SEEDS OF STRENGTH

SEEDS OF STRENGTH
2020 GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

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INTRODUCTION

Why the Grant Guidelines User Guide

This User Guide was created to help organizations write more effective grant applications. It provides a greater understanding as to why each question is important to Seeds of Strength's grantmaking process and what we hope to learn about an organization from a particular question.

It is also intended to alleviate some fears that organizations may have. While the questions are uniform, Seeds of Strength's Grant committee expects wide variation in the answers based on an organization's budget size, years in existence, location, and mission. There is no one "right" answer.

It is not essential for a grantwriter to reference this Guide when completing the Seeds of Strength's Grant Application. The grant application itself is designed to stand alone. However, for those new to grantwriting or for anyone who is not clear about the intent of a particular question, the User Guide provides information that will hopefully alleviate confusion.

User Guide Overview

The User Guide covers each question and attachment of the Seeds of Strength's Grant Application. It can be read start to finish or referred to for clarification related to a specific component, question, or attachment.

It will give a brief explanation of why a particular question is being asked and provides additional insight into the intent of the question. The items specified in the text of the questions or attachments need to be addressed in your answer. The "Tips and Things to Consider" sections are suggestions, not necessarily requirements.

Considering the extreme diversity of the types of organizations completing the Seeds of Strength's Grant Application, some of the items listed may or may not apply to your organization. The tips section is offered to help stimulate your thinking if you are unsure about what information would be relevant to convey in response to a specific question.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. **Are there any changes to Seeds of Strength's Grants cycle this year?**
   No.
2. **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, Grant Schedule, 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.
3. **Can our organization submit more than one Letter of Intent?**
   No. Each organization may submit only one grant application per year.
4. **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.
5. **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.
6. **We are a faith-based organization. Can we apply?**
   Yes, with certain qualifications. Seeds of Strength's ***Eligibility Requirements*** 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*).

7. **Our project could qualify under more than one of Seeds of Strengths 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.
8. **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.
9. **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 ***Eligibility Requirements,*** *and* ***Grant Guidelines*** for additional information.
10. **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).
11. **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.

12. **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.
13. **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.

14. **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.
15. **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 July 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.
16. **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.
17. **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 an 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.
18. **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.
19. **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.
20. **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.
21. **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 2019 cannot apply in 2020. The organization will be eligible to apply again in 2021).*
22. **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.
23. **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

Tips for Writing Successful Proposals

Grant writing is a challenge for both the beginner and the experienced writer. You have only one chance to make a good impression and grab the grantreaders' attention, so here are some helpful hints to ensure that your proposal is effective and competitive.

- **FOLLOW THE DIRECTIONS!** Carefully read the Grant Guidelines and Grant Application. Answer the questions in the order listed and include only the materials specified.
- Be organized- Plan, plan, and plan. Start early and allow plenty of time for writing, revising and editing.
- Use good writing skills. Keep your word choices simple and to the point. Use clear English, avoiding acronyms and technical jargon.
- Don't assume that our grantreaders know what your organization does and the impact you have on the community.
- Emphasize what your organization will do. Spend more time describing your solution than the issue. Economize content and avoid repetition.
- Evaluation counts. Keep what you want to learn and evaluate in mind, as well the assessment tools you will use to evaluate your program or project *(e.g., records, surveys, interviews, pre-and post-tests).*
- The amount of funds requested should be credible and realistic. Request only enough funds to do the work. Significant over or underestimating your expenses suggest that you may not understand the scope of the program/project and will call that to the attention of the grant evaluator. Expenses that exceed the proposed budget approved by Seeds of Strength must be absorbed by the grantee. Grant money not spent at the end of the project must be returned to Seeds of Strength.
- Proofread carefully. Make sure numbers add up and typos are removed.
- Seriously, proofread! If your proposal has been adapted for multiple funders, then make sure you omit other funders' names.
- Ensure that your request is based on Seeds of Strength's Mission and Areas of Interest.

Two excellent videos about writing a grant and budget can be viewed online at Youtube.com.

1. ***"It's 12-12-12….Do you Know What Your Proposal is Up To?"***
   8:48 minute video. Maryn Boess presenter from the Nonprofit Association of Oregon.

   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mC9AyMldPGg

2. ***"Major Proposal Budget Bloopers and How To Avoid Them?"***
   7:20 minute video. Maryn Boess presenter from the Nonprofit Association of Oregon.

   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u4P-SJqOGzM

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Activities: Actual events or actions that take place as part of the program to achieve goals. Activities are the processes, tools, events, technology, and actions that are an intentional part of the program implementation. They are used to bring about the intended program or program changes to achieve the proposed goals.

Best Practices: *(See Program Approach*) A method or technique that has been generally accepted as superior to any alternatives because it produces results that are superior to those achieved by other means or because it has become a standard way of doing things.

