Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program (AFG)

2016 Assistance to Firefighters Grants

Self-Evaluation Sheet

Operations & Safety

This Self Evaluation Sheet is designed to help you understand the criteria that you must address in your Narrative Statement when applying for the Assistance to Firefighters Grants (AFG) Program. The Panel Reviewers will review all the criteria in the Narrative Statement to assess your agency's financial need, the degree to which your proposal best describes your community risks, the requirements you have listed that will reduce those risks, and how your project(s) align with the AFG Program priorities.

1. Financial Need

Applicants should describe their financial need and how consistent it is with the intent of the AFG Program. This statement should include details describing the applicant's financial distress, summarizing budget constraints, unsuccessful attempts to secure other funding, and proving the trouble is out of their control.

- Applicants should provide a comprehensive overview of their organization's budget, including but not limited to describing sources of revenue/funding and expenses
- Does the applicant clearly describe their financial distress?
- Does the applicant explain why they don't have the means to fund their project?
- Does the applicant include evidence of sacrifice due to budget constraints?

Below are the same scoring dimensions that the Panel Reviewers will use to rate your application. Using the criteria below, rate your own application and assess how the Peer Reviewers might rate your application.

Excellent: The applicant's financial difficulties are clearly identified, contributing to the current financial need. The applicant provides strong evidence showing the distress is beyond the applicant's control and federal intervention is necessary.

Very Good: The financial needs of the applicant are explained. The applicant describes why the project cannot be completed with current funds and describes some attempts to gain other funding, but more details are needed.

Good: The applicant identifies a financial need, but lacks details. The applicant demonstrates the organization has limited funding, but does not provide an adequate explanation why they cannot fund the project. It is unclear what the applicant has done to addresses its operational or safety needs.

Fair: The applicant identifies a possible financial need, but little to no detail is provided about other funding attempts, why funds are lacking, and/or why this problem is out of their control.

Poor: The applicant's financial needs are not identified, nor are they articulated. It is unclear if the lack of operational assets and/or resources are directly related to the financial need of the applicant.

2. Project Description and Budget

This statement should clearly explain the applicant's project objectives and its relationship to the applicant's budget and risk analysis. The applicant should describe the various activities applied for with respect to any program priority or facility modifications, making sure they are consistent with project objectives, applicant's mission and national, state, and/or local requirements. Applicants should link the proposed expenses to operations and safety, as well as the completion of the project goals.

- Does the applicant demonstrate they understand the stated program priorities?
- Does the applicant produce evidence to support its requested needs?
- Does the applicant show evidence the project is based on risk analysis?
- Does the applicant clearly associate the completion of project goals to proposed expenses?
- Does the applicant show evidence that they have conducted good market research, e.g., bids and specs ready to go?

Below are the same scoring dimensions the Panel Reviewers will use to rate your application. Using the criteria below, rate your own application and assess how the Peer Reviewers might rate your application.

Excellent: The applicant clearly identifies all aspects of the project and budget. Project goals are evident, articulated, and directly tied to the applicant's mission. The itemized budget items are proven necessary, directly relate to the risk assessment, and are not excessive. The project(s) are clearly and coherently aligned with Medium and/or High AFG Program priorities.

Very Good: The applicant's project is sufficiently explained. Budget items and risk analysis are sufficiently described, but the relationship between the risk analysis, the mission, and the proposed project needs strengthening. The project(s) are sufficiently aligned with Medium and/or High AFG Program priorities.

Good: Some project goals are discussed, but it is unclear how some of the project's elements address the organization's needs or mission. A budget and a risk analysis are addressed, but lack sufficient information regarding how it will benefit the organization. The project(s) align with some Medium and/or High AFG Program priorities but lack clarity on implementation and/or functionality.

Fair: The applicant includes little detail about the project and how it relates to the organization's mission or needs. The information regarding the budget and risk analysis, and how those factors will benefit the organization, is insufficient or non-existent. The alignment of the project(s) to AFG Program priorities is unclear, confusing, and/or incomplete.

