GRANTS OFFICE
empowering communities

The Art of the Ask

Designing Fundable Projects and Writing Powerful Grant Narratives for Nonprofits



Sponsored by: INGRAM MICRO®

AGENDA

01 | Welcome & Introductions

02 | Think|Stack IT, Cybersecurity, & Cloud Solutions

03 | Developing a Grant-Ready Project

04 | Selecting Grants Strategically

05 | *Writing a Proposal in Real Time*

06 | Ingram Micro Grant Services

07 | Q&A



Today's Presenters



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Business Development



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Ingram Micro
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Grants



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CEO



Sandy Trowbridge
Grants Office
Grants Development
Associate



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Associate


THINK
STACK
powered by NetCov

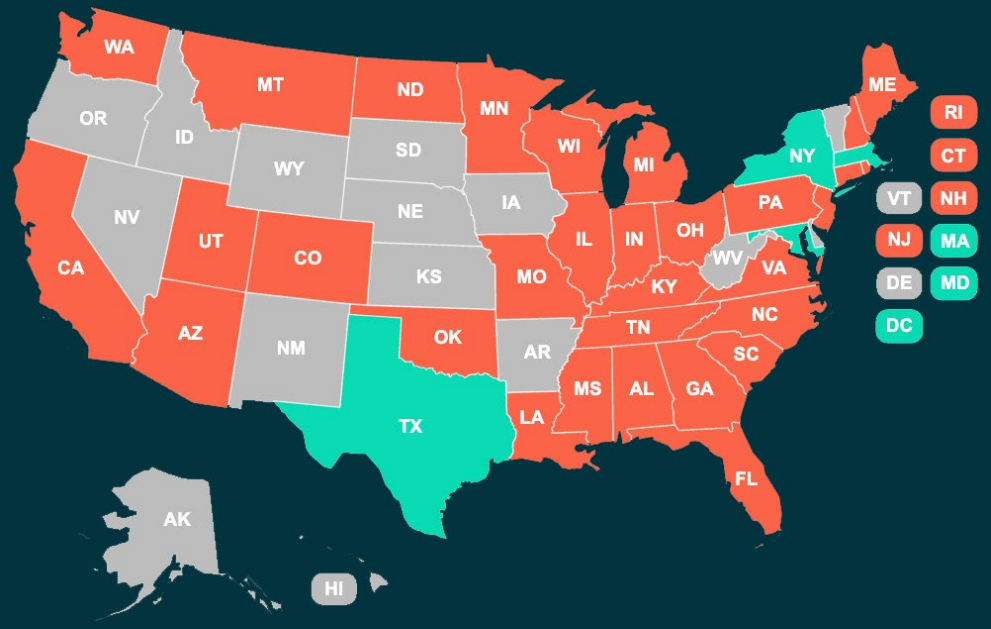
By the Numbers

1996 COMPANY FOUNDED

350+ STAFF MEMBERS

50K+ SUPPORTED USERS

9.6 AVERAGE TICKET SCORE



We're **strategically staffed** nationally, with team members in 35 states and the District of Columbia, in addition to our **five offices** in Boston, New York, Baltimore, Fort Worth and Washington, D.C.

4.9/5 ★★★★★ bizratings.com 9.6/10 ★★★★★ GLASSDOOR 4.4/5 ★★★★★

$100K Cloud Grand Opportunity

For Credit Unions & Nonprofits – In Partnership with AWS

What You Get

- $50,000 in Think|Stack services (advisory, architecture, assessments – you name it!)
- $50,000 in AWS credits (used toward cloud migration, security, or modernization)

Use It For

- Cloud readiness or migration
- Security and compliance upgrades
- Infrastructure modernization
- Proof of concept or pilot project

Why Apply

- No long-term commitment
- Application takes 2 minutes
- Worst case: you don't win
- Best case; $100K in fully funded IT transformation

We're awarding a $100,00 grant to one eligible credit union or nonprofit to accelerate cloud, cyber, or IT modernization. Apply by Oct. 15, 2025. Winner to be selected in November.

Our Services



Managed IT

Comprehensive support that ensures seamless operations, proactive maintenance, and tech tailored to your needs.



Cybersecurity

Advanced protection against evolving digital threats through proactive, customized strategies.



Advisory Services

Strategic insights and tailored solutions to drive smarter decisions and sustainable growth.



Cloud

Secure, scalable solutions that boost performance, enhance collaboration, and support long-term growth.



Compliance

Expert guidance to meet regulatory requirements, reduce risk, and safeguard data integrity.



AI

Innovative solutions using machine learning and automation to streamline workflows & boost insights.

What We Deliver

Think|Stack is a managed IT, cybersecurity, and cloud solutions provider for nonprofits, NGOs, and associations.

As a **2x AWS Nonprofit Partner of the Year**, we help mission-driven organizations scale securely and affordably.

