

GRANTS – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Qualification Questions

Do small or new nonprofits have a chance of winning a grant?

Yes. Grants have been awarded to small, medium, and large-sized nonprofits. Applications are evaluated on the strength of the organization, the strength of the project, the project's sustainability, and the impact of the project on the community.

If a nonprofit is a religious organization can it apply for a grant?

Possibly. Although a church is ineligible from applying for a grant, a separate tax-exempt public charity that is not under the umbrella of the church, synagogue or other body of worship can apply if the grant is for a project that is not restricted to a particular faith, denomination or religion.

Why can't we use the funds for "operating funds"?

Each nonprofit must already have sufficient funds to sustain their ongoing operations. This grant is to enable you to pursue a dream that you might otherwise be unable to complete. Operating funds would have to be related solely to the new project funded by the IMPACT 100 grant and a sustainability plan must be provided.

Letter of Intent to Apply Questions

Do we have to submit a Letter of Intent in order to apply for a grant?

Yes, a Letter of Intent is required so we may check the eligibility of nonprofits intending to apply for a grant, prior to the grant application process. This prevents us from having to disqualify a grant application.

Each organization will confirm the organization meets all requirements by:

- Providing a copy of the Dept. of Treasury letter affirming the organization's status as a tax-exempt public charity under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3). Religious institutions must have a separate tax-exempt entity, not under the umbrella of the body of worship, to apply
- Filing the latest Annual Report with the Florida Department of State, Division of Corporations (www.sunbiz.org)
- Registering with the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, unless the organization is exempt (www.freshfromflorida.com)

How do we submit the Letter of Intent to Apply?

The online form can be found on our website at <http://impact100pensacola.org/grant-info/letter-intent>.

What is the deadline for the Letter of Intent to Apply?

The deadline for the Letter of Intent is April 30.

Why do we need a copy of the Dept. of Treasury letter granting 501(c)(3) status for our organization?

The Dept. of Treasury letter that your nonprofit received when it obtained its status will verify that your organization was granted the 501(c)(3) designation as an individual or group charity. This is how we check for

current certification. This is NOT the same certificate as your tax exempt letter.

What if we don't have our 501(c)(3) yet?

You may submit your Letter of Intent with an explanation that you've applied for it (and the date applied). You may apply, but we MUST have a copy of the 501(c)(3) letter by the time the grant application is submitted.

Application Questions

What is the deadline for the grant application?

The deadline for the online grant application is Friday, June 16, 2017 at 10:00 pm.

Can we turn in a grant application if we didn't turn in a Letter of Intent to Apply?

No. We MUST have the Letter of Intent (LOI) by April 30th if you intend to turn in a grant application. Submitting an LOI does not obligate you to apply. We strongly recommend submitting an LOI even if you are unsure if you will apply.

Can our organization submit different grant applications in different categories?

No, each organization may submit only one grant application per year.

Why won't you tell us which focus area to apply in?

We believe you are the best judge of where your grant application, once written, will best fit. A project may meet the criteria for several focus areas, so we believe the decision is best left to the organization.

Can we meet with our Focus Area Chair/Co-Chair to review our application before we turn it in?

No. But it is a great idea to bounce your application off some of your board members, or even women who are members of IMPACT 100, but not on the board. IMPACT 100 board members are available for general questions about the grant process. New this year are the Grant Application 101 Workshop scheduled for May 18 and the Grant Application Q& A scheduled for June 15. Grant Application 101 is designed to offer an in-depth review of the IMPACT 100 grant application, while Grant Application Q & A offers an opportunity to ask application questions one on one of a member of the IMPACT 100 Board and/or Grants Committee.

Can we include our brochures, annual reports or videos about our organization?

No, we do not accept these types of materials with the application.

What are some of the most common application errors?

- More than one application came from an organization.
- Organization is not a 501(c)(3) public charity or cannot prove their 501(c)(3) status.
- Grant project does not benefit residents of Escambia and/or Santa Rosa Counties.
- Organization requested less than the full grant amount.
- Financial information is missing.
- Grant project funds debt reduction for any purpose.
- Grant funds are used for general operating expenses of the organization not associated with project described in the grant application.
- Organization does not demonstrate sustainability or the project does not include a sustainability plan.
- Grant is for interim or bridge funding.
- Grant is for an individual.

- Grant is for endowment funding.
- Grant is for partisan, legislative or political activity.
- Grant project requires capital improvements or renovations to property that the organization does not own or have a lease of at least five years.
- Grant project requires participation in activities of a particular faith, denomination or religion in order to benefit from the project or program.

What if our organization does not have to complete a 990?

Submit a copy of the IRS form 990-N (E Post Card) if Form 990 is not required.

What if the nonprofit has only existed for one year and cannot submit two years' 990 forms?

Submit the past year's 990.

What if our organization is smaller and may not need the full amount of the grant?

This is a transformational grant opportunity. An organization must decide if they have a need or a program that meets the criteria for the full grant. Perhaps a collaboration with another organization who has a similar program will work. Each collaborating organization must submit a Letter of Intent. Try to think outside the box and dream big!