Capacity Building: Supporting programs that strengthen the development of an organization's core skills and capabilities, such as leadership, management, finance/fund-raising, programs, and evaluation, in order to build the organization's effectiveness and sustainability.

Collaboration: Organizations often submit joint proposals for funding to address common issues of organizational capacity and program outreach where they have similar outcomes to accomplish.

Cultural Competency: The process by which individuals and systems respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, languages, classes, races, ethnic backgrounds, religions, spiritual traditions, immigration status, and other diversity factors in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values the worth of individuals, families, and communities and protects and preserves the dignity of each.

Diversity: Term that describes the presence of individuals from various backgrounds and/or with various identities. The term is often used to include aspects of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, and ability.

Endowment: Financial support kept permanently by a nonprofit and invested to provide income to support programs or operations. A nonprofit with an endowment may send a signal to the community and donors that the organization is thinking long-term and building assets for its own future sustainability.

Equity: The condition that would be achieved if the identities assigned to historically oppressed groups no longer acted as the most powerful predictor of how one fares, with the root causes of inequities eliminated. (*Examples include the elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce or fail to eliminate differential outcomes by group identity/background*).

Equity is created when a program is managed in such a way that no one is excluded. All the individuals hired and all the members of the target population are given equal access to program opportunities – to be participants (*target population*) and to be hired *(program staff*) without discrimination.

Evaluation: The process of undertaking an analysis, at various degrees of formality, of the impact of a grant-funded program, usually communicated in the form of a report to the funder.

Fiscal Agent: A nonprofit, tax-exempt organization that acts as a sponsor for a program or group that may not have its own tax-exempt status. Grants or contributions are made to the fiscal agent who manages the funds.

Goal: What is the desired result of the program in general terms? The broad, overarching purpose served by your program or service – for instance, "Our purpose [or goal] is to help women victimized by abuse recover their strength, stability, and self-esteem."

Impact: The fundamental intended or unintended change occurring in organizations, communities or systems as a result of program activities. In the current model of grantmaking and evaluation, impact often occurs after the conclusion of the program funding.

In-Kind Support: A non-cash commitment or contribution of equipment, materials, time, and/or services that the donor has placed a monetary value on. This type of contribution may require written documentation.

Inclusion: The degree to which individuals with diverse perspectives and backgrounds are able to participate fully in the decision-making processes of an organization or group.

Inputs: Also known as resources that include the human, financial, and physical assets dedicated to a grant-funded program. These resources include money, staff and staff time, volunteers and volunteer time, facilities, equipment, supplies and community partners that a grantee, applicant, or organization has available to direct toward doing the work of the planned program.

Letter of Intent (LOI): A Letter of Intent contains a description of a proposed program or project, an estimated budget, and information on the applicant. This information allows the funding source to screen out ineligible applicants or programs or projects not consistent with the funders eligibility requirements. This screening saves considerable time for both the funding source and the applicant.

Logic Model: The Logic Model depicts your organization's planned work and intended results for a given program or project. The model is a systematic and visual way to present and share your understanding among the resources you have to operate your program, the activities you plan to do, and the changes or results you hope to achieve.

Long-term Goal: A goal that is reached after the specified funding period.

Marginalize: The process of making an individual, group, or class of people less important or relegated to a secondary position, which often leads to exclusion from meaningful participation in society.

Mission Statement: A statement of the overall purpose of an organization – what you will do every day to make your vision a reality.

Needs Statement: Presents the facts and evidence that support the need for the program, and establishes that your organization understands the problems and therefore can reasonably address them. The information used to support the case can come from authorities in the field, as well as from your agency's own experience.

Operational Support: A grant given to cover an organization's day-to-day expenses such as salaries, utilities, office supplies, etc.

Outcomes: The specific changes in the program participants' behavior, knowledge, skills, status, and level of functioning due to their participation in program activities. Time-specific, measurable statements describing the results to be achieved and the manner in which they will be achieved. For example, "30 of the 40 third grade students participating in the literacy program will increase their reading level by one grade level."

Outputs: These are the direct results of a program's implementation activities. They're actually written as indicators of productivity. Outputs usually start with the phrase *number of* and reflect how you'll quantitatively track your program activities *(e.g., # of participants, # of sessions held, and # of encounters*). Outputs describe what the program will do and/or has done in the past.

Program Approach: Many grantmakers want to know that an organization's program reflect best practices or utilize evidence-based approaches. If the organization is using a specific model or evidence based approach, then provide that information. If the program is not based on a specific best-practice, then explain why the organization chose to address the issue and/or opportunity in the way that it did. It may be appropriate to highlight the uniqueness of the organization's approach and, perhaps, why the approach appears promising. If the reason is that the approach is based on the evaluation results, then it may be appropriate to refer the reader to your response in the Evaluation section where you describe program results.

Program: An organized set of services designed to achieve specific outcomes for a specified population that will continue beyond the grant period.