We lock down your data, optimize your tech stack, and provide 24/7 support — so you can focus on making an impact, not managing IT.

Cloud Services

Lift Your Infrastructure to New Heights

We help modernize everything, from your core applications to the systems that support them, delivering performance, reliability, and room to grow without added complexity or future roadblocks.

1

ASSESS & ARCHITECT

We start with a deep dive of your current environment (AWS, Azure, hybrid, on-prem) and design a strategy tailored to your operational goals, security requirements, and future roadmap.

2

MIGRATE & MODERNIZE

We migrate key systems from legacy setups to modern platforms like SaaS, IaaS, and containers — enabling smarter ops and tighter integration across AWS, Microsoft 365 and Azure.

3

MANAGE & REFINE

Once deployed, we manage the full lifecycle — monitoring, patching, cost control, and security — keeping your environment secure, high-performing, and ready to scale with your business.

Cloud Solutions

Cloud Migration & Modernization

We manage complex cloud migrations and application modernization projects, minimizing disruption and unlocking long-term value.

AWS Cloud Engineering

As an AWS Advanced Technology Partner, we design, deploy and manage cloud-native environments with scalability, automation, and performance built in.

Azure & Microsoft 365

We manage the full Microsoft cloud stack – from Entra ID to Teams, SharePoint, and Copilot – giving you full command of your ecosystem and ensuring you get the most out of it.

Hybrid & Multi-Cloud Migration

We connect your cloud and on-prem infrastructure – bringing AWS, Azure, and private environments together into one cohesive, manageable ecosystem.

Business Continuity

From ransomware to outages, we design and manage recovery strategies to keep your critical systems and data available, recoverable, and compliant.

Cloud Security & Compliance

We embed security and compliance into every layer of your cloud environment – aligned to standards like SOC 2, ITAR, and CMMC.

Client Spotlight

Solarity Credit Union

The Transformation

- Solarity needed a secure, flexible environment to support innovation and membership growth
- We built a unified data platform, enabling teams to access insights from multiple sources
- Security was foundational — solutions were designed to support secure AWS Marketplace adoption
- Partnered with AWS, Cloudamize, and used Terraform and proprietary backups to:
  - Execute a full lift-and-shift to AWS
  - Optimize the environment
  - Enable DevSecOps
  - Provide ongoing support

- Today, Solarity operates with no on-site servers, full cloud redundancy, 15-minute disaster recovery, and rapid deployment agility.

About Solarity

Founded: 2003

HQ: Yakima, WA

Serves: Appx. 50-60k members

Assets: Appx. $750-820M

The Quote

"Delivered on-budget, quality work that challenged teams on both sides and helped us be better about how we execute our projects. They are always responsive, providing us with expertise on cyber security, cloud migration, and network migration. Today, they are like part of the team." ***- Chad Richie (CIO, Solarity Credit Union)***

Client Spotlight

IES Abroad

The Transformation

- Think|Stack partnered with IES to guide their transition to the cloud through a comprehensive AWS Cloud Readiness Assessment
- The objective was to evaluate the feasibility, cost, and migration steps needed to move their existing environment to AWS
- The process began with:
  - In-depth interviews with key stakeholders
  - Detailed journey mapping of current systems
  - Focus on network infrastructure and connectivity dependencies
- Next, we deployed a data collection tool to monitor:
  - CPU, memory, disk usage, input/output operations (I/O), and network behavior
  - Data was gathered continuously over a 2–4 week period
- Using that data, we built a detailed report that included:
  - Projected monthly and annual AWS costs
  - Recommendations for cloud migration strategy, ongoing management, and security posture
- We delivered a final presentation to IES leadership, providing a clear, actionable roadmap for cloud migration success
- We executed the migration smoothly working closely alongside their team and have provided ongoing management
- We've also done quarterly audits for best practices and a DR backup failover

About IES Abroad

Founded: 1950

Type: Nonprofit educational organization

HQ: Chicago, IL

Serves: More than 10,000 student per year

Assets: Appx. $141M



Ready to modernize?

Let’s turn strategy into action. We’ll help you:

- Apply for the AWS $100K grant
- Map out your cloud journey
- Identify high-impact opportunities

Email: sflahertythinkstack.co | **Tel:** 410-500-9178

Developing a Grant-Ready Project

Step 1: Craft Your Needs Statement

1

Need

- What gap do you have in fulfilling your mission-driven goals?
- What data do you have that can help illustrate this need?

2

Solution

- What are you going to do to meet this need?

