



The sample language in this guide is designed to help you build your proposal. Adapt and expand each section to reflect your YMCA's unique story, community needs, partnerships, and sustainability goals. The strongest proposals are those that clearly communicate your local impact.

Sustainability Project Grant Proposal Guide

Prompt I: Describe the sustainability project or initiative your YMCA is seeking to implement.

Government Funders:
Strengthen this section with local data, documented community needs, environmental conditions, or other evidence demonstrating why the project is needed.

Foundation Funders: Focus on the opportunity to create positive change, the people who will benefit, and how the project aligns with your organization's mission and long-term vision.

I. Case for Support

[Organization Name] is committed to creating a healthy, resilient, and sustainable future for the communities it serves. As community needs continue to evolve, our organization remains focused on identifying practical opportunities to strengthen our impact while advancing environmental stewardship, operational resilience, and community wellbeing. Through [Project Name], the YMCA seeks to implement [brief project description] in response to [community need or sustainability opportunity].

Grant support will enable [Organization Name] to transform this vision into meaningful action by investing in the people, resources, and infrastructure necessary to successfully implement the project. This investment represents an opportunity to strengthen our organization while creating lasting benefits for participants, families, and the broader community. By addressing both immediate needs and long-term sustainability goals, the project will help position the YMCA as a leader in creating healthier communities through thoughtful stewardship and responsible investment.

The proposed project reflects our ongoing commitment to serving as a trusted community partner while ensuring that today's investments continue generating meaningful impact for years to come.

Prompt II: Describe the proposed project and how grant funding will support its implementation.

Government Funders:
Clearly describe the project scope, implementation strategy, major activities, and anticipated timeline.

Foundation Funders:
Emphasize how grant funding will help transform an identified need into meaningful and lasting community impact.

II. Project Description

Grant support will allow [Organization Name] to implement [Project Name], an initiative designed to address [community need or opportunity] while advancing the YMCA's commitment to creating healthier, more resilient, and sustainable communities. Through this project, the YMCA will invest in [brief description of the project], creating opportunities to strengthen programs, facilities, operations, or community partnerships in ways that generate lasting value for participants and the broader community.

The proposed project has been thoughtfully designed to respond to local priorities while supporting the organization's mission and long-term strategic vision. Funding will support implementation of [major project components], providing the resources necessary to move this initiative from concept to reality. Each project activity has been intentionally developed to address identified needs while strengthening the YMCA's capacity to serve current and future generations through practical, sustainable solutions.

Throughout implementation, [Organization Name] will work collaboratively with staff, volunteers, community partners, and other stakeholders to ensure the project reflects local priorities and delivers meaningful, measurable results. By combining thoughtful planning with intentional action, this investment will strengthen the YMCA's ability to respond to evolving community needs while creating lasting environmental, operational, and community benefits.

Prompt III: Describe the goals and measurable objectives the project is expected to accomplish.

Each objective should directly support the overall project goal and provide meaningful indicators that can be measured and communicated throughout the grant period.

III. Goals & Objectives

The primary goal of [Project Name] is to strengthen [Organization Name] by implementing sustainable solutions that respond to identified community needs while advancing long-term organizational priorities. Through this investment, the YMCA seeks to create meaningful improvements that benefit participants today while building a stronger, more resilient organization for the future.

Government Funders:
Include measurable objectives with specific quantities, percentages, timelines, or completion targets whenever possible.

Foundation Funders: Pair measurable objectives with the broader impact those accomplishments will have on participants and the community.

Project objectives provide measurable benchmarks that demonstrate progress toward achieving this vision. Objectives may include [reducing energy or water consumption], [improving access to programs or services], [enhancing facilities], [expanding environmental education], [strengthening community partnerships], or [increasing organizational capacity], depending on the scope of the proposed project. Together, these objectives establish a clear framework for implementation while demonstrating the tangible outcomes this investment is expected to achieve.

Prompt IV: Describe the key activities that will be completed during the grant period.

Government Funders:
Include project phases, timelines, milestones, procurement activities, or construction schedules when appropriate.

Foundation Funders:
Highlight collaboration, participant engagement, innovation, and opportunities for community involvement throughout implementation.

IV. Project Activities

Template Language

Implementation of [Project Name] will occur through a coordinated series of activities designed to successfully complete the project while maximizing community benefit and ensuring responsible stewardship of grant resources. The implementation plan has been thoughtfully developed to support successful project delivery while remaining responsive to the unique needs of the organization and the community it serves.