Project: A planned undertaking or organized set of services designed to achieve specific outcomes that are time-limited. *(Note: A successful project may become an ongoing program of the organization*).

Responsibility: Individual(s) responsibility for the stated activity and measurements.

Short-term Outcomes: Occurs during the funding period.

Strategic Direction: The main themes/focuses/areas that will lead the organization toward accomplishing its Mission.

Target Population: The people the proposed program will impact, if funded. When writing about the population include age range, gender, ethnicity, economic status, educational level, and other characteristic descriptors.

Timeline: When the program is taking place and/or what is the duration? Incorporate target dates for your activities, such as when the activities will happen and when the activities will start and end. A timeline presented in a table is often referred to as a *Gantt* or *implementation chart.*

PART I. LOI & GRANT APPLICATION COVER PAGE

Rationale
The Seeds of Strength's Letter of Intent and Grant Application Cover Page is intended to provide a "snapshot" of the organization.

Tips and Things to Consider:

- Be brief. Remember, this is a quick look at the organization. Detailed explanations should be reserved for the narrative portion of the application.
- Be sure that the information on the Cover Page (budget figures, requested amount, etc.) matches any reference made later in the application.

Regarding items on the Letter of Intent and Grant Application Cover Page:

- **Legal Name of Organization-** This should be the exact wording from the IRS 501(c) (3) Determination letter.
- **Main Contact for this Grant-** If this is different from the Executive Director or CEO. This could be the Development Director, Program Director, or other person who should be contacted for further information or questions regarding the application.
- **Board President-** In the case of potential staff changes at the organization, it is important to also list the current Board President.
- **Program or Project Name-** The name of the program or project for which you are requesting funding. The organization may be the same name as the proposed program or the program may have a separate name and operates within the organization.
- **# Current population served by organization** *(unduplicated individuals and geographic area(s) – cities, counties, etc*.) The name of the cities, county(ies), region(s), neighborhood(s), your organization serves. Be as accurate as possible within a short space.
- **# Target population served through this proposed program *request*** *(unduplicated individuals and geographic area(s) – cities, counties, etc.)*- The people the proposed program will impact, if funded.
- **Tax Exemption Status-** If the organization applying is operating under the fiscal sponsorship of another organization, then provide the legal name of the fiscal agent (*Organization's Legal name: as shown on the 501 (c)(3) IRS Letter*). Everything else in the application should be completed with regard to the organization applying, not the fiscal agent.
- **Type of Program/Project Request-** New, Existing, Expansion or a New Collaboration. Check which selection best fits your proposal.
- **Seeds of Strength's Area of Interest-** Health and Well-Being, Family, Education/Financial Stability, and Arts and Culture. Check which selection best fits your proposal.
- **Financial Information-** Amount of program/project funding requested, organization's current budget, and total program/project budget. Be sure the number matches the information contained within the application and in the financial attachments.

PART II. GRANT APPLICATION NARRATIVE

SECTION A, QUESTION 1 – Request to Modify the LOI Program or Project Request.

Does the grant application include a modification to your original Letter of Intent (LOI)? If so, please describe the change(s) and the need to revise the proposal.

Rationale

By offering a reason why the change was necessary to revise the Grant Application from the LOI proposal allows the grantreaders context for understanding the change.

SECTION B, QUESTION 2 – ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Please describe the organization's current programs, activities, number of individuals served annually, and recent accomplishments. Tell us why your organization is well positioned to implement the program or project for which you are requesting funding.

Rationale

By reading about the organization's programs or projects, the grantreaders will learn how the organization has chosen to deliver on its mission and goals.

SECTION C. QUESTION 3- DIVERSITY, EQUITY, & INCLUSION (DEI): Efforts and Ambitions

Describe how your organization reflects diversity, equity and inclusion in the composition of your staff, board, volunteers and clients served. This may include future aspirations.

Rationale

A growing number of grantmakers and nonprofits are embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion in their work. Grantmakers are seeking an understanding of their potential grantees' capacity and/or hopes to effectively navigate diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) issues.

Tips and Things to Consider

- Funders like to know if and how an organization is working to best incorporate a lens of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) into their work.
- There are no "correct" answers, as every organization's work in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion is different and can present opportunities to grow. It is up to each organization to identify what "diversity," equity," and "inclusiveness" means to them within their organizational and community-based context.
- If your organization does not have any efforts or initiatives that incorporate a DEI lens into its work, list any DEI goals your organization hopes to achieve in the future.

EXAMPLES

- Focus on the organization's board of directors:
  - ABC Nonprofit is committed to building an inclusive and diverse organization.
- Focus on the organization's cultural competency:
  - We provide materials to our clients in both Spanish and English, and ABC Nonprofit covers translation costs into other languages upon request.
  - ABC Nonprofit, annually offers cultural competency training to board members, staff, and volunteers, and has implemented new employee orientation specific to issues of inclusiveness.

