

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND NARRATIVE TOPICS

Review and reference the Evaluation Criteria before and during the preparation of the narrative. Successful narratives are clear, convincing, and supported by budgets and other application materials. The Narrative Topics are the framework for writing the narrative, and they align with specific evaluation criteria. Please arrange your narrative to clearly address each of these questions either through the use of headings or numbers. Compose a narrative that will provide a panelist who does not know your organization the ability to understand them in relation to the Evaluation Criteria. Use the required and optional support materials to reinforce specific narrative topics.

Evaluation Criteria	Aligns With	Narrative Topics
<p>1. Stability/Capacity Challenge:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant articulates a specific, real, and significant challenge to the organization’s stability/capacity. 	<p>Narrative Topic 1; audits/Form 990s; organizational budget chart(s); staff and board charts; optional support materials</p>	<p>1. Detail the organization’s major challenge to institutional or financial stability or future operational capacity, including any self-assessment behind identifying the challenge. Explain why its resolution is a high priority for the organization.</p>
<p>2. Project Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed project is sufficiently detailed and specific, demonstrating a firm understanding of the mechanics of the project in order to successfully complete it. The intended project outcomes are clear and follow logically from the project activities. 	<p>Narrative Topic 2; project budget; required support materials; optional support materials</p>	<p>2. Fully articulate the proposed stabilization/capacity project and its expected outcomes.</p>
<p>3. Project Suitability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed project is an appropriate solution to the identified stability/capacity challenge. The proposed project aligns with the organization’s overall strategic planning and financial health as a logical next step. 	<p>Narrative Topic 3; organizational and project budget charts; staff and board charts; audits/Form 990s; required support materials; optional support materials</p>	<p>3. Discuss why the project is the best available solution to the stabilization/capacity challenge, and how it fits into your organization’s overall strategic planning and financial health.</p>

Evaluation Criteria	Aligns With	Narrative Topics
<p>4. Project Feasibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed project budget and quotes are reasonable, realistic, and sufficient to complete the project. • The identified expenditures are appropriate to the project. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ For projects involving consultants: The identified consultant is appropriate and suitable to the project. ○ For projects involving equipment/software purchase: The proposed purchases are appropriate and suitable to the project. ○ For projects adding a new staff position: The job description is appropriate and suitable to the project. ○ For projects requesting cash reserve/working capital funds: The board policies for managing and replenishment of the fund are appropriate and reasonable. ○ For project requesting debt/deficit reduction: The plan to avoid a recurring deficit is appropriate and sufficient. • The applicant has the necessary infrastructure, capacity, and organizational commitment in place to support the project or provides a reasonable plan for obtaining the needed resources. 	<p>Narrative Topic 4; organizational and project budget charts; staff and board charts; required support materials; optional support materials</p>	<p>4. Explain the major expenditures and the human resources that will be used to complete the project, including (if applicable) how consultants, vendors, and materials were selected. If the project will cost more than the funds requested, explain how and when the additional resources will be obtained.</p>
<p>5. Project Impact and Sustainability:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project as proposed will result in significant improvement to the long-term stability or capacity of the organization. • The applicant provides a sufficient plan for how the gains from the project will be sustained after the grant period. 	<p>Narrative Topic 5; required project attachments; optional support materials</p>	<p>5. Explain how the project will result in significant improvement to the long-term stability or capacity of the organization, and how the gains made through the project will be sustained, independent of future Cultural Trust funds. NOTE: If the project is the addition of a new staff position, explain specifically how the position will be sustained after the grant period.</p>