



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 in one application. This makes it difficult to prioritize all proposals. For example, an application that asks for equipment and operating costs will be difficult to score.**
- The online application system limits the length of your answers. You do not need to fill the entire space. Concise answers help volunteers (who read multiple applications) better understand each proposal.
- 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 main focus of the Board is to benefit as many people as possible with available dollars.
- Outputs and outcomes can be challenging to create, collect, and report. However, clear metrics help readers understand what will be different when your proposal is implemented.
- Applicants must provide recent Balance Sheet and Income Statement. Up-to-date financial documents are one indicator of a strong 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 Outdated or missing financial information may disqualify your proposal.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 systems allows us to verify the status of nonprofits. 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 defined
- Proposal seems too ambitious – not realistic
- Budget is vague, unrealistic or lacks other funding sources
- 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
- Impact on Scott County residents is unclear or insignificant