SECTION D, QUESTION 4 – DESCRIPTION OF COMMUNITY/CLIENT NEEDS

Identify the concern or issue the program/organization will address. This is the place to highlight an organization's understanding of the need it is addressing through a specific program or project.

Rationale

The needs statement defines the underlying problem or issue the grant proposal is addressing. The needs statement is used to educate grant reviewers about the community need the nonprofit organization seeks to change.

Why is the Needs Statement important? A needs statement answers the question: "Why care?" It demonstrates to the funder that there is a problem that is important; is significant; and is urgent. A needs statement must relate to the organization's mission statement and to the funder's priorities.

Tips and Things to Consider:

- This is where the organization demonstrates the importance of the issue. It is an opportunity to describe why the organization has expertise on the issue and has the ability to provide a solution to meet the unmet need.
- How and when the problem was identified? Detail the problem's background.
- Don't assume that the grantreader knows much about your subject area. They will probably know something about the topic, but if the topic is complex, then you might add some additional information.
- If this is an existing program, provide service statistics and how it was previously funded. If this is an expansion, describe the nature of the expansion *(new geography, new population, etc. be specific*). If new, provide the basis for the request.
- When writing a statement of need for grant funding, the presentation of what's wrong should be compelling and believable and supported with facts.
- Make the language tight- get down to the heart of the problem- and what the organization is going to solve or work toward solving. More is not necessarily better, especially if there are page or paragraph limits!
- When describing the target population, give just enough detail to aid the reader in understanding who your operating dollars benefit *(e.g., community members who are poor, adults who are unemployed, youths who have dropped out of high school, people who are homeless, or those with a terminal illness*), and where they will be served *(e.g., county, city, neighborhood, or zip codes*).
- Grantreaders want to see:
  - Characteristics of the target population (*age range, gender, ethnicity, education level, ability, and income level*). Also, be sure to cite the source of your demographics.
  - Changes in the target population that may relate to why the organization is asking for grant funds.

SECTION D, QUESTION 5- DATA THAT PROVIDES EVIDENCE OF NEED AND PROGRAM/PROJECT APPROACH

(See Glossary of Terms: Best Practices and Program Approach for more information)

Rationale

To support the need of a proposal the grant evaluator will need to know what evidence the applicant has researched that justifies a need for the program. The data should be current and specific to the community, and target populations to be served. If possible, design a program that has produced previous researched results.

Tips and Things to Consider:

- The role of data and statistics:
  - Supporting: should back up the issue you want to address
  - Rely on context: try to compare apples with apples
  - Objective: provides outside information to substantiate the issue

  Basic Rules
  - Timely: data needs to be as recent as possible
  - Unbiased: who did the research? Who funded the research?
  - Reliable: it is considered reputable by others
  - Historical data about the program, can be valuable as long as the numbers seem reasonable
- Data Searches

Demographics information clearinghouses, federal agencies, state agencies, foundations and other nonprofits, scholarly journals and articles, and industry publications are key resources for gathering statistics and data.

- Census website: www.census.gov TIP: Find the "Fact Sheet" for your community. You can find data by city/town name or zip code. This gives you information such as population, median household income, number of individuals speaking languages other than English at home, poverty levels, etc. National comparisons are also available on the "Fact Sheet".
- Research your program's topic area on best practices websites. Examples include: www.HealthyWilliamsonCounty.org and www.evidencebasedprograms.org . Don't forget to cite the source.
- When you find best practices, look for the evaluation results of previously implemented programs similar to yours. Know what works and what doesn't work before you write your proposed solution.

SECTION D, QUESTION 6- PROGRAM/PROJECT UNIT SERVICE COSTS

Unduplicated Individuals Served	Total Program Costs	Cost Per Unduplicated Individual

Tips and Things to Consider:

- Describe the service unit as it relates to the proposed program.
- Show the mathematical calculations that resulted in the individual/unit service cost.

Example

- *"Cost per parent",* is derived by dividing the total program budget by the number of parents that the program will serve over the life of the grant. $37,435 Total Program Costs/120 parents served=$312, the cost per parent of the 8 week parenting class.

SECTION D, QUESTION 7- PROGRAM or PROJECT MANAGEMENT PLAN

Rationale

Before grant reviewers can make a confident decision, they need to know who's in charge of the organization and the proposed program/project. Funders want written validation that competent administrators will manage the grant monies.

In addition to knowing who will be working on the program, grant reviewers also want to know who reports to whom for the program. Funders want to make sure that the organization understands the responsibility inherent in accepting the grant monies. The *management plan* tells the grant reviewer who's accountable to whom.

Please include the position name, full-time or part-time devoted to the program, line of accountability (*who reports to whom*), and how the position will be funded (*grant request, cash match-other funds, or in-kind contribution*). Please list the program personnel in order of ranking, beginning with the highest administrative position and ending with volunteers, if any. In your plan, the number in parentheses behind each position title indicates the number of individuals hired or assigned for each title position.