3

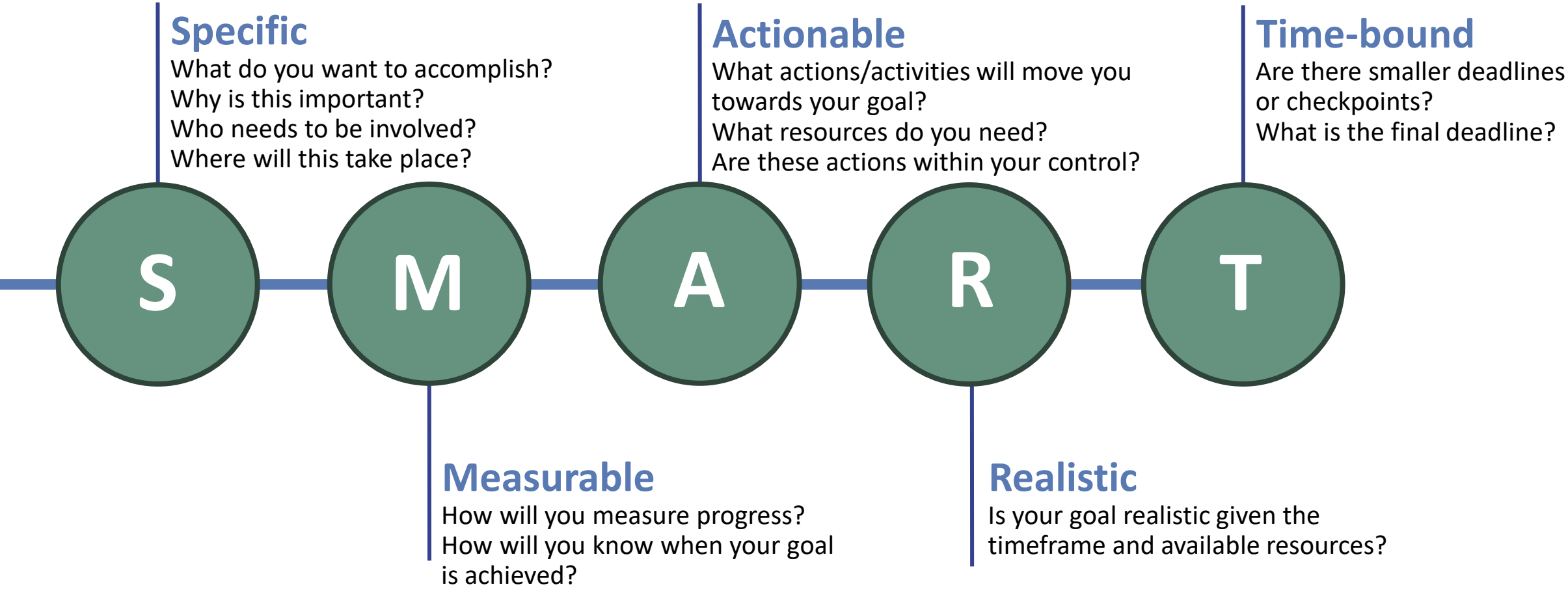
Impact

- Who is currently impacted by the need and who will benefit from the solution?

Step 2: Outline Your Project Plan

Project Name: Community Services Referral Platform			Quarter				Output	Goal
Activity #	**Description**	**Responsible Party**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**Deliverable Name**	**Related Goal**
1	**Needs Assessment and Planning**							
1.1	Conduct 2 focus groups	Project Coordinator					Focus Group Findings	1
1.2	Finalize Project Workplan with Partners	Project Director					Project Workplan	1
2	**Platform Design and Development**							
2.1	Design User-Friendly Interface	Design Team Lead					Interface Mock-Up	2
3	**Integration with Existing Services**							
3.1	Develop Plan to Integrate with Local Service Providers	Partnership Team Lead					Data Integration Plan	4

Step 3: Document Your Project Goals



Step 4: Confirm Your Required Resources

Personnel	Fringe Benefits	Travel & Per Diem	Equipment
Supplies & Materials	Consultant Fees	Other Direct Costs	Indirect Costs

Step 5: Draft Your Story

WHO

is your organization and why is it best positioned to address the need?

WHAT

will this project require in terms of equipment, personnel, and planning?

WHERE

will the project take place?

WHEN

will the project occur and how long will it take to complete?

WHY

is this project the best option to solve the given problem?

HOW

will this project fit within the context of your community's needs?

Selecting Grants Strategically

Top Sources of Grant Funding

1

Federal Government Agencies

Public Funding
$700B+ USD annually

2

State Government Agencies

Public Funding
$100B+ USD annaully

3

Family, Community, & Corporate Foundations

Private Funding
$70B+ USD annually

Where to Find Grants

Federal Government Agencies

GRANTS.GOV℠
FIND. APPLY. SUCCEED.

NSF

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

State Government Agencies

Google

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
THE GREAT SEAL OF THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

NEW JERSEY HUMAN SERVICES

Private Foundations

FOUNDATION CENTER
by Candid.

