



Grant Readiness Checklist

This document is not intended to be a score sheet. It serves as a checklist to assist your organization's appeal to prospective funding sources. The absence of suggested items should not deter you from seeking grant funding but to guide you towards making those items available.

Does your organization do something important?

- Can you show the need for what you do?
- Can you show how your impact is significant and appropriate?
- Do you have competition? If so, who are your direct competitors?
- If competition is present, can you make a case for why your program should be funded over others and demonstrate that you are not duplicating services.

Who do you serve and why?

- Can you provide a detailed description of your clientele?
- Can you describe how they matter to you and to your donors?
- Can you explain why you have focused on this group or service area?

Do you what you do well?

- Are you accredited or qualified in appropriate ways?
- Do you regularly and conscientiously evaluate staff performance and program success?
- Can you provide award information or complimentary letters as third party endorsements?
- Do you continue to improve your performance?
- Can you produce evidence (reports, statistics, and human interest stories) of impact outcomes?

Do you make a difference?

- Can you describe your work in terms of benefits and outcomes, not merely in features?
- Do you have specific program plans and budgets?
- Can you explain and demonstrate the difference you make?
- Can you explain why that difference matters on a local, regional, or national level?

Are you a smart investment? A safe one?

- Is your mission statement clear?
- Do you have a vision statement that clearly articulates where your organization wants to go?
- Do you have qualified consultants, collaborators, advisors, staff, board members, and volunteers?
- Is your board diverse? Do the members represent the demographics of your community?
- Do you demonstrate the best practice in your field?
- Does your governing body have a clear purpose and clear, appropriate roles?
- Do you have effective up to date by laws?
- Do you have a personnel policy and an ethics statement?
- Are you accredited or qualified in appropriate ways?
- Do you have a charitable edge? Professional and innovative edges?
- Do you have a system for sound financial management in place?
- Is your current financial situation reasonable?
- Do you have an annual audit?
- Do you have a resource development/fundraising plan?
- Does your organization operate under guidelines for restricted financial gifts and sponsorships?
- Do you regularly maximize impact by replicating or extending projects/
- Do you have plans to remedy any gaps here?

Are you a good partner?

Internally:

- Do you supply your mission internally?
- Do you say “thank you” for grants in an appropriate manner?
- Do you manage projects intelligently and well to include plans for evaluation?
- Do you have the capacity to submit thorough, useful reports and on time?
- Do you supply visual evidence of your work the donor can use for its own promotion?
- Do you maintain the relationship even when you aren’t asking for funding?

Externally:

- Can you show how you behave well in your own community?
- Can you demonstrate successful partnerships with credible, important partners?
- Can you demonstrate your awareness of both your environment and your donor’s
- Can you show outcomes that will compel the entity to fund you a second time?