Example: Please use the following example when answering this question.

Name of Program or Project: Management Plan			
Position & (# of personnel)	**Time allocated to program**	**Reports to**	**Funded by**
Executive Director (1)	Part-time	Board of Directors	Cash match
Chief Financial Officer (1)	Part-time	Executive Director	Cash match
Program Director (1)	Part-time	Executive Director	Grant request
Volunteer Coordinator (1)	Full-time	Program Director	Cash match
Administrative Assistant (1)	Part-time	ED, PD, and VC	Cash match
Counselors (3)	Part-time	Program Director	Grant request
Volunteers (5) 5 hours each	Five hours @ week	Volunteer Coordinator	In-kind contribution

Funded by**: **Cash match**- Other funds, **In-kind contribution**- donated volunteer service hours, and **Grant request.

SECTION D, QUESTION 8- KEY STAFF & TRAINING NEEDS (Tips also includes KEY STAFF Required Attachment)

Rationale
To assure the grant reviewers that your program's staff is well qualified and available to complete their duties as assigned.

Tips and Things to Consider:
KEY STAFF (Attachment)

- Look at the program design narrative and the implementation chart to see what personnel is committed to carrying out the proposed activities. Highlight the job titles and any other information that gives an understanding as to how many staff or volunteer members are needed. Be sure to explain if staff is already in place or needs to be hired.
- When writing about to-be-hired personnel, include the minimum job specifications and qualification of those who will carry certain responsibilities.
- Suggested program personnel could include:
    - A project administrator or program manager
    - The personnel necessary to carry out the project on a day-to-day basis
    - All remaining personnel who will be paid from the program's budget
    - Determine how much time will be devoted to the program, part-time vs full-time
    - How many volunteers will be needed to support the program activities
- Make sure to clarify how each role is essential to the success of the project and how each role clearly relates to operationalizing the program activities.

STAFF TRAINING

- Consider how and if the key employees of the organization may benefit from initial *(orientation)* training, annual, and additional training (*e.g., workshops on the effective use of social media, or training in new technologies*).

SECTION D, QUESTION 9- COLLABORATION

Describe the organization's most significant interactions with other organizations and efforts. For program or project requests, address this question with respect to the program or project only.

Rationale
The effectiveness of nonprofit organizations often depends on successful relationships with others in the community. Regardless of form – partnership, collaboration, or coordination – these relationships, or strategic alliances, can serve a variety of purposes, including resource sharing, policy influence, and improved operational efficiency.

Tips and Things to Consider:

- Do not create a simple list of key partners, as such a list does not convey very meaningful information. Instead, select the organization's most significant interactions and explain the goals and/or outcomes of those relationships. Interactions run the gamut from simple awareness of other organizations to making referrals to other groups, sharing staff/volunteer trainings, strategic alliances, and formal partnerships/collaborations. Due to space limitations, describe the interactions that are most important to the program in terms of helping it achieve its goals.
- Program requests should limit the response to interactions specifically related to the program or project. However, if space allows and there are other collaborations the organization is involved in that are important to convey, by all means do so.
- Types of partners include (*but are not limited to*) the following:
    - Referral partners (*agencies that refer clients to your organization and agencies that your organization refers its clients to as well*)
    - Public sector partners (e.g., *state, county, city, and other government agencies*)
    - Business partners *(any type of business that has a vested interest in your clientele such as banks, potential client employers, retail establishments, and for-profit employment agencies*)
    - Professional sector partners (*e.g.,, law firms, accounting firms, and professional associations that can provide adult mentors*)

Examples:

- *Office Space- A small, furnished office cubicle with phone and internet services for the program staff will be provided by ABC nonprofit, plus parking and office supplies*
- *Meeting/Event Space- Space and chairs for meetings and graduation events will be provided by the schools; space and set-up for the teacher appreciation event will be provided by the Regional Arts Commission.*

SECTION D, QUESTION 10- PROGRAM OR PROJECT TIMELINE

A timeline incorporates target dates for the program or project objectives and activities/strategies.

Tips and Things to Consider:

- Timeline – Explain any key dates or chronology associated with the program. This could include dates when enrollment is open; how many months out of the year the project is offered; and start and completion dates.
- A clear indication of the time frame for the program and the times when each aspect of the program will be implemented.

