******

**SOCIAL INNOVATION GRANT GUIDELINES**

**BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW**

Impact Austin is a community of women that seeks to transform lives in Central Texas through high-impact and life-long giving. Impact Austin combines annual donations from members and gives multiple high-impact grants each year to local, worthy causes selected by Impact Austin members.

Each year in June, Impact Austin awards high-impact Program Grants in three focus areas: Community; Education; and Health and Well-being. Along with the Program Grants, Impact Austin also awards an annual Catalyst grant, which is capacity building funding intended to strengthen and grow nonprofit organizations.

In November 2019, Impact Austin will award the organization’s first-ever Social Innovation Grant. This will fund a collaborative focused on advancing equity for women and girls of color in the Greater Austin Area. See definitions below for additional information.

Proposals for the Social Innovation Grant will be solicited and evaluated from August to October. The Social Innovation Grant amount for 2019 is $110,000 and will be awarded on November 6, 2019 by a vote with Impact Austin’s full membership.

**DEFINITIONS**

**Collaborative:** Agroup of two or more entities, at least one of which is in the social sector, working for a common goal. This collaboration can be a new or existing program with entities currently partnering together for a collective outcome. Alternatively, the collaboration can be a formal organization with established membership. Ideal applicants will have clearly defined roles and responsibilities for each entity and will incorporate a healthy mix of different entity types. Submitting entity must be an established IRS 501(c)(3) or 509(a) tax-exempt organization.

**High Impact:** Measurable outcomes as a result of specific actions, activities and/or solutions that tackle the root cause of a particular social problem or issue. Ideal applicants will be able to demonstrate a track record of significant positive change as evidenced by clearly defined key performance indicators (KPI) over time, as well as attainable future KPI targets.

**Social Innovation:** New social practices that aim to meet social needs in a more effective way than existing solutions. Ideal applicants will be able to clearly articulate the existing solutions and the differentiating factors that make them innovative.

**Advancing equity for women and girls of color:** An organization or project/initiative aimed at improving the quality of life and opportunities for non-white women and/or girls in Central Texas. Ideal candidates will be able to provide specific examples of impact to beneficiaries across a diverse set of races and ethnic groups.

**ELIGIBILITY**

**In order to be eligible for an Impact Austin grant, the requesting organization must:**

* Be classified as a “public charity” with tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) and 509(a) of the Internal Revenue Service Code;
* Provide an IRS 501(c)(3) status approval letter at the first step of the process; and
* Be a collaborative or be a member of a collaborative as defined above.

**In addition, the organization’s proposal must:**

* Outline a **project or program** that targets advancing equity for women and girls of color for a *specific duration* with *specific measurable goals* to be achieved;
* Provide services in Bastrop, Hays, Travis and/or Williamson counties, Texas;
* Use the full amount of Impact Austin’s available grant; and
* Plan to expend the grant funds within 24 months.

**In addition, the following rules apply:**

* An organization that has received any grant from Impact Austin may not reapply in the following two years. However, they may be a non-submitting member of the collaborative during the two years.
* Collaborations must identify one lead organization to submit the application.

**RESTRICTIONS**

**Impact Austin will not fund the following for Social Innovation Grants:**

* Debt reduction
* Endowments or memorials
* Bridge funding or interim financing
* Operational deficits
* Political lobbying or legislative activities
* General fund drives, annual appeals, or fundraising events
* Fraternal, sectarian and religious organizations where the grant is intended to principally benefit members/adherents or to fund inherently religious activities
* Private foundations
* Litigation/legal expenses in actions by or against the organization
* General construction or renovation (unrelated to a specific proposed project or program)
* General capital campaigns (unrelated to a specific proposed project or program)
* Advertising
* Sports teams or any sports-related activity or competition

*Impact Austin’s guidelines are continuing to evolve, and Impact Austin reserves the right to change its criteria without prior notice at any time.*

**REVIEW PROCESS**

Social Innovation Grant is piloting a streamlined 3-part process:

1. **Grant Application**: Each organization must submit the Grant Application online via the Impact Austin Social Innovation Grant form by the submission deadline. You will also be asked to submit various documents to accompany the form. Impact Austin Grant Review Committee members will evaluate all Grant Applications and select semifinalists to participate in the Pitch Presentation.
2. **Pitch Presentation**: Three to five applicants that are selected as semifinalists will give a presentation to the Grant Review Committee followed by a question and answer session and interviews with selected representatives from the organization. An education session will be conducted for the semifinalists prior to pitch week to provide more information on expectations. Following the pitch, Impact Austin Grant Review Committee members will select two finalists.
3. **Town Hall Meeting**: Information about each finalist will be provided to all of Impact Austin’s members in advance of the November 6, 2019 Impact Austin Town Hall Meeting. A representative from each finalist will be invited to attend Impact Austin’s Town Hall Meeting to provide a five-minute presentation on their organization and the proposed program or project. At the meeting, Impact Austin members will then vote, with each member casting one vote and the majority deciding the Social Innovation Grant recipient.

*Impact Austin reserves the right to reject a Grant Application for any reason; including a missed deadline or missing required documentation.*

**TERMS AND REPORTING**

**Terms of Grant**: Prior to receiving the grant money, the grant recipient must execute

Impact Austin’s Terms of Grant. A sample of the Terms of Grant can be provided on request by emailing Michelle.Rankin@impactaustin.org.

**Evaluations**: After receiving the initial grant money, Impact Austin requires that Community Partners (grantees) submit periodic progress reports. Copies of the interim and final report forms can be found at [www.impactaustin.org/](http://www.impactaustin.org/).

**KEY DATES**

* Grant application opens: August 15, 2019
* Grant application closes: September 16, 2019
* Pitch week: October 7, 2019- October 11, 2019
* Impact Austin Town Hall Meeting: November 6, 2019

Semi-finalists for pitch week and finalists for the town hall meeting will be notified during the grant review process.

**QUESTIONS**

If you have questions on application process, please check the [FAQ’s on www.impactaustin.org](https://www.impactaustin.org/apply/grant-application-faqs) for general questions. The Social Innovation Grant is following a modified process, so for specific questions to this grant application or process please e-mail Michelle.Rankin@impactaustin.org.