

APPLICATION SCORING AND EVALUATION PROCESS, CRITERIA AND RUBRICS

SCORING AND EVALUATION PROCESS

The application review process established by the Straight A Fund Governing Board for the Straight A Fund grant involves two separate steps:

APPLICATION CRITERIA

The table below outlines the overall criteria used in the scoring and evaluation process for the two steps included in the application review. Corresponding weights are included where applicable.

STEP 1: APPLICATION SUSTAINABILITY SCREENING	RELATIVE WEIGHT
Does the applicant describe a sustainable project? Are the included budget information and financial claims made credible and verifiable? Are the reductions/reallocations (if present) permanent?	Y/N
STEP 2: APPLICATION REVIEW	
APPLICANT INFORMATION Does the applicant have experience with projects similar in size and scope and/or demonstrate capacity through partnerships to carry out the proposed project?	5
PROJECT DESCRIPTION Does the applicant present a strong argument for the innovative concept that achieves the stated fund goals?	35
IMPLEMENTATION Has the applicant presented an outline of a thoughtful implementation plan, including contingencies for mid-course correction?	20
SUBSTANTIAL IMPACT AND LASTING VALUE Does the application demonstrate substantial value and lasting impact by providing information which includes relevant background research, opportunities for replication, a statement of impact and a plan for evaluating impact through quantifiable results?	40



PROCESS FOR STEP 1: SUSTAINABILITY REVIEW

Applications will undergo an initial screening by three separate scorers to ensure that the proposal includes an explanation of how the project will be self-sustaining. If the project will result in increased, ongoing spending, the applicant shall show how the spending will be offset by verifiable, credible and permanent spending reductions.

This stage of the screening involves a fiscal review of application responses and budget documents to ensure that the description of the budget, the project proposal and potential project impact demonstrate sustainability. The screening also will determine whether reductions/reallocations (if proposed) are permanent and that the claims made in the application are verifiable and credible. Based on the scores of the three grant scorers, grant advisors will evaluate and make a determination of whether a proposal has demonstrated sustainability (see Scoring Process) and will recommend to the Governing Board if the applications should be rejected (not sustainable) or undergo further review (sustainable) in step two of the process. **Any project that has not met the criteria of a verifiable, credible plan for sustainability will be rejected and not be reviewed in step two of the process.**

Criteria

Fiscal scorers and screening evaluation will focus the scoring on how well the application responses and budget documentation meet the following criteria:

- Illustrate a concept that is sustainable with ongoing costs offset by verifiable, credible and permanent spending reductions.

Using the financial documentation and the answers provided in the sustainability section (questions 13-17) of the application, scorers will score items on a yes/no scale to determine the likelihood of sustainability. The assigned score will be based on the overall strength of the answer and evidence provided.



Scoring Worksheet

Fiscal scorers will use questions 1-3 to help guide their analysis in answering question 4.

Application Screening Worksheet (Used to support the response to sustainability)	Yes/No		
1. Does the application provide verifiable and credible information on the total project cost?	Yes	No	N/A
2. Does the application provide verifiable and credible information on the new/recurring costs of the project?	Yes	No	N/A
3. Does the application provide verifiable and credible information of any expected savings that will be realized by implementation of the project?	Yes	No	N/A
Application Screening			
4. Is the project self-sustaining? If the project will include increased, on-going spending, does the applicant show how the spending will be offset by verifiable and credible spending reductions? If the project does not include ongoing spending, does the applicant show how the project will sustain itself beyond the life of the grant?	Yes	No	

PROCESS FOR STEP 2: APPLICATION REVIEW

Upon documenting the sustainability of the project, the applications and questions will be scored by three separate scorers and receive scores on a scale of 0 to 100. In order to receive the maximum number of points, an application must be of the highest quality and the applicant must provide a clear, strong narrative that the project will achieve the stated goals of the Straight A Fund. Applications will be scored and evaluated based on the extent to which the proposal reflects an innovative project containing a thoughtful implementation plan, a method to benchmark the project, and demonstrate substantial value and lasting impact.

