



## Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation Economic Impact Grant Program Guidelines and Procedures

Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation (SMIF) is a collaborative organization always seeking ways to leverage resources, talent and time. Our Economic Impact Grant Program enables us to foster new ideas and initiatives which spark new businesses and increase economies to be more prosperous. We believe communities which invest in their people will grow a sustainable economy.

SMIF seeks applications which create problem-solving initiatives to begin, increase or elevate entrepreneurial processes to grow economic opportunities. Applicants are encouraged to consider submissions to support current or future business growth, access or expansion of resources to underrepresented populations, and/or grow the community's ability to embrace and develop a grow-your-own community culture. This may include, but is not limited to, initiatives in the areas of art, tourism, food accessibility and business services.

Examples of initiatives may include the creation of a system to increase information gathering from early stage companies to further business training and grow the economy; designing new approaches to resource-sharing and educational talent to grow business knowledge; advancing opportunities for minorities to successfully start or expand enterprises; creating processes to increase prosperity for art, tourism or food economies.

Up to \$20,000 is available to qualified and approved applications.

### Grant Guidelines

- Proposals must be submitted by an IRS-designated 501(c)(3) organization, a unit/agency of government or a public institution.
- Proposals must demonstrate benefit to **SMIF's 20-county region**.
- Funding requests up to \$20,000 will be considered.
- Only one application per organization will be considered.
- All grants require a 100% match, at least 25% cash (cash match must be in-hand before grant funds are released)





## Exclusions

Ineligible organizations or activities include:

- Individuals, businesses, or other for-profit organizations
- General operating expenses and expenses not directly related to the project/program
- Capital funding, real estate investments, fixed assets, equipment, campaigns or endowments
- Existing deficits
- Programs or services mandated by law
- Projects/programs already in progress or completed
- Funds for re-granting or to establish loan pools
- Organizations that have an “open” cash grant with SMIF or have not satisfied a grant obligation within the past 12 months
- Expenses directly related to AmeriCorps VISTA members
- Research projects or school-related internships
- Routine city, county, or township planning or zoning

## Evaluation

Applicants will be asked to develop specific performance measures relative to their project. Grants approved must demonstrate the ability to achieve quantifiable and qualifiable outcomes within 12 months (projects are completed in 12 months, followed by 2 months of evaluation/results). This may include initiatives which enhance quality of life, increase community prosperity, and build collaboration.

Within the proposal, applicants will be required to dedicate at least 10% of their grant funds to evaluation which includes both baseline evaluation and end-of-grant result

## Priority Considerations

SMIF will give priority consideration to applications which best demonstrate:

Measurable results—projects that can show quantitative results in SMIF focus areas

- Asset-based approaches—projects that maximize the strengths, talents, and resources of the local community
- Collaboration/partnership—projects that work with other organizations in unique and effective ways





SOUTHERN MINNESOTA  
INITIATIVE FOUNDATION

525 Florence Avenue • PO Box 695 • Owatonna, MN 55060-0695  
PH 507.455.3215 • FAX 507.455.2098 • [smifoundation.org](http://smifoundation.org)

- Sustainability of local or other funding streams—projects that have solid plans for continuation outside of SMIF funding
- Leveraged funding—projects that access all available resources and maximize SMIF's investment
- Effectiveness—projects that effectively address an identified need and/or opportunity
- Impact—projects that demonstrate an overall impact within SMIF's region

### Required Documents

- Completed application
- SMIF Project Budget Worksheet
- Audited financials (*or filed tax forms if unaudited*)
- IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter (*if nonprofit organization*)
- Letter(s) of commitment from partner organization(s) other than the applicant organization and fiscal agent

### Application Deadline

**Deadline for application is October 4, 2019.** Award date will be November 1, 2019.

Submit application and attachments via mail, fax or email to:

Southern Minnesota Initiative Foundation

Attn: Jennifer Heien

PO Box 695

Owatonna, MN 55060

Fax: 507-455-2098

[jenniferh@smifoundation.org](mailto:jenniferh@smifoundation.org)

All applicants will be contacted via email or telephone to confirm receipt of their application.

### Contact Us

Jennifer Heien, Grants Coordinator

507-214-7040

[jenniferh@smifoundation.org](mailto:jenniferh@smifoundation.org)

