

GRANTS FAQ

- **Are there any changes to Seeds of Strength's Grants cycle this year?**

Yes. The changes include the following:

- An Apply for a Grant page, which provides additional information for potential grant applicants, can be found on the seedsofstrength.org website
- There is a new Letter of Intent (*LOI*) [Template](#).
- There is a new Seeds of Strength Grant Application.
- An alternate-year funding cycle is being implemented. An organization that was awarded a Grant in 2018 cannot apply in 2019. The organization will be able to apply again in 2020.

- **How should I submit my Letter of Intent or Grant Application?**

The first step in applying for a grant is to complete the [LOI Template and LOI Program/Project Budget](#) and email them to grants@seedsofstrength.org. See the Grant Process Tab and Grant Schedule on the "Apply for a Grant" page, and [Eligibility Requirements, Areas of Interest, and Grant Guidelines](#) for further instructions. Applicants invited to submit a Grant Application will be given instructions on how to submit their applications upon receiving their invitations.

- **Can our organization submit more than one Letter of Intent?**

No. Each organization may submit only one grant application per year.

- **Whom can we contact to discuss our grant application?**

Seeds of Strength is committed to a fair, unbiased process. For questions regarding Seeds of Strength's grant guidelines or process, you may email grants@seedsofstrength.org.

- **Our organization is exempt from paying sales tax in the State of Texas and we have a certificate from the state. Can we use this to prove our nonprofit status in our LOI submission?**

No. If your organization is a 501(c)(3) public charity, you should have a determination letter from the IRS stating this. A copy of the determination letter must be attached to your LOI.

- **We are a faith-based organization. Can we apply?**

Yes, with certain qualifications. Seeds of Strength's [Eligibility Requirements](#) and [Grant Guidelines](#) state that we do not fund organizations that require a belief in or participation in activities of a particular faith, denomination or religion in order to benefit from or receive services in connection with the project/program. A faith-based organization should take steps to ensure that any inherently religious activities, such as worship, religious instruction or proselytization, are separate, in time or location, from the services that would be funded wholly or in part, by a Seeds of Strength grant. Additionally, our grantees may not require program participants to attend or take part in any religious activities and may not discriminate against a current or prospective program beneficiary on the basis of religion or religious belief. Any participation in religious activities or events by recipients of Seeds of Strength's grant-funded services must be completely voluntary.

Seeds of Strength will not fund a program or project that restricts participation because of religion (*e.g., participation in the program or use of the facility requires that you profess a certain faith*), and/or principally guided by or requires religious activities (*e.g., the program or project is designed for purposes of engaging or bringing others into a religion*).

- **Our project could qualify under more than one of Seeds of Strength's Areas of Interest descriptions. Can you suggest which one may give us the greatest advantage?**

No. We rely on your understanding of your organization's needs to choose the most relevant area of interest. The review committee evaluates LOIs from across all areas of interest and does not consider an area of interest when making their determination.

- **How can we make our Letter of Intent rise to the top?**

Our Grants Committee members who review LOIs and grant applications suggest the following:

