

Important Qualities

To have the best chance for success, proposals should be clearly written and present a strong case for support. Projects that have many of the following qualities will be more competitive.

- Closely fits the funding objectives of the foundation
- Represents a significant expansion of services
- Addresses the root cause of a problem or the lack of an important service in a community
- Documents the community's need for the project
- Involves a broad cross-section of the community, including collaboration with other organizations
- Shows evidence of strong local support through volunteers and community donations
- Originates in the private nonprofit sector
- Uses proven methods to address needs
- Has an appropriate project budget given the proposed impact of the project
- Shows careful planning in terms of the timetable, project goals, staffing and sustainability
- Has an appropriate plan for measuring impact on the community and accomplishment of project objectives
- For capacity-building requests, aligns with a long-term strategic plan by the board
- For capital requests, will lead to an expansion of programs that would not otherwise be possible and significant funding has been secured already

Large Requests

In the case of larger requests or multi-year projects, special attention will be given to the applicant organization's history, including:

- leadership in its field
- stability in its staff and board
- uniqueness of its programs in Oregon
- breadth and depth of its private fundraising
- competency in financial management

Operating Support

OCF makes relatively few grants to support the core operations of a nonprofit. However, with the recession, the number has increased somewhat. To be competitive for bridge funding, an applicant should have most of the important qualities listed above.

In addition, critical to a competitive request for operating support is presentation by the applicant of a clear plan for how grant funds would be replaced with more *sustainable* funding the next year.