The scores of the separate scorers will be analyzed (see Scoring), and a final score based on this analysis will be issued for each project. Grant advisors will evaluate the scored proposals and issue a recommendation for funding to the Governing Board.



Criteria

The overall Criteria for the Straight A Fund application review are listed below. Scorers will determine how well the responses:

- Propose a strong argument for an innovative concept that represents bold and visionary thinking.
- Outline a thoughtful implementation plan;
- Proposes the thoughtful description of quantifiable results of the project that can be benchmarked;
- Demonstrate substantial value and lasting impact.

Each answer will be rated on a scale that moves from vague/unclear/lacking innovation to strong evidence/exemplary/highly innovative. The assigned score will be based on the overall strength of the answer and evidence provided.

Rubric

Score	Description
0	Inadequate No evidence or information not provided
1	Weak Minimal evidence; limited potential; vague; weak concepts; limited likelihood of success; limited in innovative thinking; lacks sufficient information
2	Marginal Some evidence; partially developed concepts; some potential for effectiveness and success; some inconsistencies; needs work; some innovation present; requires additional information/clarification
3	Good Convincing concepts with enough examples of evidence to indicate a good chance for success; clear and complete; innovative
4	Strong Very convincing concepts with strong examples of evidence throughout potential; well-conceived and thoroughly developed with a high likelihood for success; very innovative
5	Exemplary Excellent concepts; exceptional evidence; well-thought out with an extremely high likelihood of success, exemplary, highly innovative



Scoring Sheet

Application Response	Score (0-5)	Question Weight
Applicant Information		
8. Provide a brief description of the team or individual responsible for the implementation of this project including relevant experience where applicable. If included, descriptions, experiences and outline of roles and responsibilities of consortia or partnering entities.		1
Project Description		
11. Describe the innovative project.		4
12. Describe how it will meet the outcome(s) selected above. <i>If school/district receives school improvement funds/support, include a brief explanation of how this project will advance the improvement plan.</i>		3
Implementation		
18. Fill in the appropriate dates and an explanation of the timeline for the successful implementation of this concept. In each explanation, be sure to briefly describe the largest barriers that could derail your concept or time line for implementation and your plan to proactively mitigate such barriers. In addition, the narrative should list the stakeholders that will be engaged during that stage of the project and describe the communication that occurred as the application was developed. Describe the ongoing communication plan with the stakeholders as the project is implemented. (Stakeholders can include parents, community leaders, foundation support and businesses, as well as educational personnel in the affected entities.)		N/A
18a. Planning time line and narrative		1
18b. Implementation time line and narrative		1
18c. Summative evaluation time line and narrative		1
19. Describe the expected changes to the instructional and/or organizational practices in your institution.		1



Substantial Impact and Lasting Value		
20. Describe the rationale, research or past success that supports the innovative project and its impact on student achievement, spending reduction in the five-year fiscal forecast or utilization of a greater share of resources in the classroom.		1
21/22. Is this project able to be replicated in other districts in Ohio? If so, how?		2
23. Describe the substantial value and lasting impact that the project hopes to achieve.		2
24. What are the specific benchmarks related to the three fund goals that the project aims to achieve in five years? Include any other outcomes and benchmarks that your district, community school or consortia hopes to achieve in five years.		2
25. Describe the plan to evaluate the impact of the concept, strategy or approaches used?		1

Note: Questions in the sustainability section (13-17) were examined through the screening process and will not be issued a score during the application review. In addition, various informational questions (1-7, 9, 10) will not be scored using the criteria above. The table lists the sections, questions and corresponding weights of the scored questions. The **average adjusted score** will be the score resulting from the analysis of the three scorers' ratings, which will take into account both the differences in scorers and the weights of various questions.