Project activities will focus on [describe major activities], with each component contributing directly to the overall goals and intended outcomes of the project. Throughout implementation, [Organization Name] will engage staff, volunteers, community partners, and participants as appropriate to support successful project delivery, strengthen collaboration, and encourage shared ownership of the project's long-term success.

By approaching implementation in a thoughtful and strategic manner, the YMCA will ensure that project activities not only achieve immediate objectives but also contribute to lasting organizational and community impact.

Prompt V: Describe the measurable outcomes and long-term impact expected as a result of the project.

Government Funders:
Focus on measurable outputs and outcomes supported by data whenever possible.

Foundation Funders:
Connect measurable accomplishments to meaningful stories of community transformation and long-term impact.

V. Anticipated Outcomes

Implementation of [Project Name] will create meaningful outcomes that extend beyond completion of the grant period. By successfully carrying out this initiative, [Organization Name] expects to strengthen its ability to serve the community while creating measurable improvements that support long-term sustainability and organizational resilience.

Anticipated outcomes may include [project-specific outcomes], resulting in stronger programs, improved facilities, increased community engagement, enhanced operational efficiency, or expanded opportunities for participants and families. These accomplishments represent more than individual project milestones—they reflect meaningful progress toward creating healthier communities and strengthening the YMCA's ability to respond to future needs.

Beyond these measurable results, this investment will establish a foundation for continued growth, collaboration, and innovation while reinforcing the YMCA's commitment to responsible stewardship and long-term community impact.

Prompt VI: Describe how project success will be measured and evaluated.

Government Funders:
Include measurable indicators, reporting timelines, and baseline data whenever available.

Foundation Funders:
Balance quantitative data with participant stories, testimonials, and examples that illustrate meaningful community impact.

VI. Evaluation Framework

[Organization Name] is committed to evaluating the success of [Project Name] to ensure grant investments produce meaningful and measurable results. Evaluation activities will provide valuable information about project implementation, participant outcomes, and overall community impact while helping inform future organizational planning and decision-making.

Success will be measured through [evaluation methods], allowing the YMCA to monitor progress toward established goals and demonstrate accountability to funders, partners, and the community. Whenever appropriate, evaluation findings will be used to identify opportunities for continuous improvement, strengthen future sustainability efforts, and share lessons learned that may benefit future projects.

Prompt VII: Describe how project grant funds will be used to support implementation.

Government Funders:
Ensure every budget category clearly aligns with project activities, deliverables, and measurable outcomes.

Foundation Funders:
Demonstrate thoughtful stewardship by showing how grant funds will leverage additional resources and create lasting community benefit.

VII. Budget Request

[Organization Name] respectfully requests grant support to implement [Project Name] and complete the activities necessary to achieve the project's intended outcomes. Requested funding will directly support project implementation by providing the resources needed to successfully carry out the proposed scope of work while ensuring responsible stewardship of grant funds.

Grant investments will support [describe primary budget categories], with each expense carefully aligned to project goals, implementation activities, and anticipated outcomes. The proposed budget reflects thoughtful planning and represents a strategic investment in creating sustainable improvements that will continue benefiting participants and the community long after the grant period has concluded.

By leveraging grant funding alongside organizational resources, partnerships, and community support, [Organization Name] will maximize the impact of every dollar invested while creating lasting value for the communities it serves.

Prompt VIII: Explain why your YMCA is well-positioned to successfully implement this project.

Government Funders:
Highlight organizational capacity, staffing, partnerships, grant management experience, and project oversight.

Foundation Funders:
Emphasize community trust, mission alignment, collaboration, innovation, and the YMCA's long-term commitment to serving the community.

VIII. Organizational Capacity

For [number] years, [Organization Name] has served as a trusted community partner dedicated to strengthening the health and wellbeing of individuals and families. Guided by the YMCA's mission and supported by experienced leadership, dedicated staff, engaged volunteers, and strong community partnerships, our organization has developed the capacity to successfully implement initiatives that respond to evolving community needs while creating meaningful, measurable impact.

Implementation of [Project Name] builds upon this strong foundation by aligning community priorities with the YMCA's commitment to innovation, collaboration, and responsible stewardship. Throughout the project, the organization will leverage its relationships, operational experience, and commitment to continuous improvement to ensure successful implementation and long-term sustainability.

By investing in [Organization Name], funders are partnering with an organization that is committed not only to successfully completing this project, but also to maximizing its long-term value for participants, families, and the broader community. This investment will strengthen our ability to continue serving as a trusted resource while advancing sustainable solutions that create lasting positive change.