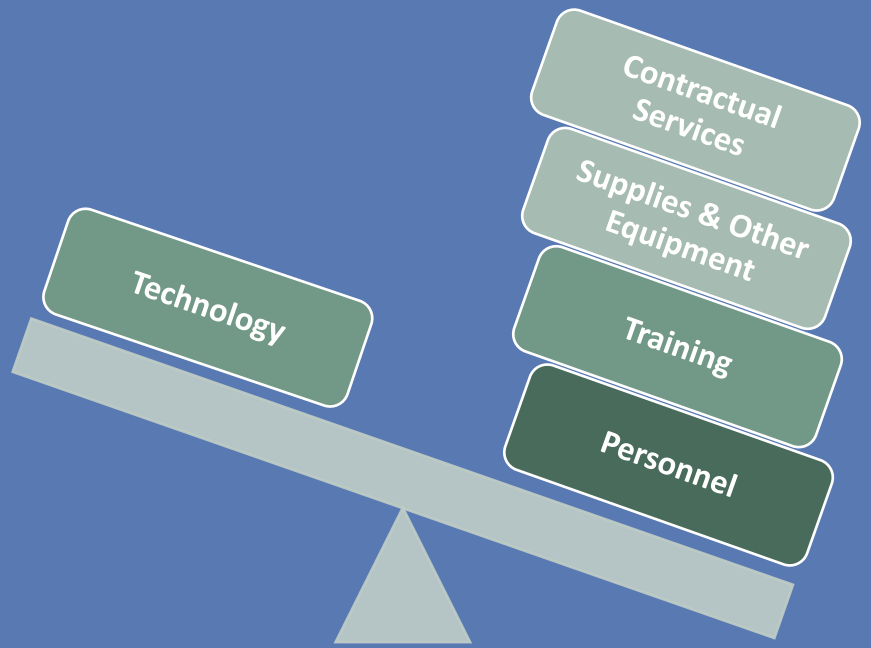
GUIDESTAR
by Candid.

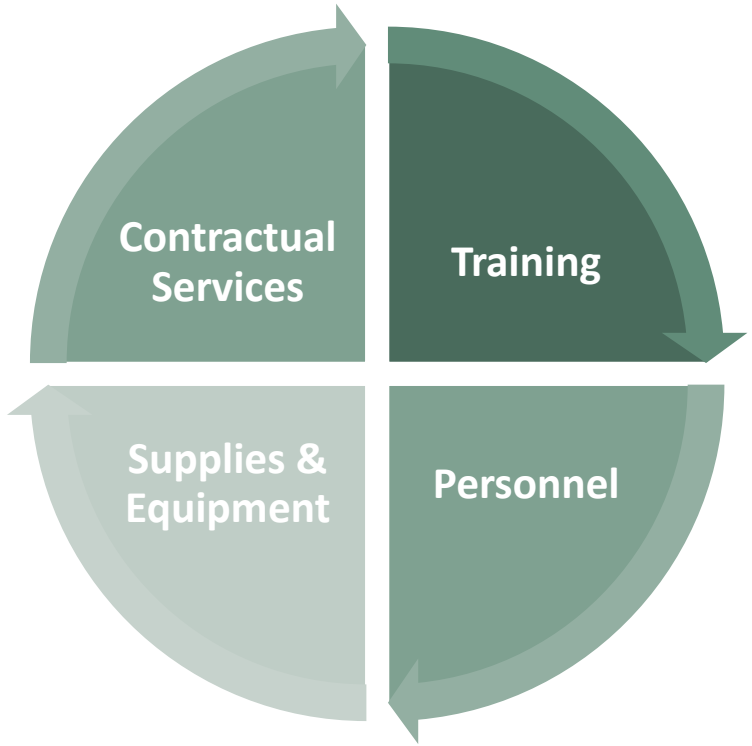
IRS

Types of Grants and How They Support Tech Purchases

Grants created to fund specific tech solutions

Grants created to fund everything else





Emphasizing overall social benefits, in addition to desired tech needs

Is This Grant “Technology Friendly?”

Check the Guidance

- Review the request for proposal (RFP) or submission instructions related to the budget.
- What are the allowable or unallowable expenses?

Read Between the Lines with Program Priorities

- Do your project goals align with the program priorities?
- Does the desired technology address the overall social benefits of the program?

Look at Past Projects Funded

- Has the program leveraged technology to accomplish its mission through past projects?
- Reach out to funder for project examples.

Strategically Selecting the “Best-Fit” Grant

01 Eligibility Requirements

Is our organization eligible to apply according to the Request for Proposal (RFP)? Consider organization type, IRS designation, geographic scope, population served, etc.

02 Timeline to Submission Deadline

Do we believe that it will be possible to compile a competitive application by the noted deadline given current staffing levels and workloads?

03 Funding Priorities

Does the purpose of these funds align with any of our overarching project goals? Does the grant have a competitive priority we can address for “bonus points”?

04 The Award

Will this fund the line items we want? Is the size of the grant appropriate for our needs? If there is a cost-share/match requirement, can we meet it?

