



Grant Writing Seminar Handout

In this activity, we will practice being grant reviewers. This will help provide insight into what reviewers might look for as they score your grants and highlight how writing to the questions posed in applications can impact your scores.

The grant application question we will review is:

Briefly describe your project and the outcomes the funding will help you achieve. Describe the unmet need the project addresses, the long-term benefit of the project, and why this funding mechanism is the most appropriate funding for your project.

The scoring criteria for this question are as follows:

How well did the application make the case for why this funding stream is the most appropriate for the unmet need and long term benefits of the project?

a. The application **clearly** describes the unmet need the project addresses and the long-term benefits of the project. The application **clearly** identifies other potential funders and describes why those funders are not appropriate for the project. It also describes why the project **cannot be completed** with the existing organizational budget. – **3 points**

b. The application describes the unmet need the project addresses and the long-term benefits of the project. The application identifies other potential funders and describes why those funders are not appropriate for the project. It **poorly** describes why the project cannot be completed with the existing organizational budget. – **2 points**

c. The application **does not well define** the unmet need the project addresses or the long-term benefits of the project. The application **vaguely** identifies other potential funding sources but does not indicate that other options have been **thoroughly** considered. – **1 point**

d. The application **does not define** the unmet need the project addresses or the long-term benefits of the project. The application does a **poor** job of identifying any other potential funding sources. – **0 points**

Turn to the next page to review and score three answers to this question.

Response 1:**Your Score:**

The Biochar Facility is an initiative designed to address the pressing challenges of wildfire risks and forest health in and around Anonymous County, Colorado. By processing liability biomass from forest restoration and wildfire mitigation projects, as well as urban and yard woody waste, the facility will convert these materials into biochar, which is an organic material that can then be used to improve soil quality, reduce water consumption, and filter pollutants. This project aims to process up to 13,000 tons of biomass annually, significantly reducing hazardous fuel loads and enhancing forest health. The long-term benefits of the project include enhanced forest health, improved waste management, and a model for biomass utilization that can be replicated in other regions. This funding mechanism is the most appropriate for our project as it aligns with the goals of promoting risk mitigation and community resilience, ensuring that Anonymous County can effectively implement and sustain this transformative initiative.

Response 2:**Your Score:**

Unnamed County is seeking funding for two wildfire detection camera stations to provide early wildfire detection in the eastern part of unnamed County, a region facing elevated wildfire risks given the increased frequency and intensity of severe weather events, such as prolonged drought. The eastern part of the County is currently isolated from existing fire and emergency response stations, with response times ranging from one to three hours, depending on the location. Camera locations are identified using a proprietary and robust methodology for network design and seek to maximize both overall coverage and triangulation areas based on multiple factors, such as fire risk, the region of interest, proximity to critical assets, and high-value infrastructure. Other considerations include leveraging existing tower infrastructure where possible and evaluating elevation and topology for maximum visibility and coverage.

Response 3:**Your Score:**

ABC District requests funding to support completion of design, geotechnical investigation, and environmental compliance and permitting for a landslide mitigation project. The project will replace a section of open earthen canal threatened by landslide with 48-inch HDPE siphon positioned north of the historic slide toe. ABC district delivers irrigation water, exchange water for powerplants and domestic water supply for over 90,000 residents. Multiple landslides have occurred in the area, and the canal is at high risk of catastrophic failure. Long-term benefits of the project include improved water security for agriculture, hydropower, and domestic uses; improved climate resilience by eliminating losses from seepage and evaporation and a hardened system; and improved public safety and reduced emergency response costs by implementing stabilization measures. NDME funding offers the quickest pathway to implementation for a time-sensitive project. While the project is competitive for federal funding, timelines associated with those programs would push the project back by years, leaving the problem unaddressed and exposing the canal to continued risk of failure. Even with strong state and local match, the estimated cost exceeds available funding. NDME would close a critical gap, leveraging partner investments to deliver a construction-ready package that can quickly be implemented.