



Tips for Successful Grant Applications

- It's a good idea to review the entire process and all application questions before you begin. This helps you plan an application that tells your whole story and covers key scoring criteria.
- The online application system limits the length of your answers. Concise answers help volunteers (who read multiple applications) better understand each proposal.
- Be clear about the difference your proposal will make. Applications that describe a clear impact will score better. Also, focus more on describing the solution than the problem.
- Please don't include multiple projects in one application. This makes it difficult to prioritize all proposals.
- Be clear and objective about the number of individuals who will be impacted by the proposal.
- The amount you ask for in a proposal is a big factor in how likely it is to be funded. Keep in mind that the RDA typically receives requests for at least double the amount we have to award. A main focus of the Board is to benefit as many people as possible with available dollars.
- Outputs and outcomes can be challenging to create, collect, and report. However, clear metrics help readers understand what will be different when your proposal is implemented.
- Applicants must provide recent Balance Sheet and Income Statement. Up-to-date financial documents are one indicator of a strong organization. Outdated financial information may disqualify your proposal.

RDA Application Checklist

- Completed online application questions
- Upload listing of Board of Directors (include city and state of residence)
- Upload Balance Sheet and Income Statement – required for non-profit organizations.
- **WE NO LONGER REQUIRE THAT YOU SEND THE DETERMINATION LETTER AND CERTIFICATE OF EXISTENCE. THE ONLINE SYSTEM ALLOWS US TO VERIFY YOUR STATUS AS A NONPROFIT. IF THERE ARE QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR NONPROFIT STATUS, WE WILL CONTACT YOU.**

Common Reasons Why Grant Proposals are Rejected or Score Lower

- Applications are unclear or missing required information
- Need is not adequately defined
- Proposal seems too ambitious – not realistic
- Budget is vague, unrealistic or lacks other funding sources
- Impact described doesn't justify amount requested, especially when compared to other proposals
- Past experience of applicant does not demonstrate expertise for successful implementation
- No or limited correlation to agency mission, vision and values – seems to show mission creep
- Impact on Scott County residents is unclear or insignificant
- Incomplete application

For questions on application process, please contact RDA at ceo@rdauthority.org or 563.323.5177.