



**NJ DEPARTMENT OF STATE
OFFICE OF FAITH-BASED INITIATIVES GRANT PROGRAM**

SOCIAL INNOVATION

To download the grant guidelines, click this link: <https://www.state.nj.us/state/ofbi.shtml>

The mission of the New Jersey Office of Faith Based Initiatives (OFBI) is to eliminate barriers to funding and other resource opportunities, create greater access for partnership and enhance the capacity of faith and community-based organizations (FBCOs) to create and implement innovative approaches that are designed for community and economic transformation.

Grant Awards are Subject to the Availability of Funding
Application Due Date: March 03, 2026 @ 1:00PM

Training Webinars:

Technical assistance training webinars can be found on OFBI's website <https://www.state.nj.us/state/ofbi.shtml>. Scroll down to "Spotlights" click "Grant Opportunities" then click "Webinars" located on the right-hand side.

Applicants may only apply for one funding category listed below

Eligibility Criteria:

Applicant must:

- Be a non-profit Faith and/or Community-Based Organization serving low-income residents;
- Must be tax-exempt by determination of the Internal Revenue Service in accordance with Section 501(c)(3) and upload their IRS Determination Letter that states that the organization is created for charitable purposes and not for religious purposes;
- Must be registered with the NJ Division of Consumer Affairs and have a valid Charity Registration Number and be **IN COMPLIANCE** with the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs, Charitable Registration and Investigation Section
- Be registered with the NJ Department of Treasury - Division of Revenue and Enterprise Services and must have a valid Business Revenue Number;
- Be **IN GOOD STANDING** with the Department of Treasury - Business Service Center
- Applicants must have their Certificate of Incorporation.

Ineligible Applicants:

- Houses of Worship;
- Colleges/Universities;
- Public schools, charter schools, or private schools;

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Category Descriptions:

Service Category	Maximum Request	Total Funding Available
College Readiness	\$40,000	\$200,000
Trade Skills Readiness	\$40,000	\$280,000

College Readiness Program

- The College/Trade School Readiness grant is designed to create greater access to college and/or trade schools between 16 years and 25 years. Funding can be used but not limited to subsidize a minimum of five college school applications fees, acceptance fees, coordinating college tours. The project must report on how many college applications were submitted, how many program participants were accepted and how many will be entering college Fall of 2025. **Indicate that the OFBI grant will be used to support an existing project and that the existing project is funded by whom and at what amount**

Trade Readiness Program:

- The Trade Readiness Program is designed to educate and create access to trade schools and/or apprenticeship opportunities for program participants between 16 years and 30 years. Funding can be used but not limited to the following:
 - Support create paid internship opportunities with specific trades in partnership with local trade businesses.
 - Launch trade fairs
 - Help program participants access vocational high schools and/or access county colleges that provide trade skills opportunities.
- **Indicate that the OFBI grant will be used to support an existing project and that the existing project is funded by whom and at what amount**

Program Procedures:

Applications are submitted to the OFBI on the System for Administering Grants Electronically (SAGE) and reviewed by an outside independent panel. Recommendation for funding is based solely on the merit of the application. Award and denial letters are e-mailed to the appropriate organizations via the SAGE system. **Funding period is from July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027.**

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The proposal is to be submitted via the Department of State – System Administering Grants Electronically (SAGE) no later than **March 03, 2026 @ 1:00PM.**

All applications must consist of and include the following items in order to be considered complete.

**Applications missing requested information will be disqualified from review;
Applications rating 69 percent or lower will not be considered for funding.**

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Application Requirements and Rating Criteria		
Section	Description/Criteria	Maximum Rating
Project Summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide an overview of the organization, its name, the mission of the organization.• Brief overview of the proposed activities, a brief overview of the budget and the project’s SMART goals.• Indicate how the logic model aligns with the budget, activities, SMART goals and the impact of the program on participants.• Indicate how the OFBI grant will be used to support an existing program.• How will OFBI funding be used to expand or add a component that’s not being implemented currently?• Indicate the funding source(s) of the currently funded program.• Indicate how long the organization has been implementing the approach designed to solve the identified social issue	20 Points
Organization Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe the leadership makeup of the organization. It’s board of directors, who are they, what skills do they bring to the organization, how long have they served, how many times does the board meet.• How long has the Executive Director been leading	10 Points

Application Requirements and Rating Criteria		
Section	Description/Criteria	Maximum Rating
	<p>the organization?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the ways, if any, that the organization is planning or is actually grooming and mentoring leadership within the organization. 	
Statement of Need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicate which surveys, needs assessments were used to inform the organization that the program it is applying for is needed in the community. • Utilize the Human Services Advisory Councils (HSAC) needs assessments to assure that the social issue being addressed is identified in the HSAC needs assessment? If the social issue is not identified in the HSAC why is the organization applying for the project? 	20 Points
Statement of Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify three collaborating partners and how will the partnership support the organization's ability to implement the project designed to solve the identified social issue. 	5 points
Project Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a detailed description of the project. Include time frames: when will the program operate, where will it operate? The reader should have a full understanding of the step by step account of what a client will go through in order to maximize program benefit. 	15 Points
Target Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the target population, where do they live, what are their ages, what is their income level, educational status, single individuals or families or both, what percentage are employed or underemployed, etc. 	5 points
Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indicate the S.M.A.R.T goals <p>S pecific: Well defined, clear and unambiguous</p> <p>M easurable: With specific criteria that measure your progress toward the accomplishment of the goal</p> <p>A chievable: Attainable and not impossible to achieve</p> <p>R elavant: Within reach, realistic and relevant to the clients life purpose</p> <p>T ime-bound: With a clearly defined timeline, including a starting date and a target date. The purpose is to create urgency</p> <p>Example:</p>	15 Points

