

Focus Committee Members - Frequently Asked Questions

Why is it important to serve on a focus area committee?

While membership in IMPACT 100 does not require a commitment of time, serving on a focus area committee is one of the most rewarding experiences a member can have. We believe that it is the “heart and soul” of the grant decision process and helps the members not only fully understand the grant applications, but what the organization does in the community.

Why doesn't IMPACT 100 fund grants for projects less than \$100,000?

Part of the mission of IMPACT 100 is “to collectively fund significant grants to charitable initiatives.” The goal of funding a grant of \$100,000 or more is to provide an organization an opportunity to implement a transformational project or dramatically improve an existing program that positively impacts our community in a significant way. IMPACT 100 recognizes that there are many needs for smaller amounts of funding, and there are a number of funding sources to meet these needs. Very few funding sources exist for grants of this transformational nature.

Do we only fund grants to large organizations?

Since 2004, we have awarded grants to small, medium, and large sized nonprofit organizations. The grant applications are reviewed for the strength of the project, the impact to the community, and the strength of the organization.

Do we tell the organization which focus area to apply in?

No. We believe that those who write the grant have the best perspective and are the best judge of where their proposed project best fits. The Grants Committee ensures that the application meets the technical requirements to apply but does not judge the quality of the application or determine if it is in the appropriate focus area committee.

Can an organization apply in more than one focus area?

No. An organization can apply in only one focus area, and they can only submit one grant application per year.

Can grant money be used to fund salaries?

Yes. Salaries can be covered by grant funds if they are one-time salaries specific to the project such as a construction superintendent, architect, consultant, training specialist, or a new case manager for the first year of the project. Ongoing salaries, considered as overhead, are prohibited. If a position will be an ongoing position, such as a case manager, a sustainability plan must be provided.

Do we fund grants to churches or religious organizations?

IMPACT 100 does not fund grants to individual churches, synagogues or other religious institutions unless a separate tax-exempt entity that is not under the umbrella of the church, synagogue or other

religious institution exists for receiving IMPACT 100 funds. We do fund faith-based programs as long as the benefits of the project or program are available to any person, regardless of religious beliefs or practices, and the benefits of the project or program must not be dependent on any person being required to participate in any religious activity, ceremony, or worship service.

If an organization has already received a grant, can they apply again?

Yes. We believe that the strength of the project and its impact on the community should be the focus of the decision to fund a project. If an organization continues to improve our community with the projects that are funded and the need for the project still exists, the project should be considered. They may apply again as long as they have expended the funds received from the last grant by the new application due date.

Why do we conduct site visits?

Reading a grant from a nonprofit is only a "snapshot" of the organization and the project. Visiting and hearing what the organization hopes to do with the grant money is much more informative and brings the grant application to life in a way that can't always be conveyed on paper. Participating in site visits also fulfills part of our mission to "know and serve the community." What sets our organization apart is that we provide a site visit to every single organization that applies for a grant.

Does everyone on the site visit team have to agree on the outcome of the visit?

No. Everyone will have their own personal thoughts and feelings about the visit and should share them during the committee report.

Can we discuss the grants with others outside of our committee?

No. The grant application submitted by each organization includes sensitive material which can be discussed openly in committee but must be kept confidential and not shared with anyone outside of that committee, including other IMPACT 100 members.

Will we explain to an organization why their grant wasn't a finalist?

No. There is never an easy explanation why a grant didn't make it as a finalist. Each year, committees are made up of different women and different grant applications. The decisions are as unique as the individuals who make them.

We do provide aggregate feedback at our Nonprofit Workshop in April. There, we present general feedback regarding what makes a good grant and the evaluation criteria our committee members use in assessing each grant. We also host a Grants 101 workshop where we go through each section of the grant application, question by question, to ensure that applicants are very clear as to the intent of each question. Nonprofit organizations attending these events have found both to be helpful in getting their questions answered. Please recommend these two events to any nonprofit organizations you know.