05 Peripherals

Is collaboration required and do we have any possible partners in mind? Do we have the capacity to implement the project AND adhere to any reporting requirements if awarded?

06 Funder History

Does the funder have an established history giving to organizations or projects like ours already? Or do they prefer innovative projects only, in which case is our idea new?



Writing a Proposal in Real Time

Common Elements of a Grant Proposal



Design by PresentationGO.com

Common Elements of a Grant Proposal

Executive Summary



Design by PresentationGO.com

Meet The Non-Profit

Maplewood Roots

Operating as a Nonprofit 501c3 Since 2018

Serving Maplewood NY, and the Surrounding Monroe County

Connecting to Resources, for a better, stronger and Healthier Communities and Families.

(Seeking funding for a new referral platform)



Elements of an Executive Summary

The Problem

What is the problem that needs to be addressed?

The Solution

What is your organizations idea to solve this problem?

How Your Org Can Help

What makes your organization qualified to help?

Executive Summary: The Problem

Good

"Connecting community members to resources is inefficient and incomplete. People in the community are not aware of or receiving the benefits of all of the available resources nearby."

vs

Better

"The process of connecting **community members of Maplewood NY** to local resources is inefficient and incomplete. Many individuals are either unaware of the available support services or are not taking full advantage of the available resources."

Executive Summary: The Solution

Good

“To improve the connection between community members and available resources, a centralized outreach and referral system will be established.”

vs

Better

“To strengthen the connection between community members and essential local resources, Maplewood Roots will launch a coordinated outreach and referral system. This new referral service utilizing {{Platform Software}} will connect a network of local organizations and will be inclusive and accessible to all Maplewood residents.”

Executive Summary: How Your Organization Can Help

Good

"Our organization is in a good place to take on this challenge because we've been part of the community for a long time."

vs

Better

"With over **7 years** of service to the community and working partnerships with **100 local organizations,** Maplewood Roots is uniquely qualified to address the disconnect between residents and resource organizations available to them."

Bringing It All Together

The current process of connecting community members of Maplewood to local resources is inefficient and incomplete. Many individuals are either unaware of the available support services or are not taking advantage of the available resources.

To strengthen the connection between community members and essential local resources, Maplewood Roots will launch a coordinated outreach and referral system. This new referral service will connect a network of local organizations and will be inclusive and accessible to all Maplewood residents.

With over 7 years of service to the community and working partnerships with over 100 local organizations, Maplewood Roots is uniquely qualified to address the disconnect between residents and resource organizations available to them.



Common Elements of a Grant Proposal

Needs Statement



Design by PresentationGO.com

Researching Quantifiable Data

Utilize resources like the U.S. Census website to strengthen your proposal with key demographic facts.

www.census.gov



Maplewood Roots Needs Statement

The community

Maplewood Roots serves residents in the city of Maplewood and the surrounding area of Monroe County, NY.

The population

Monroe county has a diverse resident population of over 740,000 people. People identifying as white represent the largest percentage (71%) followed by etc. etc.

Economics

Over 16% of residents of Monroe county are unemployed, compared to **7% statewide,** underscoring the **dire need for increasing services like those provided by Maplewood Roots.**

Housing

Residents in Maplewood are experiencing **rates of homelessness 3X's the rest of the state**. Maplewood Roots has received an increase in request for housing services every year for the last 5 years.

Food

A recent community assessment survey completed by Maplewood Area Foundation highlighted the reality for many Maplewood residents, over 60% of residence self identified as food insecure.

Bringing It All Together

Maplewood Roots ***proudly*** serves the residents in the city of Maplewood and the surrounding area of Monroe County, NY. Monroe County has a diverse resident population of over 740,000 people. People identifying as white represent the largest percentage (71%). Over 16% of residents of Monroe County are unemployed, compared to 7% statewide, underscoring the dire need for increasing services like those Maplewood Roots provides. Residents in Maplewood are experiencing rates of homelessness 3 times the rest of the state. ***Our goal is to utilize grant funding to develop, pilot, and implement a cloud-based referral platform that better connects community members with community resources. Maplewood Roots wants to ensure that all Monroe County community members can access the support that they need when they need it most.***

Common Elements of a Grant Proposal



Design by PresentationGO.com

Goal: (the activity conducted or the result to be achieved), how much (a specific target), and by when.



"Maplewood Roots will implement a cloud-based referral system to **improve onboarding and support** participant growth over the next year."



"Maplewood Roots will implement a cloud-based community referral system **that enables the organization to streamline onboarding processes."**

Objective: How will we know (the strategy for measuring whether the goal was met)



The PLATFORM will serve an increased citizen population by referring citizens to resources in the community.



“The PLATFORM will serve an increase citizen population by referring citizens to resources in the community. Maplewood Roots will track this growth through pre and post launch surveys and data. The community programs manager will collect information monthly and compare trends to ensure continued growth.”

