

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What are the Raise the Blues and Raise Up Umatilla County Campaigns?

The Campaigns are a joint effort to raise funds that will exist forever to benefit Garfield, Columbia, Walla Walla, and Umatilla Counties by making grants to support local nonprofits or projects in those counties. In Columbia and Garfield Counties, the Campaign also includes a scholarship fund called LaunchNW Scholarship Fund that will make scholarships to graduating seniors in those counties.

What is a Forever Fund? What does it do?

A Forever Fund is the equivalent of a charitable foundation that anyone can participate in by donating money or assets into the Fund. Those donations are professionally managed and used, forever, to make grants to support the needs and opportunities of the community as those needs change over time - today, tomorrow, and for future generations. Through this Campaign, people can donate to any of these Forever Funds:

Garfield County Forever Fund
Columbia County Forever Fund
Walla Walla County Forever Fund
Milton-Freewater Athena Weston Forever Fund
Greater Hermiston Forever Fund
Umatilla County Forever Fund
Blue Mountains Forever Fund (which benefits all four counties)

Who decides what grants are made by a Forever Fund?

Now and forever these decisions will be made by a volunteer committee of people who live in, or have deep roots in, the area that the Fund benefits. For example, the people who decide what grants are made by the Garfield County Forever Fund are residents of Garfield County. These committees' work will be administered by the Blue Mountain Community Foundation's professional staff.

What kind of assets can I donate to the Fund?

Anything. The Forever Fund can accept donations of cash (including donations via credit card), checks, stocks, bonds, LLC interests, wheat or other commodities, real estate, farmland, cars, crypto, etc.

What is the goal of the campaign?

We are asking people to consider two options. One, donate money or other assets to a Fund before the campaign ends on December 31, 2024 (we call these donations "today" donations). Two, include money or other assets for a Fund in your will, trust, or estate (we call these "tomorrow" donations). Many people are doing both – donating today dollars and tomorrow dollars.

How does the match work for gifts made during the Campaign?

Thanks to generous donors, the first \$2,035,000 donated during the Campaign will be matched on a 50% basis. So, if you donate \$100,000 to the Columbia County Forever Fund today, these donors will add \$50,000 to that same Forever Fund. Donation pledges that start during the Campaign with a commitment to give over the next 5 years may also qualify for a 50% match.

How does the match work for bequest pledges?

Generous donors have offered an additional \$2,000,000 to provide a match of \$20,000 for the first 100 "tomorrow" gifts that total \$100,000 or 5% of a donor's estate. In other words, if you commit to leaving at least \$100,000 or 5% of your estate to the Columbia County Forever Fund, this donor will add \$20,000 to that Forever Fund today. If your estate is small, so that 5% is only \$4,000, that still counts and gets the \$20,000 match.

Can I make my own Forever Fund?

Yes you can! You can make your own Fund and call it whatever you want (such as naming it after you or your family). And you can decide what geographic areas will benefit from the money you donate into your Forever Fund. If you want to receive matching funds, the only requirement is that the decisions on what grants are made from your Fund must be made by the community (not you) and can be made to any nonprofit in your defined geographic area.

Of course, you can make your own Forever Fund for which you make the grant decisions each year and/or that are limited to making grants to only certain, or certain types of, nonprofits. Blue Mountain Community Foundation hosts lots of Funds just like that; however, that Fund won't receive matching dollars.

What are the fees charged by BMCF for a Forever Fund? How much of my donation actually goes to the effort?

BMCF's fee to manage funds are currently 1% annually on the first \$250,000 and drops goes down to 0.65% on amounts over \$1 million. In addition, the wealth manager hired by BMCF charges 0.35% for their work. There are no other fees, such as tax preparation fees, accounting fees, or legal fees. This is true even if your donation is a complicated asset such as real estate, securities, farmland, crypto, or anything else. This means that 98.65% to 99% of your donation goes to support our community.

Why would I make a gift or leave a bequest to a Forever Fund rather than directly to a local nonprofit organization?

We hope you will consider doing both - give now and in your estate directly to the nonprofits that inspire you and include a Forever Fund or LaunchNW Fund in your giving as well. Having said that, there are a couple of reasons why you might want to donate to the Forever Fund rather than only directly to nonprofits.



One, donating to a nonprofit directly is kind of like putting money into a charitable checking account. Your donation may be spent quickly. Donating to a Forever Fund is like putting money into a savings account that will exist forever.

Two, the needs in our community change over the years. Maybe you are attracted to the idea of leaving money to your community that will support whatever the most pressing needs of your community area over time, as those needs change.