



## **FAQs for Nonprofits re: Impact Grant**

### **Application process and eligibility**

#### **I assume that the LOI and subsequent grants are submitted online?**

Correct. Check our published dates on our website to learn when we will open up our submission process for the LOI on Submittable. The full application will only be accessible once we notify organizations who have been invited to advance to the full application.

#### **Do you consider organizations serving Essex County in a significant way as "operating" in Essex County or do we need a physical location in Essex County?**

While your organization does not have to be based in/located in Essex County, your project has to occur and services need to be provided in Essex County and benefit Essex County. If you are located somewhere else, you should make a strong case, ideally with data, for how you serve Essex County with your proposal.

#### **If you do not receive a grant award this year, are you eligible to reapply in the future? If so, how long is the wait period?**

You can reapply and there is no waiting period.

#### **Can those that receive a grant reapply every year?**

No, if you have received an Impact Grant from Impact100 Essex, you have to wait 5 years before you can reapply. We welcome everyone else to reapply the following year, including those who were a semi-finalist or finalist, or those who were a recipient of an Equity Grant.

#### **How many applications have you received over the past few years?**

We usually receive between 50-65 applications.

#### **How will site visits be conducted?**

Ideally, we'd like to conduct site visits in person, but logistics and health concerns at the time may dictate that we hold them virtually, as has been the case the past few years.

**Is there a limit on the number of organizations you are inviting to submit a full application?**

We do not set a percent or hard number. We advance those applications that we believe will be most successful in our review process. About a third of last year's applicants were advanced to the application stage.

**Is there a greater focus on small or new organization's programs rather than a new program from an organization in existence for many years?**

No, there is not a stated preference and nothing in our review process rubric favors one over the other.

**Do you offer one grant of \$100k or are there multiple funded group grants? What are the range of grant amounts?**

Our Impact Grant will be \$100,000. In addition, we have generally been able to offer small grants to each finalist and semi-finalist. Once the full membership numbers are complete, we determine if and what amount we can offer to the finalists and semi-finalists of the Impact Grant. In addition, we offer separate Equity Grants (a different application process). See our website to read more about our Equity Grants.

**How critical is sustainability in your criteria? In other words, if funding from Impact100 Essex helps us create a new program with a clear need, but we do not have funding in place for year 2 or 3, will that prevent us from getting a grant?**

We want to be sure that whatever you've started, you can continue. For example, if a grant is to purchase something physical, to create a new curriculum or for a one-time event, then we'd like to know how you will ensure it will be utilized on an ongoing basis. If it's a grant to expand or create a program that will be ongoing, you don't have to have secured the longer-term funding already, but you should share a solid plan for getting that funding. For example, one organization told us they had been unsuccessful getting funding for the project because it was new and untested. Once they had it in place and tested over two years, then they would become eligible for other kinds of funding. We just want to know if there's something in place to sustain the project in the long run.

**What if you aren't a 501(c)(3) but/and you have a fiscal sponsor?**

The fiscal sponsor must be a 501(c)(3) that meets our eligibility requirements. If so, the fiscal sponsor should be the lead applicant.

**Collaboration and Financials**

**Can you define what constitutes collaboration? Do we need to include ANY organization we may partner with as a partner and do they need to complete all the same financial data?**

There is no perfect definition, but if your project's success requires the significant participation of another organization such as a school or if you are subgranting 40% or more from the Impact Grant to the other organization, you should complete this section of the application.

For details on collaborations and the specific information required in the application budget and budget narrative, please refer to our Info Session Slide Deck posted on our website. Also note, if a significant amount of funding (i.e. 40% or more) from the Impact Grant will go to the other organization and you advance to the site-visit stage, we will ask that the partner join the site visit meeting and will likely ask to review their financials as well. Be sure to review details on required financial documentation.

**Do you have a preference over whose financials you see (with a collaboration)?**

We do need to see the financials of the organization we're funding (the lead applicant).

**Do all collaborators have to be 501(c)(3)'s?**

No, all collaborators do not have to be 501(c)(3)'s. If some of your key collaborators are for-profits, then we would want to know that. Of course, everyone needs to buy pencils from for-profits, so we're not talking about things like that.