EXAMPLE

1ST Year Timeline

Month One (date)

- *Advertising and interviewing Program staff positions*
- *Meetings with school administrators and community leaders*

Month Two (date)

- *Hiring and orienting program staff positions*
- *Meetings with teachers and pre-trained service officers*
- *Selecting school classrooms for first half of first semester*

Month Three (date)

- *Orienting service officers, staff, and teachers*
- *Preparation for classroom operation*
- *Order ABC approved curriculum and student incentives*

Month Four- Six (dates)

- *Hosting parent/community meetings at school*
- *Collection of baseline data on students*
- *Implementing ABC in classrooms*
- *Recruitment/selection/training of additional service officers*
- *Assigning service officers to classrooms for the remainder of the academic year*

Month Seven – Twelve (dates)

- *Conclude implementing ABC in classrooms*
- *Hosting parent/community ABC graduations at schools*
- *Hosting service officer appreciation event*
- *Conducting of regular formative evaluation*
- *Final summative evaluation at end of twelfth month*

SECTION D, QUESTION 11- LONG-TERM GOALS AND FUNDING

Rationale- A nonprofit who prepares for their long-term goals often engage in the planning to define a clear vision for the future with specific strategies for reaching established goals.

Tips and Things to Consider:

- This question is asking for a broad overview of the organization’s approach to planning for either the organization in general or this specific program.
- Report if the organization has developed or is currently working on any variety of plans, including, but not limited to a strategic plan, a long-range operational plan, or a fund development plan.

SECTION E, QUESTION 12- EVALUATION – (PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL ATTACHMENT)

Rationale
Best practices in nonprofit operations encourage that organizations engage in some examination of their activities to help guide their work.

Tips and Things to Consider:

- Program Evaluation serves many purposes: Supports program and strategic planning, helps communicate program goals and progress to staff, stakeholders, and community, and serves as a basis for ongoing learning to make a program work stronger and more effective.

The Logic Model depicts the organization's planned work and intended results for a given program or project. The purpose of the model is to provide a road map describing the sequence of related events connecting the need for the planned program with the program's desired results. It helps to visualize and understand how human and financial investments can contribute to achieving your intended program goals and can lead to program improvements.

LOGIC MODEL Components

<table>
<tr><td colspan="5">GOAL: A one-sentence overview of what the program or project is designed to accomplish and the target population you intend to serve. (Start with the word provide, develop, plan, educate, create, or build and be sure to include your target population)</td></tr>
<tr><th>Target Population</th><th>Inputs</th><th>Activities</th><th>Outputs</th><th>Outcomes</th></tr>
<tr>
<td>Who we reach:

The people you serve. Identify enough information to help the grant reader understand who will benefit from your program.

Participants
Families
Communities served (e.g., cities, zip codes).
Characteristics (e.g., Age range, gender, ethnicity, educational level, or income level).

Examples include adults who are unemployed and Individuals who have a terminal illness.</td>
<td>What we invest:

Resources include:
• Staff
• Volunteers
• Time
• Office Space
• Money
• Materials
• Equipment
• Technology
• Partners
• Facilities
• In-kind contributions</td>
<td>What we will do:

Who will carry out the activities?

Create a <u>timeline</u> to complete all activities.

Deliver Services
Technical Assistance
Program Marketing
Train
Develop
• Products
• Curriculum
• Resources
Assess
Facilitate
Conduct
• Workshops
• Meetings</td>
<td>How we measure effort:

Measurable, tangible, and direct products or results from program activities.

# of surveys distributed
# of surveys returned
# of classes offered
# of residents completing the class
# of service hours
units of service
reports completed</td>
<td>Results: Changes in Target Population

Outcomes are written as change statements (e.g., things increase, decrease, or stay the same).

Outcomes are about change:
1. Changes in learning (e.g., new knowledge, increased skills, or a change in attitude).
2. Changes in action: (e.g., modified behavior or practice).
3. Changes in condition:
• Human
• Economic
• Civic
• Environment</td>
</tr>
<tr><td colspan="5">Performance Measures: How will you know when you have accomplished your goal? How we measure effort (outputs): What and how much the program accomplishes (e.g., enrollment/participation, materials developed, service hours, customer satisfaction. How we measure effect (outcome): Changes in target population that come about as a result of the program activities (e.g., survey/test, third party data, interview, focus group, observation, tracking, case study and photo/video).</td></tr>
</table>

Tips and Things to Consider:
Goals

- It may be relevant to explain why it is the best time to address the issue and/or opportunity at this point.
- Goals convey the general direction or overall purpose for the program for which funding is requested.

Activities

- Activities refer to the essential tasks or projects that need to take place to accomplish the program goal(s).
- Explain the program in such a way that a reader who knows nothing about how the program is implemented will be able to visualize it.
- Make sure to establish a timeline for each activity. Include who will conduct each activity and date accomplished.

Outcomes

- Outcomes answer the questions to the problem that needs solving. Outcomes are about change: changes in learning, changes in action, or changes in condition.
- Changes in learning: new knowledge, increased skills and changed attitudes.
- Changes in action: modified behavior or practice, changed decisions.
- Changes in condition:
  - Human *(e.g., from oppression to freedom; from malnourishment to food security*),
  - Economic *(e.g., from unemployment to employed)*
  - Civic (*e.g., from disenfranchised to empowered*)
  - Environmental *(e.g., from polluted to clean*)

SECTION F, QUESTION 13- SOURCES OF ORGANIZATION SUPPORT

The purpose of this section is to provide an overview of the organization's revenue streams for the previous fiscal year end and current fiscal year to date. The chart is divided into two sources: External sources received from outside of the organization and Internal sources generated from within the organization. For the current fiscal year please specify whether the contributions, gifts, grants, etc. are in-hand (I), or pending (P).