Outcome: (the activity conducted to achieve the desired result), how much (a specific target), and by when.



The PLATFORM will serve an increased citizen population this year by referring citizens to resources in the community. Program anticipates ongoing changes



"Maplewood Roots will implement a cloud-based community referral system that enables the organization to streamline onboarding processes. MR aims to **increase the number of participants by 20% by December 2025** and by an **additional 25%** by **June 2026**. Citizens throughout Monroe County will be provided with access to a range of specialty services by bringing the providers into a centralized referral platform and streamlining onboarding processes. Citizens throughout Maplewood will be connected through an online referral platform in greater volumes starting immediately upon program launch. Citizens will continue to receive benefits into the foreseeable future."

Bringing It All Together

For many funders, proper formatting can mean the difference between failure and success. Be sure to follow each funder's formatting requirements.

GOAL	OBJECTIVE	OUTCOME
"Maplewood Roots will implement a cloud-based community referral system that enables the organization to streamline onboarding processes."	"The PLATFORM will serve an increasing citizen population by referring citizens to resources in the community. Maplewood Roots will track this growth through pre- and post-launch surveys and data. The community programs manager will collect information monthly and compare trends to ensure continued growth."	"Maplewood Roots will implement a cloud-based community referral system that enables the organization to streamline onboarding processes. MR aims to increase the number of participants by 20% by December 2025 and by an additional 25% by June 2026. Citizens throughout Monroe County will be provided with access to a range of specialty services by bringing the providers into a centralized referral platform and streamlining onboarding processes. Citizens throughout Maplewood will be connected through an online referral platform in greater volumes starting immediately upon program launch. Citizens will continue to receive benefits into the foreseeable future."

Answer All Grant Application Questions

"Describe your project in detail, including proposed timeline and specifically, how you would use the funds: (200 words max.)"

WHO	WHAT	WHERE	WHY	WHEN
Maplewood Roots is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting residents of Maplewood and surrounding Monroe County.	Maplewood Roots is launching a cloud-based referral system.	The majority of project beneficiaries reside in the city of Maplewood, but services are extended to residents in the surrounding county.	To streamline operations and processes that would otherwise be done manually. Ultimately leading to a more efficient process, a greater number of residents served, and a less burdened staff.	Launching a cloud-based referral system within 2 months of receiving funding. Benefits of the program will be captured within three months of the program start and will continue into the foreseeable future.

Strengthening your language

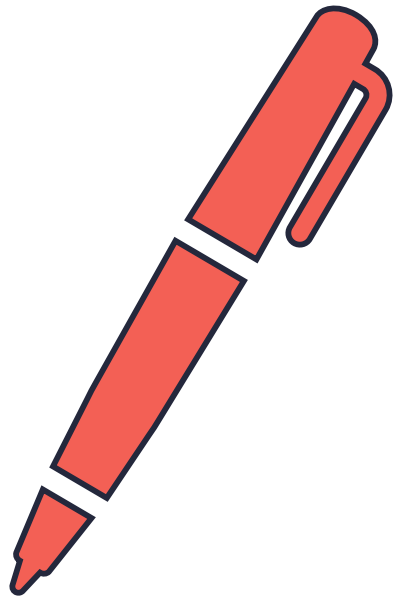
Maplewood Roots is a nonprofit organization that supports residents of Maplewood and the surrounding areas in Monroe County. We are launching a cloud-based referral system to help make our work more efficient. Right now, many of our processes are done manually, which takes time and puts extra strain on staff. With this new system, we'll be able to serve more people, work more smoothly, and better connect residents—especially those in need of housing, healthcare, employment, and food assistance—with the services they need.



Maplewood Roots is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ~~that supports~~ supporting residents of Maplewood and the surrounding ~~areas in~~ Monroe County.

Strengthening your language

Maplewood Roots is a nonprofit organization **dedicated to** ~~**that supports**~~ **supporting** residents of Maplewood and the surrounding ~~**areas in**~~ Monroe County. We are launching a cloud-based referral system **designed to streamline operations that are currently performed manually.** ~~**to help make our work more efficient.**~~ Right now, many of our processes are done manually, which takes time and puts extra strain on staff. ~~**With this new system**~~ **This new platform will increase efficiency, reduce staff burden, and enable us to serve a greater number of residents,** ~~**we'll be able to serve more people, work more smoothly, and better connect residents,**~~ especially those **facing barriers to critical resources such as** ~~**in need of**~~ housing, healthcare, employment, and food assistance. ~~**with the services they need.**~~