- Take the LOI step very seriously. While this stage seems easy because the submission is relatively short and simple, it is critical that your organization be very thoughtful about the request being made. Once you have submitted your LOI, you cannot change the scope of the request or how you plan to use the funds if you are moved forward in the process.
 - The submissions that really stand out are from organizations that have a clear and thoughtful mission, fill a defined need by reaching out to underserved populations in the Georgetown community, are financially healthy, AND have a well-conceived project or program that needs funding.
 - Our review committee carefully considers the number of people served by a project and the intensity of services proposed. We evaluate the depth and duration of the impact on the target population, and whether the impact might extend beyond the scope of the project and have a ripple effect, either in the broader community or over time.
 - For requests to fund programs, a clear explanation of how a program can be sustained after the Seeds of Strength award is spent is important to us. We would like to know that we are jump-starting or investing in a program that has a strong probability of being funded beyond our one year involvement.
 - We recommend that you do not try to guess what kind of project, program or interest area Seeds of Strength “prefers” to fund. Each year the organization with the most impactful grant projects inevitably rise to the top as finalists and award recipients.
- **Will you consider a proposal from a group or organizations collaborating on a project or program?**
Yes, however, one of the collaborating organizations must be the “lead organization,” applying as if it were an individual organization on behalf of the collaboration. The lead organization must be willing to take on all the potential rights, responsibilities, restrictions and liabilities of the grant, if it is received. Both organizations must sign Seeds of Strength’s [Collaborator Agreement](#) (downloaded from [seedsofstrength.org](#) “Apply for a Grant” page) and submit the agreement with the LOI request. Please review [Grant Guidelines](#), and [Eligibility Requirements](#) for additional information.
 - **The program for which we seek funding will be a collaborative effort. Do both organizations have to be a 501(c) (3)?**
Yes, both organizations have to be a 501(c) (3).
 - **Do you have any other requirements for applying for a collaborative grant?**
The **lead organization** must complete the LOI and application and describes the collaborative program and with whom they will be collaborating. They will answer all questions describing the proposed program. The lead organization must submit all required financial attachments.
The Collaborative organization must also submit the required financials and the contact information to Seeds of Strength via email to grants@seedsofstrength.org. Note in this email the name of the lead organization and your program. You will receive an email acknowledgement of receipt.
 - **Can an organization apply for a grant separately and also as a Collaborative in the same year?**
No. Organizations applying for a grant as part of a Collaborative Project are not eligible to also apply in the same grant cycle for a grant as an individual organization, and vice versa.
 - **Are we required to use the sample financial forms attached to the grant application?**
Yes. Wherever a requested attachment says, “use the attached form,” that’s what we want you to do. We understand you may have the same information in another format, but putting the financial information in a format common for all proposals helps our committees review the information more efficiently and effectively.
 - **What types of expenses do you allow in a project or program budget?**
Seeds of Strength will fund capital expenditures (e.g., *capital improvements to property and the purchase of fixed assets*), program expense (*including salaries*) or a combination thereof.

- **When funding capital improvement projects, does Seeds of Strength have specific requirements with respect to the ownership/leasing of property?**
 Yes. The property must be owned by the applicant or leased with a minimum of five years remaining on the lease as of June 1 of the Seeds of Strength Award year. Ownership or lease of said property must be in place as of the LOI due date. See our [Eligibility Requirements](#) and [Grant Guidelines](#) for more information.
- **What do we do if we do not have one of the attachments requested in the LOI or grant application?**
 You should include an explanation of why you do not have the attachment. The Grants Committee will take that explanation into consideration as they conduct their review.
- **My organization submitted a Letter of Intent for the current grant cycle. What's next?**
 Seeds of Strength will confirm receipt of all Letters of Intent via email. If you do not receive an email within 72 hours of sending in your LOI, please contact grants@seedsofstrength.org.

 - Please remember that submission of a LOI is not a final application for funding; the LOI process is intended to be an avenue for research and information-gathering by the Grants Committee. After the LOIs are reviewed, selected applicants will be invited to complete a grant application. Only those organizations will be actively considered for funding in the current grant cycle.
- **If we are invited to submit a Grant Application and our funding requirements and/or project needs have changed since submitting our LOI, may we submit a new proposal in our Grant Application?**
 No. New Grant Applications will not be accepted at the Grant Application stage. They would need to be held for LOI submission in the next year's grant cycle. We do anticipate some restructuring of funding needs or updates on costs or bids from the LOI submissions; however they should not affect the scope of the proposal and will need to be fully explained in submission.
- **How do we know if Seeds of Strength will make a site visit?**
 Your organization may be selected for a site visit during the application process. The Grants Chair will contact you should your organization be selected.
- **If our organization is not a grant recipient will someone let us know how we can improve our application?**
 Our policy is to provide as much direct feedback as possible.
- **Once an organization receives a grant from Seeds of Strength, can it reapply the following year?**
 No. Your agency will need to wait out a funding cycle to be eligible to apply for a grant again. (*e.g., an organization that was awarded a grant in 2018 cannot apply in 2019. The organization will be eligible to apply again in 2020*).
- **In what period of time must the money be spent?**
 Seeds of Strength requires that the organization uses the full amount of the grant funding within 12 months of the grant.
- **May I send additional materials with the LOI, such as one of our brochures or newsletters?**
 No. Please send only information specifically requested. Any additional materials will be discarded.

Questions? E-mail: grants@seedsofstrength.org