Funding Status

- (I) In-hand-the agency has received the contribution, gift or grant.
- (P) Pending-that a request has been made but not yet agreed to or granted.

Tips and Things to Consider

External Funding Sources

- Foundation Grants
- Corporate Foundations
- Government Grants- Group together all local government grants. Group together all State or Federal government grants.
- Fundraising Events (*net*) (*Fundraising effort less the cost of the event*).
- Other- other grants not covered by the above listed categories.

Internal Funding Sources

- Program Service Revenue- Revenues received from program participation.
- Products- what people give you in exchange for the service or product your program generates.
- Membership Income- Revenues received from membership dues.
- Investment Income- Income coming from interest payments, dividends, and capital gains collected upon a sale of assets, and any other profit that is made through an investment vehicle of any kind.
- Other- other income not coved by the above listed categories.

SECTION F, QUESTION 14- SOURCES RECEIVING THIS PROGRAM'S REQUEST

List of organizations, corporation and foundations your organization is seeking funding from for the proposed program or project, with the status of each request.

Funding Sources Receiving this Program or Project Request			
Name of Funder	**Amount Requested**	**Date Requested**	**Funding Status**
ABC Foundation	$20,000	November 2018	In-hand
City of Funding	$15,000	December 2018	In-hand
XYZ County	$50,000	January 2019	Pending
Save a Life Foundation	$35,000	January 2019	Pending
Contributions	$5,000	January 2019	Committed
Other			

Funding Status:

- In-hand- the agency has received the contribution, gift or grant.
- Pending-that a request has been made but not yet agreed to or granted and awaiting final notification
- Committed-there is a firm agreement with the donor to give a contribution

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SECTION F, QUESTION 15- PROGRAM BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

Does the program/project budget submitted with the grant application include a modification to your Letter of Intent budget? If so, please describe the revision with an explanation why it was necessary.

Rationale

By offering a reason why and when the need to revise the Grant Application from the LOI budget proposal allows the grantreaders context for understanding the change.

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SECTION F, QUESTION 16- ORGANIZATION'S CASH RESERVES

The grant reviewer is looking for indicators of how well the organization can demonstrate financial stability. Having adequate cash on hand to pay regular expenses and obligations is an indicator of financial stability.

PART III. LOI & GRANT APPLICATION REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS

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501 (c) (3) IRS LETTER OF DETERMINATION. A copy of most current IRS Letter indicating tax-exempt status.

- The determination letter is the only official document and proof that your organization is recognized as a tax-exempt organization. A state-issued tax exempt letter is not the same thing.
- If applicable a copy of your fiscal sponsor's IRS 501(c) (3) Letter of Determination.
- To obtain a copy of an original Letter of Determination contact the IRS at: https://www.irs.gov/charities-non-profits/eo-operational-requirements-obtaining-copies-of-exemption-determination-letter-from-irs

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BOARD MEMBER LIST. A copy of the most current Board members including their professional affiliations (*name of organization of employment and title*), and City and Zip code of residence.

- The detailed list of current Board members makes clear the composition of the board. Their professional affiliations indicate key leaders, and provide information on the various skill sets represented on the board. Their City and Zip Code of residence reflects the residential geographic distribution of your board.
- The following information for each board member should include:
    1. Name, position and number of years served
    2. Professional affiliations *(name of organization of employment and title)*
    3. City and Zip Code of residence
- Specify the percentage of the board members who make a financial contribution to your organization.

Example: 100% of ABC organization's Board members make a financial contribution.

Marcia Lopez, Board President (2 yrs.)	Michael Smith, Secretary (1 yr.)	Jacob Edwards, Treasurer (2 yrs.)
XYZ Law Firm, Partner	Community Volunteer	MLN Energy, Vice Pres
Georgetown, 78628	Georgetown, 78633	Cedar Park, 78613

COLLABORATING ORGANIZATION LETTER. Letter(s) from collaborating organization(s) that explain their role and is signed by the top director(s) of that organization(s). *(If applicable*)

- Seeds of Strength's *Collaborator Agreement form* submitted by the lead organization for the proposed program or project and signed by the collaborating organization. *(Collaborator Agreement can be downloaded from seedsofstrength.org "Apply for a Grant" page).*
- Collaborative work with Georgetown Independent School District. *(District's Letter of Approval of the PIE Partnership Proposal). (If applicable).*

KEY STAFF List (*no more than two pages*) *(see page 12 Grant Guidelines for additional information*)

- Key staff might include, Executive Director, Program Director, or other key staff member(s) who will be directing the program and explain why his/her oversight positions the program for success.
- If this is a volunteer position, please indicate year assigned to the position and how long serving with the organization.
- The Staff list should include name, position title, education, (*specific degree, license, certification*) length of time employed, brief biography of work history as it relates to the program/project, and brief description of duties.
- If the position is vacant, please indicate how long you expect it will take to be filled.
- List the number of full-time, part-time, and volunteer staff assigned to the program or program.

