



Improve Your Odds

A Grant Writing Workshop

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2019 Sustainability Summit
June 14, 2019



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OVERVIEW

Sustainable Jersey Grants Program

- Funded over **900** municipal and school projects and distributed over **\$4.9 million** in grants since 2009
- Is an important resource benefit for communities participating in the certification program
- Offers guidance on how to submit a successful grant application
 - Debrief calls for non-recipients
 - Webinars preceding every cycle
 - Sessions and workshops at conferences
 - grants@ all year round



GRANT LEVELS



2k

- Simpler application form
- Can be used to support general green team efforts and build capacity
- Can fund a project related to an action to be used toward certification efforts



10k

20k

30k

- More detailed application form
- Must fund a project related to an action to be used toward certification efforts (Gardinier = energy)
- More rigorous selection process and evaluation criteria



SELECTION PROCESS

2k Grant Applications

- **MAIN GOAL:** To support green teams in participating towns and schools
- **50%** of grant funding reserved for certified communities
- Main considerations
 - Certification efforts
 - Community need
 - Regional distribution of funding
- **Evaluation Criteria**
 - The clarity of the project description
 - Strength of the action plan that will guide green team's activities
 - Budget includes only eligible and reasonable expenses
 - **The demonstrated commitment to move forward with sustainability efforts**



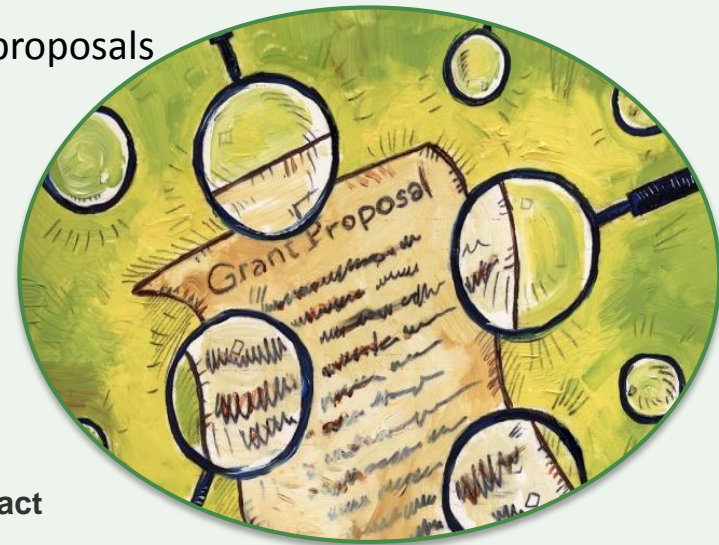
SELECTION PROCESS

Large Grant Applications

- **MAIN GOAL:** To support a well thought out project that directly relates to one of our program actions that a municipality may not otherwise have the resources to complete on its own
- **50%** of grant funding reserved for certified communities
- Decided by a **Blue Ribbon Selection Committee** composed of colleagues from partner organizations
- **Evaluation Criteria**
 - More rigorous than that of the 2k grant proposals



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EVALUATION CRITERIA

10K & 20K Proposals

Project
Description

20 Points

Project Team
Members

10 Points

Action Plan &
Timeline

20 Points

Community
Engagement

10 Points

Project Impact

20 Points

Budget

20 Points



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WORKSHOP

Community Garden Project

1. Write a brief project description
2. List the necessary team members
3. Create a timeline and brief action plan
4. Identify potential community engagement
5. Describe the project's intended impact
6. Construct a reasonable budget (total to 10k)

Break out into groups to draft what you think a well-written proposal for a community garden would look like (use bullet points). Discuss available resources to complete the project. Be prepared to share your work.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- **Concisely** summarizes the **specific project** to be funded by the grant award
- **Clearly** explains how it will address a **need** within the community
- Will contribute towards the successful **completion of a Sustainable Jersey action**

EXAMPLE

- Identify where the garden will be created
- List who will be responsible for the garden
- State what the garden will be used for
- Explain why your community needs the garden
- Should connect it to certification efforts
- Should state the goal of the project



TEAM MEMBERS

- Project team appears **qualified**
- Project team includes **representation from community stakeholder groups** that will **be involved or impacted**

EXAMPLE

- Important project roles are filled
- Summary of qualifications
- Includes community partners and volunteers
- Considers who's needed before, during, and after the project
- Match up with responsibilities in AP&T
- Includes target audience or affected groups



ACTION PLAN & TIMELINE

- Action plan addresses the **steps needed to successfully complete** the project
- Target completion dates are **realistic** and will enable the project to be completed within the **18-month performance period**
 - 2k grants = **performance period of 12 months**

EXAMPLE

- Begins and ends at the correct times
- Considers the before, during, and after steps
- Assigns correct roles to right people
- Includes plans for signage, communications, and outreach
- Realistic timeline with buffers



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- Capitalizes on **collaborations** between community-based organizations
- Action Plan includes efforts to **share the success** with the wider community

EXAMPLE

- Explains the community partnerships
- Goes into detail on the collaboration
- Explains how the community...
 - Was involved with the proposal of this project
 - Was involved with the completion of the project
- Action Plan includes a ribbon cutting ceremony/event
- Includes future plans to further engage the community



IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY

- **Augments existing green team efforts** and/or be a **catalyst to advance sustainability efforts** in the community
- **Who will benefit** from the proposed project and **how** is clearly articulated.

EXAMPLE

- Explains the effects of the project on...
 - Community members
 - Green team efforts
 - Future sustainability initiatives
 - Completing the SJ or SJS action
 - Other—environment, culture, energy savings
- Plan for how to evaluate impact



BUDGET

**** #1 indicator of a good proposal ****

- Budget Narrative clearly summarizes project expenses & aligns with budget template
- Identifies **all sources of funding**
 - **In-kind contributions** such as volunteer hours and **no or low cost resources**
 - Clearly identifies the **eligible grant expenses**
 - **Promotional items do not exceed \$1,000**
- Is **realistic, justified** and contributions have **reasonable value**

EXAMPLE

- Consider all expenses needed to complete the project



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PROJECT RESOURCES

- Handout available on websites
- Grants portal
- Rutgers Cooperative Extension
 - Environmental Stewards
 - Master Gardeners
- State and Federal grant programs
 - NJCEP and utility energy incentives
 - It Pay\$ to Plug In
 - Tonnage grants
 - Clean Communities
 - Watershed Ambassadors
- Funding through foundations
- “Resources” section of program actions
- Local businesses, charities, boy scouts, etc.



GENERAL TIPS

- If a **consultant** is writing your application, your proposal should be customized to your municipality
- If permitting, site evaluation, state approval, or any other “task” is required to be completed **BEFORE** a project can begin, it is best to have that finished before submitting an application
- A proposal should tell the whole “**story**”
- Use **uploads** to provide more details on the project
- Take advantage of the guidance opportunities
- Research your project and the available resources
- **Make use of the different sections of the action that relates to your project**





GRANTS & RESOURCES

Sustainable Jersey Grants Program

Resource Opportunities

Grants Portal

Green Team Resources

TCNJ Center for Community Engaged Learning & Research

Publications

Regional Hubs

Conference, Training & Webinar Presentations

Conference Presentations

Training & Workshop Presentations

Webinar Recordings & Presentations

GRANT WRITING

Additional SJ Resources

- 2018 NJLM Presentation: The Grass is Greener with a Sustainable Jersey Grant
 - <http://bit.ly/2018NJLMGrantsPresentation>
- 2018 Sustainability Summit Presentation: Turning Projects into Points
 - <http://bit.ly/2018SummitGrantsPresentation>

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10

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Q&A