



Tips for Successful Grant Applications

- It's a good idea to review the entire process and all application questions before you begin. This helps you plan an application that tells your whole story and covers key scoring criteria.
- **Please don't include multiple projects or purposes in one application. This makes it difficult to prioritize among other proposals in that grant cycle. For example, an application that asks for equipment and operating costs often drops to the bottom of the priority list.**
- The online application system limits the length of your answers. You don't need to fill the entire space. Concise answers help Board volunteers (who read multiple applications) get the big picture.
- Be clear about the difference your proposal will make to the community. Applications that describe a clear impact will score better. Also, focus more on describing the solution than the problem.
- Be clear and objective about the number of individuals who will be impacted by the proposal, especially the percentage of people who will benefit are Scott County residents.
- The amount you ask for in a proposal is a big factor in how likely it is to be funded. Keep in mind that the RDA typically receives requests for 2-3 times the amount of dollars we have to give. A focus for the Board is to help as many people as possible with available dollars.
- Applicants must provide recent Balance Sheet and Income Statement. Up-to-date financial documents are one indicator of a strong and accountable organization. Outdated or missing financial information may disqualify your proposal.
- **We no longer require that nonprofits send the DETERMINATION LETTER and CERTIFICATE OF EXISTANCE. The online application system allows us to verify your nonprofit status. If there are questions about your nonprofit status, we will contact you.**

Common Reasons for Low Scoring on Grant Proposals

- Applications are unclear or missing required information
- The need is not adequately described
- Proposal seems too ambitious – not realistic
- Budget appears vague or unrealistic
- Budget lacks details about other funding sources and the leverage available
- Impact described doesn't justify amount requested, especially when compared to other proposals
- Past experience with applicant does not demonstrate expertise for successful implementation
- No or limited correlation to agency mission, vision and values – seems to show mission creep
- Benefit for Scott County residents is unclear or insignificant