

CITY OF DETROIT

Housing & Revitalization Department



2024 - 2025

Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (NOF) American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding Opportunity

NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY (NOFA) INFORMATION PACKAGE

Administered by SP Grace, LLC

NEIGHBORHOOD OPPORTUNITY FUND (NOF)/ AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT(ARPA)

PROGRAM INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES

The American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was created under the Biden Administration to provide direct relief to American, contain COVID-19 and rescue the economy. Through ARPA funding, City Council (seven districts and the two at-large) received funding to provide grants within their districts for programs proposed by nonprofit and neighborhood service organizations through the Neighborhood Opportunity Fund (NOF) program.

Small nonprofit, tax-exempt community organizations that wish to participate in the development and implementation of ARPA/NOF projects as advisors and/or as operating agencies are encouraged to apply. Organizations not acting as a fiduciary to an organization may apply once for a minimum of \$10,000 – a maximum \$20,000 for a proposed program. Organizations acting as a fiduciary to an organization may apply once for a minimum of \$10,000 – a maximum \$20,000 for each partnering organization.

During the 2024-2025 Program year, the City of Detroit and SP Grace will host in-person and virtual Technical Assistance Proposal Workshops. Registration details and informational materials will be available on the NOF ARPA [website](#) and SPGrace.com/NOF-ARPA.

Technical Assistance in the form of small group coaching sessions with applicants will also be provided prior to the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) release to help applicants prepare for grant submission. All awarded Beneficiaries will continue to receive technical assistance toward increasing the organization’s sustainability and program capacity.

PLEASE NOTE: All 2024-2025 NOF/ARPA applications must be prepared and submitted online using the application link to the Submittable portal, accessible only on the [SP Grace NOF/ARPA website](#). For questions regarding registration, email NOF-ARPA@SPGrace.com.

Applicants must register and submit proposals on the Submittable portal, which can be accessed only on [SPGrace.com/NOF-ARPA](#). Proposals must be submitted via the Submittable platform on SPGrace.com/NOF-ARPA. **Paper copies of proposals will not be accepted.**

The City ARPA FY 2024-2025 allocation will be implemented under six (6) eligible activities as follows: Education, Health, Public Safety, Recreation, Seniors, and Mobility and Accessibility. Thus, the City seeks to award through this Notice of Funding Availability competition to qualified applicants. All organizations that receive funding, hereafter, referred to as “Beneficiary” under the City’s ARPA program, are expected to read and be in compliance with the necessary ARPA guidelines, which can be found at: <https://home.treasury.gov/system/files/136/SLFRF-Final-Rule.pdf>

FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

Eligible Program Participants:

Eligible program participants for the ARPA program must meet ARPA guidelines according to the Treasury Final Rule and 2 CFR 200.

Who can apply?

Eligible Organizations:

- Incorporated community organizations, block clubs, and faith-based organizations serving the City of Detroit, and in good standing within the State of Michigan
- Must have IRS 501(c)3 designation

Ineligible Organizations:

- Educational Institutions
- A for-profit organization; or
- An individual

We strongly encourage groups that do not meet these criteria on their own to consider partnering with nonprofit organizations that can act as the fiscal sponsor

A fiscal sponsor is a nonprofit organization that provides fiduciary oversight, financial management, and other administrative services to help build the capacity of charitable projects.

We recommend that entities partnering with an organization with a 501(c)3 obtain a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) agreement with the organization.

Minimum Qualifications:

- All applicants must apply for the program via on-line application and submit all required documentation to receive funding
- Organizations must demonstrate capacity to comply with program guidelines
- The applicant must submit a clearly defined Scope of Work and Budget. Program goals must be realistic and achievable
- The project must demonstrate clearly defined success and performance standards/metrics/outputs and outcomes
- The project must maximize positive impacts in the community it serves
- The project addresses community needs

All entities applying for the NOF ARPA grant program must be able to demonstrate:

1. How they were disproportionately impacted economically by COVID-19 and
2. How the program for which they are requesting funding is addressing the impacts of COVID-19

3. That they serve low- to moderate-income City of Detroit residents
4. That the 501(C)3 Organization is registered with Sam.gov

Applicants are required to actively use an acceptable and accountable financial management system that minimizes any opportunity for fraud, waste, or mismanagement. The program tracking and reporting system must be approved by the City of Detroit and SP Grace before the applicant contracts with SP Grace, LLC. Additionally, the applicant must comply with additional requirements under SP Grace's contract agreements.

Determination of Income Eligibility:

The definition of household income for the purpose of this program is based on Low/Moderate income criteria.