Poor: The applicant does not identify their budget, needs, mission, or risk assessment, and/or how the project will complement the organization. The project(s) do not coherently align to any AFG Program priorities.

3. Operations and Safety/Cost Benefit

Applicants should describe how they plan to address the operations and personal safety needs of their organization, including cost effectiveness and sharing assets. This statement should also include details about gaining the maximum benefits from grant funding by citing reasonable or required costs, like specific overhead and administrative costs. The applicant's request should also be consistent with their mission and identify how funding will benefit their organization and affected personnel.

- Does the applicant fully explain all aspects of the request?
- Does the applicant give evidence that funds are directly tied to operations and safety?

- Does the applicant include information on sharing some or all of the assets with neighboring jurisdictions?
- Does the applicant show evidence that they have conducted good market research so as not to request more funds than they need?

Below are the same scoring dimensions the Panel Reviewers will use to rate your application. Using the criteria below, rate your own application and assess how the Peer Reviewers might rate your application.

Excellent: The applicant clearly identifies and fully articulates the proposed achievements, which are consistent with the applicant's mission. The project's goals benefit the organization and affected personnel, and are very advantageous when compared to the costs.

Very Good: An analysis of the cost benefit is given, but the applicant excludes in-depth details. The affected personnel and operational needs are somewhat identified, but some of the cost of the project may be excessive. Most of the funding is geared toward the applicant's mission, but more details are needed.

Good: The applicant identifies the request, but includes little detail to fully understand. The affected personnel and operational needs are somewhat identified, but lack details. The applicant's operational needs and/or how costs will address those needs are not clear.

Fair: The applicant fails to define the relationship between the request and their mission and/or affected personnel. The applicant provides little to no detail to understand the benefits of the project. The costs requested are underdeveloped, excessive, and/or superfluous.

Poor: The applicant does not identify, nor articulate, the benefits of the request. The applicant does not adequately address the benefits to the organization or affected personal, and does not adequately explain how they are cost efficient.

4. Statement of Effect/Impact on Daily Operations

This statement should explain how this funding request will enhance an organization's overall effectiveness. It should address how this request will improve daily operations and reduce an organization's common risk(s). Applicants should include how frequently the requested item(s) will be used and in what capacity. Applicants should also indicate how the requested item(s) will help the community and increase an organization's ability to save additional lives and property.

- Does the applicant demonstrate a high benefit for the cost incurred and maximize the level of funding going directly into the delivery of the project?
- Are the costs reasonable for the target population that will be reached?
- Does the applicant provide justification for the budget items relating to the cost of the project?
- Does the applicant include sufficient details to understand their organization's most common risk?
- Does the applicant explain how the project is directly tied to protecting life and property?
- Does the applicant include daily benefits?

Below are the same scoring dimensions the Panel Reviewers will use to rate your application. Using the criteria below, rate your own application and assess how the Peer Reviewers might rate your application.

Excellent: The applicant clearly demonstrates the items requested are necessary for daily use, contribute to protecting lives and property, and support the organization's mission. It is apparent the items will be used frequently and the outcomes of the program are clearly evident.

Very Good: The applicant sufficiently explains how the request complements the mission and will increase the organization's efficiency, but a portion of the items requested have little to no daily operational use or little affect on the saving of lives and property.

Good: The applicant describes how their request provides a benefit to daily operations and saves lives and property, but lacks in-depth information. It is not absolutely clear how effective the items will be, how frequently the items will be used, and/or how the items benefit the organization's mission.

Fair: The applicant does not adequately relate their request to the needs of the organization. The applicant excludes details as to how the requested items will improve the organization's mission, daily operations, or ability to save lives and property.

Poor: The applicant does not prove the items requested in the application are necessary for its daily operations and would not contribute to the applicant's ability to protect life and property.