Strengthening your language

Good

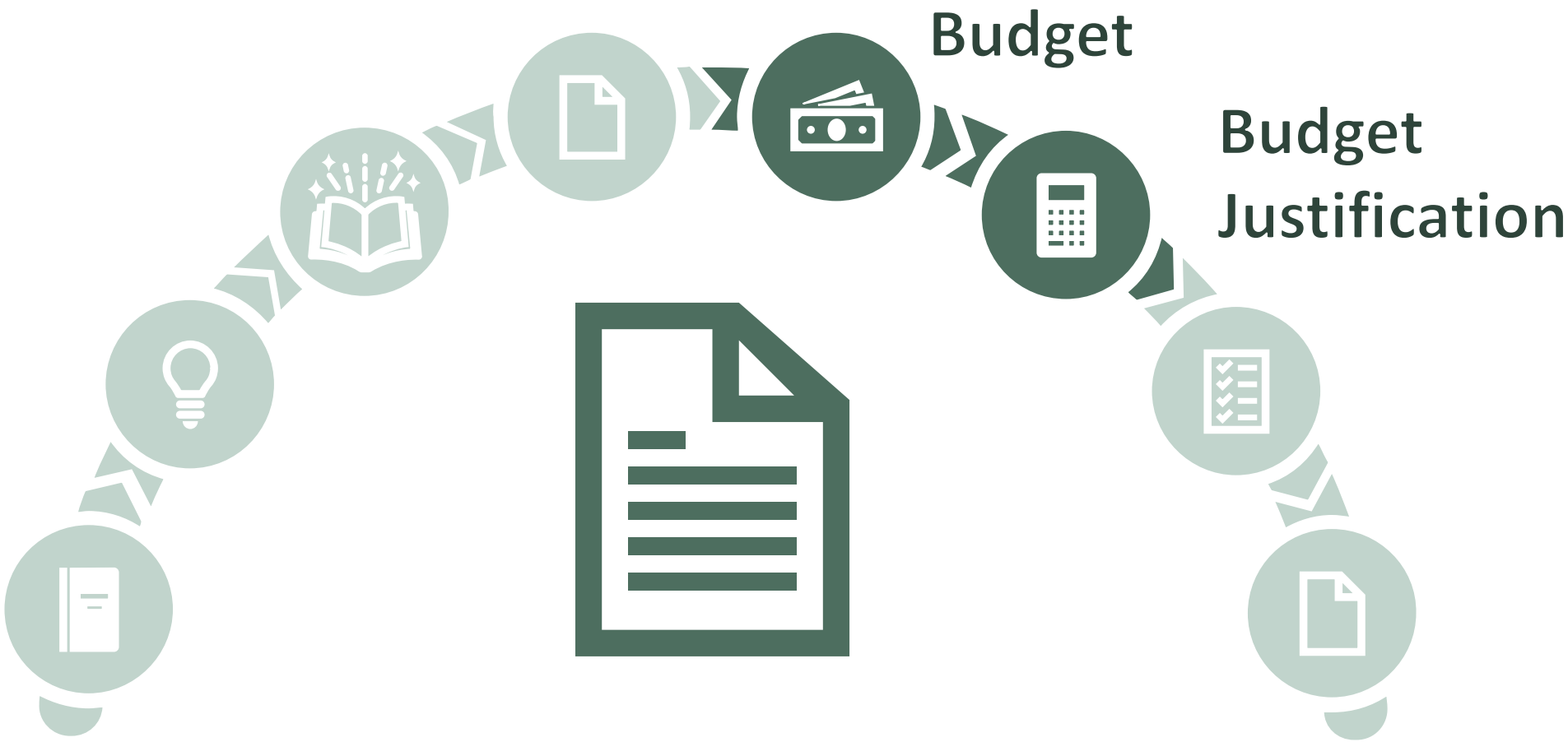
"Maplewood Roots is a nonprofit organization ~~that supports~~ residents of Maplewood and the surrounding ~~areas in~~ Monroe County. We are launching a cloud-based referral system ~~to help make our work more efficient~~. Right now, many of our processes are done manually, which takes time and puts extra strain on staff. ~~With this new system, we'll be able to serve more people, work more smoothly, and better connect residents~~—especially those ~~in need of~~ housing, healthcare, employment, and food assistance—~~with the services they need~~."

vs

Better

"Maplewood Roots is a nonprofit organization **dedicated to supporting** residents of Maplewood and the surrounding Monroe County. We are launching a cloud-based referral system **designed to streamline operations that are currently performed manually.** Right now, many of our processes are done manually, which takes time and puts extra strain on staff. **This new platform will increase efficiency, reduce staff burden, and enable us to serve a greater number of residents,** especially those **facing barriers to critical resources such as** housing, healthcare, employment, and food assistance."

Common Elements of a Grant Proposal



Design by PresentationGO.com

Budget

Project Expenses			
	Funder Budget	Other Sources Budget	Total Budget
PLATFORM Software	$ 6,000.00		
New Computer for Community Use	$ 1,000.00		
Salary PTE Part Time Equivelant		$ 50,000.00	
(line item)			$ -
Total Expenses	**$ 7,000.00**	**$ 50,000.00**	**$ 57,000.00**

Budget Justification

The {{PLATFORM Software}} streamlines operations and automates workflow and reduces manual tasks. Maplewood Roots will purchase one {{subscription}} to this cloud-based software service.