What is a collaboration?

A collaboration exists when two or more qualifying nonprofit organizations have the responsibility of managing and contributing to the proposed project in a significant manner and all organizations benefit financially from the grant. One nonprofit would need to be identified as the lead - serving as the Fiscal Agent, financially managing the IMPACT 100 grant funds and completing the basic application. The other collaborating organizations will provide their organizational and financial information, but not be required to complete the additional sections of the grant application.

Does a collaborative grant application have a better chance of being awarded than an application submitted by a single nonprofit organization?

Not necessarily, however IMPACT 100 Pensacola Bay Area encourages collaborative efforts when the project or program warrants such an approach. Each grant application will be evaluated based on its own merit as it relates to the overall criteria for the IMPACT 100 grant program.

If the project is a multi-organization collaboration, do we submit the financial information from all the collaborating partners?

If a project is a multi-organization collaboration, IMPACT 100 requires financial information from all collaborating partners. Each organization must also have submitted a Letter of Intent.

Can a nonprofit organization apply for the grant as part of a collaborative effort and then separately as an individual organization?

No. Each organization can apply for one (1) grant either as part of a collaborative effort or as an individual organization.

What are some of the reasons applications may not be selected as a finalist?

- Grant project may not demonstrate the ability to fully expend the grant funds or complete the project within the twenty-four-month timeframe.

- Grant project, if designed to be ongoing, does not show how it will be funded after the end of the grant.
- Competing organization may be filling a similar need of the grant project.
- Application is unclear and poorly written.
- The project budget is not clear or well defined.
- The grant project does not fall within the scope of the focus area as defined on the application.
- The nonprofit organization lacks a proven record of success or a strong, diverse board of directors.

Focus Area Committee Questions

What happens after we turn in our Grant Application?

The Grants Committee will give the applications to the Chairs/Co-Chairs of the respective Focus Area. Focus Area Committees will begin meeting once a week during late July through August.

What happens during the Focus Area Committee Meetings?

The Focus Area Committees are comprised of IMPACT 100 members who volunteer and have no conflict of interest to serve (e.g. not staff or board member of a nonprofit which has submitted a grant application in that focus area). All discussions during committee meetings are kept private (even from IMPACT 100 members not on that committee). The committee meets each week, reviews all grant applications, and chooses smaller groups for site visits. A site visit leader will call you to schedule an appointment. After each site visit, that group reports back to the remaining committee members. After site visits are completed, the entire committee votes on each application and chooses the finalists.

How many finalists will be selected to make presentations to the IMPACT 100 membership?

Each Focus Area Committee will select three finalists.

Site Visit Questions

What should we expect to happen at the site visit?

This is the time for your organization to shine and for you to be able to tell your story, your vision, and your dream in person. You will have the opportunity to explain what the application cannot always convey: the passion, the difference this grant would make, and the impact on the organization and the community. You should plan to have the following people attend the site visit: your board chair, your treasurer or someone who can answer financial questions, and perhaps one or two key employees. There should be no press at the meeting.

How many people will be on the site visit?

There will be an average of 3 to 5 members from the focus area committee.

Do we need to provide refreshments, hand-outs, or demonstrations for the site visit members?

Any amplifying information, such as brochures or reports are appropriate. Refreshments, CDs/DVDs, mementos, promotional items, or gifts are highly discouraged. All applicants will have an opportunity to submit a wish list of items that could benefit their organization. Wish lists will be posted on the IMPACT 100 website for one year, giving possible donors an opportunity to grant applicants' wishes.

How will we know if we have been named as a finalist?

Finalists will be notified by phone. All other applicants will be notified by both email and mail prior to the press conference on September 13, 2017.

After the Grants Are Awarded Questions

If we submit a proposal this year that is not funded, how soon can we resubmit the proposal?

You may apply again the following year.

If we submit a proposal and are awarded a grant, how soon can we apply again?

An organization must have expended all funds from the previously awarded grant prior to submitting another grant application. In other words, if a 2016 grant winner has expended all funds as of the grant application deadline of June 16, 2017, they may submit a grant application for 2017.

How does IMPACT 100 Pensacola Bay Area disburse the grant money?

IMPACT 100 disburses funds on an as expended basis. Grantees must submit quarterly reports upon implementation and progress of the project. Prior to the release of grant funds, each recipient must complete the IMPACT 100 Pensacola Bay Area grant agreement form.

What is the period of time the money must be spent?

A project must expend the funding within two years, following award of the grant. For a 2017 grant, the recipient organizations must expend the funds by October 2019.

Conflict of Interest Questions

Can you be a member of IMPACT 100 if you work for a nonprofit organization?

Yes! You can even participate on a Focus Area Committee, but not one that reviews your organization's application.

Can you be a member of IMPACT 100 if you are a CEO of an organization?

Yes! You can even participate on a Focus Area Committee, but not one that reviews your organization's application.

Who can we contact for more information or questions?

IMPACT 100 Grants Committee at grants@impact100pensacola.org or (888) 992-5646.