



PROGRAM GRANT GUIDELINES

OVERVIEW

Impact Austin is a community of women that seeks to transform lives in the Austin area through high-impact and life-long giving. Impact Austin combines annual \$1250 donations from members and gives multiple high-impact grants each June to local, worthy causes selected by our members. We want our funds to make a visible difference in our community. Each year we award high impact program grants in focus areas selected from the following five: culture, environment, education, health and wellness, and family. The members of Impact Austin choose the grant recipients who become our new Community Partners. Starting in 2015, Impact Austin also awards a new category of grant called a catalyst grant. Check our website (www.impactaustin.org/) for additional information on the catalyst grant.

Impact Austin's funding cycle runs from July 1st of one year to June 30th of the next year. In each funding year, funds are collected through December, proposals are solicited and evaluated from January through May, and grants are awarded in June. The exact amount of funds available for award in any given funding year will be announced after December 31st.

ELIGIBILITY

In order to be eligible for an Impact Austin grant, an organization must:

- be classified as a “public charity” with tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) and 509(a) of the Internal Revenue Service Code and
- provide an IRS 501(c)(3) status approval letter at the first step of the process.

In addition, the organization's proposal must:

- Outline a **project or program** that targets a *specific population* for a *specific duration* with *specific measurable goals* to be achieved;
- Provide services in Bastrop, Hays, Travis and/or Williamson counties, Texas;
- Use the full amount of Impact Austin's available grant; and
- Plan to expend the grant funds within 24 months.

In addition, the following rules apply:

- A nonprofit organization cannot apply for both a program grant and a catalyst grant in the same year. They may submit only one proposal each year.
- An organization that has received a grant from Impact Austin may not reapply in the following two years.
- Collaborations must identify one lead organization to submit the application.

RESTRICTIONS

Impact Austin will not fund the following:

- Debt reduction
- Endowments or memorials
- Bridge funding or interim financing
- Operational deficits
- Political lobbying or legislative activities
- General fund drives, annual appeals, or fundraising events
- Fraternal, sectarian and religious organizations where the grant is intended to principally benefit members/adherents or to fund inherently religious activities
- Private foundations
- Litigation/legal expenses in actions by or against the organization
- General construction or renovation (unrelated to a specific proposed project or program)
- General capital campaigns (unrelated to a specific proposed project or program)
- Advertising
- Sports teams or any sports-related activity or competition

Our guidelines are continuing to evolve, and Impact Austin reserves the right to change its criteria without prior notice at any time.

FOCUS AREAS

Impact Austin will accept grant applications in focus areas selected from the following five.

- **Culture:** Programs and projects that cultivate, develop, educate and improve the cultural climate in the Greater Austin area.
- **Environment:** Programs and projects that seek to 1) improve, enhance or restore the surroundings and promote conservation of our natural resources in the Greater Austin area, 2) promote the protection and welfare of animals and 3) encourage research, public awareness and education relating to the environment and animals.

- **Education:** Programs and projects that further the ability to educate and improve education in the Greater Austin area.
- **Family:** Programs and projects that strengthen and enhance the lives of children and families in the Greater Austin area.
- **Health and Wellness:** Programs and projects that positively impact the mental or physical health and wellness of the people in the Greater Austin area.

Each grant applicant must select only one focus area under which it wishes to be considered. The specific focus areas for each year will be announced prior to the annual Impact Austin Non-profit Workshop.

REVIEW PROCESS

Impact Austin has a four-part Program Grant Application process:

1. **Letter of Inquiry:** Each applicant must submit a Letter of Inquiry online via our grants management system. Impact Austin Grant Review Committee members will evaluate all of the submitted Letters of Inquiry and invite certain organizations to complete a Grant Application.
2. **Grant Application:** Each organization invited to complete an application must submit the Grant Application online via Impact Austin's grant management system by the submission deadline. You will also be asked to submit various documents to accompany the form. Impact Austin Grant Review Committee members will evaluate all Grant Applications and select semifinalists to participate in Site Visits.
3. **Site Visit:** Impact Austin will conduct a site visit with three to four semifinalists in each Focus Area. Site visits provide an opportunity for Impact Austin members to meet the people behind the organization requesting funding. Site visits include one-on-one interviews with selected representatives from the organization. Following the site visit, Impact Austin Grant Review Committee members will select two finalists from each Focus Area.
4. **Annual Meeting:** Information about each finalist will be provided to all of Impact Austin's members. In addition, representatives from each of the finalists will be invited to attend Impact Austin's annual meeting to provide a five-minute presentation on their organization and the proposed program or project. At the meeting, Impact Austin's members will then vote on the finalist from each focus area, with each member casting one vote and the majority deciding the Community Partners.

Impact Austin reserves the right to reject a Letter of Inquiry or a Grant Application for any reason; including a missed deadline or missing required documentation. For more detailed instructions, see the LOI Worksheet and Program Grant Overview documents on our website at www.impactaustin.org/.

Terms of Grant: Prior to receiving the grant money, the grant recipient must execute Impact Austin's Terms of Grant. A sample of the Terms of Grant can be found on our website at www.impactaustin.org/.

Evaluations: Impact Austin requires that our Community Partners submit periodic progress reports. Impact Austin emphasizes the use of evaluation to measure program progress and outcomes, promote learning from experience, improve program performance and encourage our Community Partners to build effective self-evaluation plans into their projects. Copies of the interim and final report forms can be found on our website at www.impactaustin.org/.

QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions regarding the program grant application process, please check the FAQ's on our website or e-mail us at grants@impactaustin.org.