Metrics/Goals

Do your research, review the:

1. Eligibility Criteria
2. Submission Requirements
3. Evaluation process (if available)

Make an outline refining your projects metrics and goals for your grant writing process using the acronym SMART.

Specific- Describe your project and goals in enough detail so that the grantor evaluation committee know specifically what the project is, how it is important and how it will impact the community. Keep it simple and to the point.

Measurable- How do you know when your goal(s) have been accomplished?

Attainable- Can your goal(s) be accomplished? Is it realistic? Financially?

Relevant- How do your goal(s) relate to your project and/or mission. Are they relevant to the grantors mission? What is the impact?

Timely- Can the goal(s) be accomplished in a reasonable amount of time?

Eligibility Criteria

Qualified applicants must be either a private, non-profit organization tax-exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Service Code or a public institution or entity. The organization, or program to be funded, must be in Vermont. An organization may submit only one application during a 12-month period

Funding Guidelines

Through its grant making, the Windham Foundation seeks to support organizations concerned with the needs and quality of life of Vermonters. Those organizations include, but are not limited to, those dealing with:

1. Agricultural preservation and the food systems
2. Environmental enhancement
3. Education in the broadest sense
4. Promotion of the arts, crafts and Vermont traditions
5. Meeting basic human needs
6. Historic Preservation where it serves a broad community purpose

In making decisions, the Foundation will look at an organization's competence in the proposal area and its track record, the stability of its financial base and fundraising strategies, the strength of its leadership and the long-term viability of the program in question.

Approximately $65,000 in grants will be awarded each quarter. There is no fixed limit on the amount of grant requests although most will be within the $5,000 - $10,000 range. Our priority is small, community-based organizations.

The types of proposals the Foundation funds are wide ranging. They include operational support, special initiatives, capacity building, matching and challenge grants. Support for operations will be considered where it strengthens organizational capacity.

The Foundation will not provide support for the following:

- Endowment campaigns.
- Sporting activities, outings or events.
- Fraternal or religious organizations, including schools with religious affiliation.
- Individual fellowships or scholarships.
- Playgrounds, day care facilities and skate parks. (With such programs in virtually every community we find it impossible to choose one over the other. We do consider grants that could result in a benefit to all such centers.)
- Publications, books, films or surveys.
- Promotional Events.

Although we value the work, we do not provide grants to affiliates of national organizations focused on particular diseases or those that provide emergency relief efforts.

How to Apply

The Foundation does not pre-screen applications. We never know what content or geographic competition will exist in any cycle. Personal interviews or site visits are not required but on occasion may be requested. We hope that the section on how we evaluate your application will help you understand our process.

Online Grant Application

All applications are required to be submitted electronically. Use our Online Grant Application.

Submission Requirements

Proposal narrative (not to exceed 3 pages) including:
a. Brief description of the applying organization and its expertise in the project area.
b. The background to the project or the problem being addressed, including goals, population served and timeline.
c. Plan to sustain funding.

Financial Information

a. Organization budget for current year and for the specific program.
b. One copy of your audited/compiled financial statement (not older than 18 months). or tax form 990 will be accepted in place of the audit if your organization's assets do not exceed $500,000.

Attachments

a. Board of directors
b. Funding sources over $1,000.

How We Evaluate Your Application

To assist you in understanding our decision-making, here are the factors the committee typically considers:

Mission Fit

- How does the project advance the Windham Foundation's mission to enhance the vitality of Vermont's rural communities?

Likelihood of Success:

- Are the project's objectives clear and realistic? Please, tell us what you are trying to do and why.
- Is there a plan for future sustainability? How will you support the program going forward?
- Are the project objectives measurable and clearly understood?
- If successful, is the project impact significant?
- In education how does the program reflect state or local education goals?

Fiscal Strength:

- Does the application explain how the requested funds are to be used and why they are needed?
- What is the overall financial status of the organization?
- Does the organization have a track record of effective fiscal management?

Evidence of Community Support:

- Does the proposal show knowledge of related initiatives or programs and coordination with them?
- Is their evidence of strong community support through local fundraising, in-kind donations including volunteers?

Capital and Historic Preservation Projects:

- Does the project, site or building have historic significance other than age?
- Will the project have public use?
- Have project viability thresholds been established and met and are there accurate cost estimates? (In general, with limited grant resources, we are more likely to participate in such projects when they are underway, not at the exploration or planning stage).

Land Conservation and Farm Viability Projects:

- Does the project enhance Vermont's working landscape through the creation of food or forest products, public recreation or land management programs?
- Has the project met a viability threshold and is it likely to happen? (These projects are often large and require stages of funding. With our limited resources we find it more effective to fund once the program is viable and moving forward.)

School Projects:

- Is there a charitable and community mission associated with the project?
- Is the request seeking to replace school budget cuts? While we understand the pressures on school budgets we do not feel Foundation funds should be used to fill that void.
- If the project concerns curriculum, how is it integrated in the overall curriculum standards?
- Does the project demonstrate a finding that could be of importance to other schools?