PROGRAM LOGIC MODEL Template: ***(Must use Seeds of Strength's Template*****)** **(*****see page 14 & 15 Grant Guidelines for additional information)***

- The logic model is the first step of the grant evaluation process. It is a visual representative that describes a program or organization in evaluation terms. The model shows how day-to-day activities connect to the results or outcomes the program is trying to achieve. The model has the following components: Goal, Target Population, Inputs, Activities, Outputs, Outcomes, and Performance Measures.

FINANCIALS

The following is an overview of the requested financial documents used in reviewing the financial activities and position of nonprofit organizations applying for a grant.

IRS Form 990 and Independent Financial Audit

- **IRS Form 990** ***(gross receipts $200,000 or greater and total assets greater than or equal to $500,000)*** **filers:** Copy of the most recent fiscal year, including all completed schedules.
- **990-EZ** ***(gross receipts less than $200,000 and total assets of less than $500,000)*** **filers:** Copy of most recent fiscal year, including schedule A and O.
- **IRS Form 990-N** ***(gross receipts of under $50,000 e-Postcard*****) filers: Electronic IRS filing:** Proof of the filing of the e-Postcard for the most recent year filed. Proof of the IRS Electronic 990-N filings can be found at *https://apps.irs.gov/app/eos/*
- **Most recent independent financial audit including Auditors Notes and Management Letter.** *(Both the 990 and audit documents should be the same fiscal year*). If no audit is available, please attach a written statement that explains why.

BUDGETS

LOI PROGRAM/PROJECT BUDGET

- LOI Program/Project Budget *(submitted as a LOI attachment*). A LOI Budget example can be downloaded from seedsofstrength.org "Apply for a Grant" page.

GRANT APPLICATION PROPOSED PROGRAM/PROJECT BUDGET (***must use Seeds of Strength's Excel template*****)**

Part 1: Budget Narrative- The budget narrative serves two purposes: it explains how the **costs** were estimated and it justifies the need for each budget item.

Part 2: Budget Summary- The budget summary includes both proposed **revenues** and **expenses** for the program.

GRANT APPLICATION ORGANIZATION BUDGET ATTACHMENTS

- Actual Program/Project Budget for prior fiscal year (*if program was operable the prior year*)
- Proposed Organization Budget for current fiscal year;
- Actual Organization budget for prior fiscal year

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Note: Financial statements are to be prepared according to Generally Accepted Account Procedures (GAAP).

Income Statement (***Statement of Activities*****) previous fiscal year and year-to-date financials**

- Also known as profit and loss statement *(P&L*), statement of financial performance, earnings statement, or statement of operations. It indicates how the revenue is transformed into the net income (*the result after all* *revenues and expenses).* It displays the revenues recognized for a specific period, and the cost of expenses charged against these revenues, including write-offs *(e.g., depreciation and amortization of various assets*) and taxes. The purpose of the income statement is to show whether the nonprofit made or lost money during the period being reported. It represents a period of time. This contrasts with the balance sheet, which represents a single moment in time. It is important to specify whether it is accrual (*preferred)* or cash accounting.

- **Submit .pdf files. Organization previous fiscal year, and year-to-date financials through January 31, 2020.**

Balance Sheet (*Statement of Financial Position*) previous fiscal year and year-to-date financials

- A summary of the financial balances of your nonprofit. Assets and liabilities and fund balances are listed as of a specific date, such as the end of its fiscal year. A balance sheet is often described as a "snapshot" of a nonprofit's financial condition. It applies to a single point in time of an organizations' fiscal year.
- **Submit .pdf files. Organization previous fiscal year, and year-to-date financials through January 31, 2020.**

Note: If the organization has existed for less than two years, please provide the financial data, as noted above, since the organization's business start date.

LITIGATION

- If applicable, provide a list of all actual (*within the past two years*) or threatened litigation or regulatory proceedings, investigations, or governmental actions involving your organization (*or a collaborating partner*) in the last 2 years, with a brief description of the basis for each. Submit this file as directed on the Grant Application "Required Attachment Checklist" by scanning the document to a .pdf file and naming the file, NAME OF YOUR AGENCY- FINANCIALS and include the file with the other financial documents requested.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY *(Must use Seeds of Strength's one-page Template*)

- A one-page program or project summary that could be shared, separately from the completed application, with Seeds of Strength's members who may not review grant proposals in their entirety. This summary should mention key elements of the proposal, work of your organization and the impact the grant request will have. The document would tell the story of your agency and program request in a summarized form.
