

INSTAGRANTS

Looking for project ideas? Consider adapting one of these highly successful Gratitude Grant projects for your community.

Funding the Arts



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Arts and music programs are often underfunded and can be the first to suffer from budget cuts. Elks can create opportunities for students to exercise their creative sides and express themselves through the arts.



STEP 1

Get Started

Determine where there is an opportunity for an arts program. If programs are offered by local schools, contact principals and teachers to see how they can be improved or supported. Is there an afterschool arts program in your community, or a VA hospital in need of supplies for art therapy? Find the need!



STEP 2

Make it a Success

Consider focusing on different mediums. Supporting visual art, music, and dance programs helps students to explore and find their favorite way to be creative.

Art programs may need instruments, painting or drawing supplies, or other materials that are not included in their budgets or funding.



STEP 3

Make it Your Own

Host [a musical instrument petting zoo](#) at your Lodge to help students choose their instrument. Or, at the end of the program cycle, hold an exhibition or performance night at the Lodge celebrating the artwork. It is a great way to show members the role the Lodge can play in the community and encourages students to be proud of their work.

Literacy Programs



Elwood, Ind., Lodge No. 368

PROJECT OVERVIEW

According to the [National Children's Book and Literacy Alliance](#), 65 percent of fourth graders do not read at a proficient level. An estimated 61 percent of families living in households below the poverty line have no age-appropriate books in their homes. Foster a love for reading and increase literacy levels in your community by supporting a reading program.



STEP 1

Get Started

Determine the scope of your literacy project. Consider building and filling Little Free Libraries around your community. Start a large-print book club at your local nursing home. Provide braille books and audiobooks to schools or organizations that work with people who are blind. The possibilities are endless.

Instead of the Dictionary Project, provide children with stories that they can sit down and read to foster an interest in literacy. Some children may respond better to graphic novels or audiobooks, and that's okay! There's no wrong way to read.



STEP 2

Make it a Success

Consider inviting library representatives to your event to sign families up for library cards. Partner with schools and read to students after sponsoring a day at the Scholastic Book Fair.



STEP 3

Make it Your Own

Many libraries have a summer reading program. Start a winter reading program! Provide rewards for participants who reach certain milestones to encourage reading goals all year long.

Physical Fitness and Sports Programs



Watertown, S.D., Lodge No. 838

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Physical fitness can reduce the risk of chronic diseases, improve mental health, and promote social connections. Youth who participate in sports programs develop important life skills such as teamwork and communication, while adults benefit from stress relief, improved self-esteem, and enhanced quality of life. Elks can offer a wide range of sports programs that are accessible and inclusive.



STEP 1

Get Started

Physical activity can benefit many different populations. Focus your program on those most in need. Your Lodge can start a pickleball league for residents at nursing homes or veterans with PTSD. Or work with your school district to begin a sports program for children with disabilities. Take a page out of [Santa Barbara, Calif., Lodge No. 613](#)'s book and start a fishing program that teaches families facing food insecurity how to fish as a source for food.

Remember, CIP projects must have a charitable focus. Ensure that your project is doing all it can to assist people from marginalized communities.



STEP 2

Make it a Success

Go beyond donating sports equipment. See if any Lodge members can coach a team. Or, host a Lodge outing and attend a game or event. Be your project's biggest cheerleaders!



STEP 3

Make it Your Own

Have an outdoor space at your Lodge? Consider hosting a sporting event there. Or organize a sports equipment drive to get the community involved. At the end of the season, host a banquet to keep the team spirit thriving.

Community Safety Days



Christian County, Mo., Lodge No. 2777

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Safety Days allow Elks to bring together members of the community to learn about safety in a fun and interactive way. Whether it's CPR and first aid demonstrations, fire safety workshops, or bicycle and car seat safety checks, these events raise awareness about safety issues, empower individuals to prevent accidents, and promote community engagement and collaboration.



STEP 1

Get Started

Talk to firefighters or community leaders. Has there been an increase in accidents in any particular area? Determine the scope of the project by pinpointing what the community needs most.

Be sure to work with food pantries or other organizations that assist families who are under-resourced. Provide each family with new fire detectors, first aid kits, and information to make individual family escape plans.



STEP 2

Make it a Success

Determine what organizations you will partner with. Contact fire departments, hospitals, law enforcement, swimming instructors or libraries to provide booths on fire safety, first aid, swim skills and disaster preparedness.



STEP 3

Make it Your Own

Harness the creativity of your Lodge members and include Elroy! Use the free resources provided by the Drug Awareness Program to have your own DAP station. Does your Lodge have a specialty food? Serve it at the event!