Grantmaking Guidelines

Leadership

(Executive Director, Board & Key Staff) What level of visionary leadership does your organization have within the executive director, board and key management or programmatic staff? We look at both individual and collective experience, expertise, passion, commitment, recognition and professional and community reputation. We compare your group's approaches and solutions to what others are doing.

Commitment to Diversity

(Staff, Board, & Population Served) What forms of diversity (gender, racial, age, etc.) do you think are important for strengthening the quality of work proposed and why? Does your staff and governance reflect this diversity? What diversity challenges does your organization face in its work overall? What kinds of resources or assistance does your organization need to meet these challenges?

Population Served

We consider whether your program or service casts a wide net and whether your organization is providing services to diverse and underserved communities.

Impact

(Program, Project, Service Model) What impact on the community does your program or project have? Is it a model of service for others in the nonprofit sector? We consider your group's unique circumstances and ask more questions. Will your proposal's impact be direct and exponential? Will it bring about systemic change? Is your project idea unique? How are you measuring impact and effectiveness? Is there an evaluation system in place? If yes, please describe.

Sustainability

(Organization and/or Program, Project or Service Model) We look at the sustainability of both your program or project and your organization as a whole. We assess the strength, stability and diversity of your nonprofit's finances as well as your board's contribution to your organization's financial strength. At the program or project level, we assess whether a grant would trigger significant contributions from other sources or whether a sustainability model may require on-going foundation involvement.

Innovation

(Organization, Program, Project, Service Model) We care about innovative organizations and approaches. We want to know if your program or project has the potential to change the field, establish a new practice, or simply improve how a specific population is being served. Does your proposal respond to a unique situation or emerging changes in your environment? Here is another opportunity to explain if this is or can be a service model that can be replicated.

Organizational Strength

(History, Reputation, Structure & Management Systems) What is your group's history, reputation, structure and management? Is your organization regarded as a provider of high-quality, relevant and meaningful services? Qualities that are needed to do the hard work of system change include strong management and communication systems, positive staff morale and leaders who are sensitive to board and staff diversity.

Partnerships

(Collaboration with other nonprofits) Collaboration is an important tool among nonprofits. We ask whether your organization is well-integrated into its community and involved in public-private partnerships. We also consider whether your organization has developed strategic partnerships as an ongoing part of its work.