

2026 Opportunity Fund Application Scoring Rubric

Scoring Scale

Score	Description
4 – Excellent	Fully addresses the criterion with strong evidence, clear planning, and exceptional alignment with Opportunity Fund goals.
3 – Good	Addresses the criterion well with adequate detail and alignment. Minor gaps or questions remain.
2 – Fair	Partially addresses the criterion but lacks clarity, detail, or evidence in key areas.
1 – Poor	Does not adequately address the criterion or provides insufficient information.

Eligibility Requirements (Pass/Fail)

Organizations must meet all of the following requirements to be scored:

- Registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization
- Serves the Greater Austin area
- BIPOC-led organization

Applications that do not meet the eligibility requirements listed will not advance to scoring.

Scored Criteria

1. Organizational Need & Readiness

How clearly does the organization demonstrate a fundraising challenge or opportunity, and its readiness to implement the project?

Score	Description
4	Clearly demonstrates a significant fundraising need and strong organizational readiness. Leadership commitment and implementation capacity are evident.
3	Demonstrates a clear need and reasonable readiness with only minor questions.
2	Need is identified but lacks detail, evidence, or implementation readiness.
1	Limited evidence of need or organizational readiness.

2. Fundraising Capacity-Building Impact

To what extent will the project strengthen the organization's long-term fundraising effectiveness?

Score	Description
4	Project is highly strategic and likely to create significant, sustainable fundraising improvements.
3	Project will likely strengthen fundraising capacity and create meaningful benefits.
2	Project may provide some benefit, but long-term impact is unclear or limited.
1	Limited connection to fundraising capacity building or outcomes are unclear.

3. Project Feasibility

Is the project realistic, well-planned, and achievable within the 9-month grant period?

Score	Description
4	Project scope, timeline, and implementation plan are clear, realistic, and achievable.
3	Project appears feasible with only minor concerns.
2	Significant questions exist regarding planning, staffing, or timeline.
1	Project is unlikely to be completed within the grant period.

4. Use of Funds

Are the requested funds aligned with the proposed project and Opportunity Fund goals?

Score	Description
4	Funds are clearly and strategically tied to project activities and fundraising capacity building.
3	Proposed use of funds is generally appropriate and aligned.
2	Some concerns about alignment, clarity, or effectiveness of proposed expenditures.
1	Use of funds is unclear or does not align with Opportunity Fund objectives.

5. Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access (IDEA)

How effectively does the organization incorporate inclusion, diversity, equity, and access into its fundraising practices and overall work?

Score	Description
4	Demonstrates a strong, intentional commitment to IDEA principles throughout organizational programs, culture, leadership, and fundraising practices. Provides specific examples and evidence of implementation.
3	Demonstrates a clear commitment to IDEA principles and provides examples of how they are incorporated into organizational and fundraising efforts.
2	Expresses support for IDEA principles but provides limited examples, detail, or evidence of implementation.
1	Provides minimal information regarding IDEA practices or demonstrates limited integration of IDEA principles into organizational work.

6. Organizational Budget Preference

Preference is given to organizations with annual operating budgets of \$500,000 or less.

Score	Description
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- 4 Annual operating budget of \$500,000 or less.
- 3 Annual operating budget exceeds \$500,000, but the organization demonstrates limited fundraising infrastructure and significant need for capacity-building support.
- 2 Annual operating budget exceeds \$500,000 and the organization has some fundraising infrastructure in place.
- 1 Annual operating budget exceeds \$500,000 and demonstrates substantial fundraising infrastructure and access to fundraising resources.

Reviewer Note: This criterion is intended to reflect the Opportunity Fund's preference for organizations with annual operating budgets of \$500,000 or less while also considering the organization's access to fundraising resources and capacity-building support.

Overall Scoring

Total Score: _____ / 24

Funding Recommendation Guidelines

- **22–24:** Highly Competitive
- **18–21:** Competitive
- **14–17:** Consider if Funds Remain
- **Below 14:** Not Recommended for Funding