Donation Request Guidelines

OUR MISSION
Improve and enrich the lives of families and children

OUR FOCUS
Our giving priorities include supporting programs or organizations in the areas of healthcare, housing, hunger, and education, especially those serving women and children. Our giving takes place throughout the United States where we operate stores, distribution centers, and our corporate office.

WHAT WE FUND
Support is provided in the form of monetary gifts, gift cards, and merchandise in-kind. Significant partnership projects and capital requests are by invitation only. Big Lots Foundation expects requests from 501(c)3 public nonprofit organizations only. Requests from individuals, families, and other sources will not be accepted. We receive a very high volume of requests. Only the most competitive of those will be considered. Fewer will be funded.

At minimum, nonprofits requesting support from Big Lots must:
• Be a 501(c)3 public nonprofit charity as sanctioned by the IRS;
• Serve areas where we operate stores (across the United States), distribution centers (Columbus, OH, Tremont, PA, Durant, OK, Montgomery, AL, Rancho Cucamonga, CA), or our corporate office (Columbus, Ohio);
• Not exhibit discriminatory behavior or practices

Big Lots Foundation will consider requests from organizations:
Healthcare
• Improving healthcare through research and education
• Providing preventative education and care
• Providing affordable, critical medical care
Housing
• Preventing families or individuals from losing their housing
• Providing affordable, stable housing
• Providing emergency shelter for families and individuals
Hunger
• Providing nutritious food or meals
• Providing emergency food assistance
• Educating families or individuals about the importance of healthy eating
Education
• Providing service-learning curriculum that aligns with education standards
• Promoting servant leadership through academic and experiential learning
• Improving classroom learning outcomes through innovation

Priority is given to projects that:
• Have a Big Lots associate involved as a board member, board committee member, or key volunteer;
• Support needy families, helping them transition from poverty to self-sufficiency;
• Come from organizations with strong fiscal management and board member commitment and involvement.

Note: Gifts outside of this criterion are considered on a case-by-case basis. For instance, grant awards for environmental causes, diversity, or the arts.

WHAT WE DO NOT FUND
• Organizations that are not 501(c)3 public charities
• Individuals, for any purpose (e.g. hardship, illness, scholarship)
• Political candidates, committees, or organizations
• Athletes, teams, sporting events or tournaments of any kind
• Fraternal, labor, social, or veterans organizations
• Churches and religious sectarian organizations, with the exception of those that have an outreach program that benefits the whole community
• Non-academic educational activities such as bands, choirs, proms, after-proms, graduations, etc.
• Individual K-12 schools and public service agencies such as police and fire departments
• Organizations that spend more than 20% of their revenue on overhead and fundraising costs
• Organizations that discriminate against people on the basis of age, race, creed, gender, handicap, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or national origin
• Staff positions for government agencies
• Requests to fund publications, or audio or video productions, unless they serve as supporting materials to a project within our focus
• Requests to support travel for groups or individuals when that is the primary reason for the proposal