF member survey conducted in 2018, in which members made a few things clear:

- 78% supported the idea of multi-year grants
- 60% supported large scale grants (more than \$50,000)
- 80% supported or were open to the idea of making grants to fund a pressing community need
- 87% supported sustainability grants

One of the resulting policy changes proposed by the team and approved by the Board, combined these elements into one new initiative: a multi-year, large-scale grant that focuses on an area of pressing community need.

Beginning in the 2022 grant cycle, WRWF awarded one issue-based, two-year grant of up to \$200,000. The Focus Grant allows us to invest \$100,000 per year for two years in an area of acute and persistent need in Blaine County to “move the needle” at a level we have yet to achieve.

A Task Force was formed to (1) study potential areas of focus for this grant, and (2) recommend an implementation process to include a vote of the membership on both the area of focus as well as the final grant award. In April 2021, the WRWF membership selected “Closing the Opportunity Gap in Education” as its first-ever Focus Grant topic.

The 2022 and 2023 Focus Grant Committee is co-chaired by Louisa Moats and Laura Midgley.