Application Requirements and Rating Criteria		
Section	Description/Criteria	Maximum Rating
	<p>80 percent of students who attend the out of school time program regularly will demonstrate an increase in math skills by the end of the fall semester as measured by pre-post program assessment scores</p> <p>Smart Goals Resource Links:</p> <p>Activity and Program Smart Goals</p> <p>Example of Smart Goals for Service to Seniors</p> <p>A How to Guide for Smart Goals</p> <p>13 Smart Goals Examples</p> <p>13 Smart Goals for Food Insecurity</p>	
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicate how you will measure whether and to what extent the program success has been achieved 	10 Points
Budget	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete all budget forms in the SAGE system; \$2,000 of grant funds can be used for the purchase of technology; \$1,500 of grant funds can be used for administrative costs; \$1,000 of grant funds can be used for staff development; Up to 85% of grant, funds can be used for personnel. Must provide a 20% cash or in-kind match for every line item the OFBI grant is being charged 	10 Points
Required Appendices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Resolution 3 Letters of support Logic Model 	10 points
Appendices		
Total		100 Possible Points

Restrictions and Limitations

◆ Nondiscrimination by Religious Organizations and Entities

Applicants agree that if provided funds from the New Jersey Department of State Office of Faith-based Initiatives, they will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for services or participation in the proposed program on the basis of religion, race, gender and/or physical

disabilities.

◆ Recognition of Cultural Sensitivity

Applicants must assure that all programs are linguistically appropriate and culturally relevant to groups within the community. Appropriate accommodations for services will be developed and maintained for those individuals who are deprived of reasonable access to those services due to language barriers or ethnic and cultural differences. All programs and services *must* be reflective of the demographic needs of the community, while providing all people the opportunity to experience any and all available services irrespective of their ethnic or cultural heritage.

◆ Reporting Requirements

All funding recipients are required to submit quarterly programmatic and fiscal. Schedules of due dates for reporting periods and program terms will be provided upon notification of preliminary approval of award. Funding recipients must adhere to a schedule determined by the New Jersey Department of State Office of Faith Based Initiatives

◆ Training

All funding recipients are required to attend technical assistance and training sessions scheduled throughout the fiscal year as coordinated by the New Jersey Department of State Office of Faith-based Initiatives and/or its training intermediary

- ◆ Applications that fail to meet these requirements detailed in this Grant Guideline will not be reviewed and the application will be disqualified. All applicants will be notified by email regarding the outcome of their award.
- ◆ Grant awards may only be used to further the project that the organization has applied for. Paying for organized fundraising or solicitation, construction and purchase of real property, medical/health-related activities or items are ineligible costs and will not be approved.
- ◆ Funds may not be used to build an organization's capacity to provide programs or services that include inherently religious activities. If a recipient provides programs or services that include inherently religious activities, such activities must be separate in time or location from the programs or services that the organization is seeking to improve through this grant.
- ◆ Grantee's activities are governed by all applicable State laws and regulations and will be provided directly to individual faith-based and community organizations to develop impactful services.
- ◆ The New Jersey Department of State reserves the right to reject any and all proposals when circumstances indicate that it is in its best interest to do so including, but not limited to, loss of funding for the contract, insufficient infrastructure, the applicant's failure to provide adequate services, indication of misrepresentation of information and/or non-compliance with any existing State or Federal laws and regulations, contracts or procedures. Grantees applications document the applicant's readiness to implement the project.

Selection and Notification of Award

- ◆ All applications are screened for eligibility and conformity with the specifications in the Grant Guidelines. Applications that fail to meet these requirements will not be reviewed and will be disqualified.
- ◆ Applicants are not pre-selected. All applications are rated by a panel of independent, objective reviewers according to the precise selection criteria specified in the Grant Guidelines.
- ◆ The independent committee reviewing and scoring applications will not include individuals employed by the organization, affiliated with the organization, organization's board members, contractors, training providers, providers of cost share or in-kind support, or any organization/individuals affiliated in any way with the organization.

Post Award Requirements

- ◆ **Once grantees receive their award letter, grantees have 90 days from the date of the letter to upload all required documents in SAGE. If required documents are not uploaded within 90 days of receiving their award letter funding will be rescinded.**

- ◆ OFBI will monitor grantee compliance with grant requirements, in the event of non-compliance and request appropriate documentation. Should the grantee fail to comply with these requests, sanctions may be implemented up to and including the repayment of all funds associated with this grant award.
- ◆ Promptly Respond to Requests for Communication and Information
- ◆ Participate in all Required Events, Activities and Evaluations
- ◆ Comply with all OFBI Contracting, Fiscal Monitoring and Other Reporting Requirements