Finally, while it's not a requirement that all partners be non-profits or government entities, keep in mind that you are looking to inspire a group of women who want to use their donated funds wisely. So be sure to clarify the rationale for a for-profit partner.

**Are the grant awards for a two-year period only? Or can the grant award be for one year?**

If your project will only take one year, that is perfectly fine. Two years is the maximum time frame.

**Would you be able to give some examples of overhead?**

The Impact Grant will cover programmatic expenses and up to 20% of overhead, excluding development expenses.

We understand in order to execute the project, a portion of the organization's overhead should be attributed to this project. Programmatic expenses include all the cost categories required to deliver the project or program, while overhead relates to expenses required in order to operate. For example, if a small after-school arts program has 3 staff total and the Director is both an administrator and teaches during

programmatic time, an organization could put some of that person's time in overhead and some of it in programmatic.

**Please note the Budget Template in the slide deck.** We tried to create a budget template that is simple and could be tweaked depending on what type of project you're proposing. We also do not want to have a line item that is so general and so large that we would have to come back to you and ask "what are all these expenses." So we tried to break out the most significant expenses we have seen with past applicants while recognizing there are always unique expenses depending on the budget, to be included under "Other."

**If a partner is paid for their services, should they be included as a collaborator?**

As the sector is starting to work more closely together we're seeing more applications with collaborators. If they're partnering together in a significant way, we need more information so we understand the totality.

**Is there a preference for a budget that includes other funding vs. one that is all or almost completely Impact100 Essex funded?**

We do not have a specific standard that the Impact100 funding has to be a certain percent. You have to balance the fact that we don't have a specific percentage that we require vs. the idea that you have a group of women reviewers who would like to see the impact of their funding on a project.

**If an applicant does not produce an annual report, do they need to submit anything else along with the financial statements audited by a third party?**

The required financial documentation and the certification level for those reports are determined by the organization's 2022 operating revenues (as required by the state of New Jersey). If your organization does not prepare its own financial reports and is included in the financial reports of a fiscal sponsor, the requirements are based on the revenues of the fiscal sponsor. If you are submitting the financial reports of your fiscal sponsor, you must ALSO provide a statement of your organization's revenues and expenses. Please refer the Info Session Slide Deck posted on our website for a detailed explanation of what is required of organizations invited to submit an application.

Applications will not be considered timely or complete without ALL of the required financial documents. There will be no extensions for document submissions. If invited to submit an Application and you have questions about what financial documents are required, contact [grants@impact100essex.org](mailto:grants@impact100essex.org) **before** the Application deadline.

## **Grant Awards/Administration**

### **Once the grantee is announced in May 2024, what is the anticipated/desired start date of the project ?**

We're looking to see that you'll start as close to the grant announcement date as possible. There have been times where the plan in place is a "ramp up." So once the organization knows that they have the funds, then there's certain activities that transpire before they need to spend the funds. That's ok as long as the activity gets started. That's part of that dialog so when you're putting in your work plan or milestones in the full application, we'll want to see that "ramp up."

### **What is the evaluation timeframe? Quarterly reports? Annual report?**

Currently, there are quarterly reports and a final report.

### **Are grant funds distributed in one payment to be used over a period of 2-years?**

We distribute grant funds in two ways depending on the project. If it is a milestone based project, we will coordinate with the grantee and distribute funds based on the milestone events. If there is more of a rollout, distributions can be on a quarterly basis. In either case, there are quarterly reports we review before distributing a payment.

### **How do you see Impact100 Essex's future involvement with awarded grantees? Is there an interest in future volunteerism, partnership, etc.?**

One of the advantages of our model is the exposure organization applicants get to a large group of Essex County donors. We do this in a few ways. To start, your LOI and/or application will be reviewed by a team of approximately 10-15 members. So each applicant is making a case to a set of new women who want to learn about the needs of Essex County and the projects proposed to address them. In addition, we have arranged volunteer opportunities with our past grantees as well as our finalists/semi finalists, so we do see relationships formed. Engagement increases for applicants who advance as finalists as we ask each finalist to provide a wish-list which is included in our Annual Meeting materials to members. In addition, we use our social media platforms to share and publicize finalists and past grantees' events, fundraisers and news. Inspired by certain organizations, members choose to volunteer or get more involved in other ways, including through individual giving.