Funds awarded from the {{Foundation Grant}} will enable the purchase and cover the start up and subscription cost for 1 years equal to $6000.

{{PLATFORM Software}} will increase the capacity of Maplewood Roots staff to reach more community members and participating organizations by streamlining processes otherwise done manually. {{PLATFORM Software}} will make the entire onboarding process quicker, more accurate and efficient.



	Project Expenses	
	Funder Budget	
PLATFORM Software	$	6,000.00

Requests for equipment should include the following information:

- Description
- Quantity/ Unit Cost
- Justification for the use of each item related to specific program objectives

Check Your Budget Alignment

Project Narrative

Maplewood Roots is launching an innovative {{PLATFORM Software}} project designed to streamline how community members connect with vital local resources such as food banks, housing services, mental health support, job training programs, and more.

Budget

Project Expenses		
		Funder Budget
PLATFORM Software	$	6,000.00

Budget Justification

{{PLATFORM Software}} will increase the capacity of Maplewood Roots staff to reach more community members and participating organizations by streamlining processes otherwise done manually.

Common Elements of a Grant Proposal



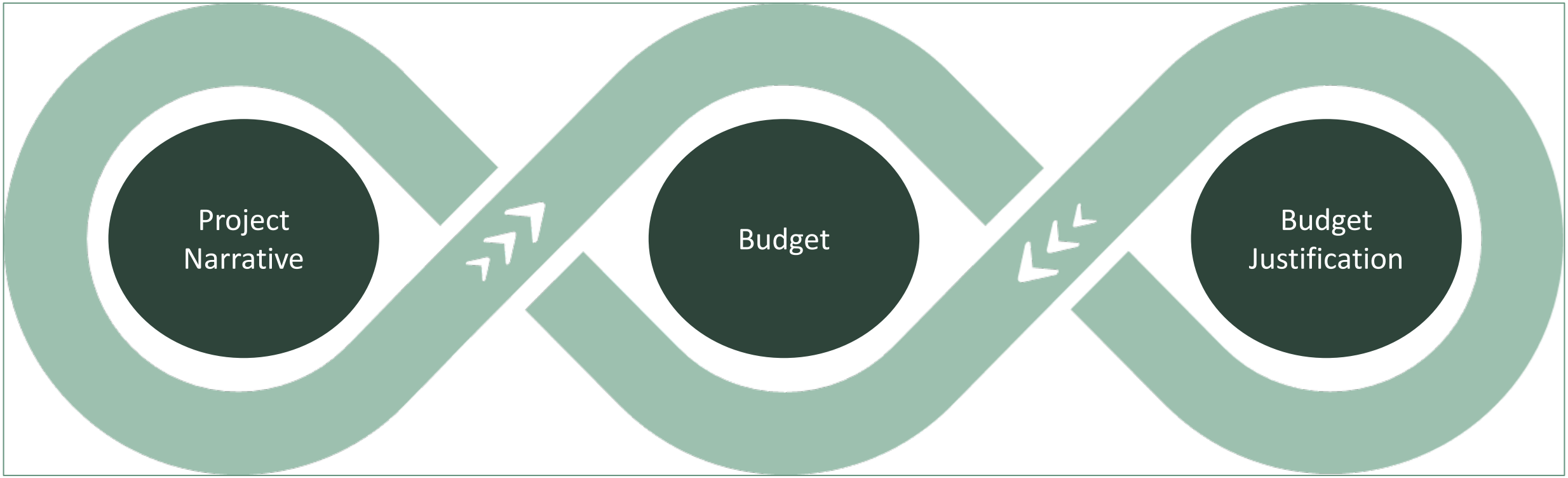
Design by PresentationGO.com

Best Practices: Before Submission

- Re-read the request for proposals
- Answer the question/s being asked in accordance with the funder's formatting standards
- Verify overall proposal alignment



The Importance of Overall Proposal Alignment



Describes your proposed project in words.

Describes your proposed project in numbers.

Describes your proposed budget in words.

Best Practices: Before Submission

- Have a colleague check your work
- SUBMIT ON TIME!



Ingram Micro Grant Services

Ingram Micro Grant Services

Grant and progress report writing, comprehensive prospect research, and grant program planning.

- Grants identification for Cloud Technologies
- Support for existing grant opportunities
- Advice on cultivating relationships with donors
- Program/project budget development
- Coordination of grant awarded
- Pre- and post-support for grant engagements
- Information Exchange – Analytics
- Proposal review including proofreading, and overall clarity and positioning
- Quarterly Webinars

Questions?

GRANTS OFFICE
empowering communities

Contact Us

grantsoffice.com

helpdesk@grantsoffice.com

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