Area median income varies by locality. Specific local AMI by household size is available at: https://www.regulations.gov/document/TREAS_FRDOC_0001-0408

ELIGIBLE ARPA PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Funding through this NOFA will be provided for six (6) eligible activities under:

1. Education
2. Public Safety
3. Health
4. Youth Recreation
5. Seniors
6. Mobility & Accessibility

Applicants must "self-select" which District their program will benefit and provide documentation demonstrating a physical location in the selected district where the program will be administered, and/or that the district chosen is an existing service area. Applicants may only apply for funding from one district. Applicants with city-wide programs are encouraged to apply for funding from the at-large district. Applicants can only apply once and will receive one award for a priority area and/or district. All required documentation must be submitted at the time of application.

***Please note that eligible activities and costs outlined in the NOFA are based on current ARPA Federal Regulations and outlined in the Treasury Final Rule & 2 CFR 200. These guidelines are subject to change.*

I. Education Examples

Education component will provide academic support to individuals in school or those that did not finish high school and desire to improve their literacy, leadership development, or get their GED and/or basic job training or skill set improvement. Proposals must be focused on the three major content areas below:

- A. Literacy: Classroom-based academics, including reading and math
- B. Enrichment/Readiness: Math and Science
- C. Job Training: Basic skill set improvement, technical assistance, job placement

II. Seniors Examples

Seniors' component includes activities targeted for the well-being of senior citizens for transportation and health services. Services in this category should be focused on transportation for senior medical appointments and related activities, along with other community-based group programs that provide health services to older adults with Alzheimer disease and other cognitive disorders, break to people taking care of their elderly loved ones in the form of adult day care services, etc.

- Transportation: To medical appointments
- Health Services: Dental appointments, drug prescriptions etc.
- Senior Health & Wellness

III. Health Examples

Health component is specifically designed for the provision of other health services, which does not include transportation or medical appointments. Basic health services may include, but are not limited to:

- Nutritious lunch and snacks
- Socialization and recreation, community outings, personal grooming, and hygiene
- Therapeutic activities, health monitoring, medication administration, family counseling services, prescription medication for individuals or insurance to pay retail, and prescription mail orders.

IV. Public Safety Examples

Public Safety component includes neighborhood or community-based activities focused on safe keeping of citizens. Program services may include, but are not limited to:

- Domestic and gun violence prevention
- Crime reduction and supportive counseling and referrals
- Community/neighborhood-based patrols/watch and code enforcement, etc.
- Representation/human trafficking services
- Grief support to individuals and families

V. Recreation (Youth) Examples

Recreation component will be focused on youth programs. Eligible service activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Arts, crafts, music, theater

- Youth sports and activities

VI. Mobility and Accessibility Example

Programs and services that address and improve access and quality of life through sustainable transport and mobility. Eligible accessibility activities include innovative approaches that improve access for individuals who previously have been left behind in the wake of mobility-on-demand.

INELIGIBLE PROGRAM COSTS

<input type="checkbox"/>	Pre-contract costs
<input type="checkbox"/>	Back taxes, proposal costs, debts, late charges, penalties
<input type="checkbox"/>	Improperly procured purchases
<input type="checkbox"/>	Gifts and Donations
<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff recruitment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Facilities/equipment depreciation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Costs associated with the organization rather than the specific program
<input type="checkbox"/>	Any costs associated with advertisements, pamphlets, surveys, etc.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Staff training, entertainment, conferences or retreats, travel
<input type="checkbox"/>	Public relations, advertising, or fundraising
<input type="checkbox"/>	Payments for bad debts/late fees
<input type="checkbox"/>	Indirect organizational costs, if an Indirect Cost Plan has not accepted by the City and SP Grace, LLC prior to execution of the contract
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rental assistance in any unit in which the beneficiary or subsidiary has one percent or more ownership interest in the property
<input type="checkbox"/>	Undocumented expenses
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lobbying at partisan political activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Promotion or advertisement without City's consent
<input type="checkbox"/>	Alcoholic beverage or illegal drugs, food not related to program activities
<input type="checkbox"/>	Insurance Deductibles, Past Pension Contributions
<input type="checkbox"/>	Publication not related to contract work
<input type="checkbox"/>	Personal credit card or personal checking account charges
<input type="checkbox"/>	Suing the government
<i>Beneficiaries will be offered Technical Assistance to assure that ARPA expenses comply with program guidelines.</i>	

PROPOSAL SELECTION & EVALUATION CRITERIA

Phase 1 – Eligibility Requirements

Applications must meet the basic eligibility requirements listed below. Applications that do not meet these basic Threshold requirements will be eliminated from consideration and will not move forward for review.

Threshold Criteria	Requisite Documents
<p>1. Application complete and submitted on the SP Grace NOF/ARPA Submittable portal by the deadline. Application must be received by the date and time required. Applications must be complete when submitted (No additional materials or signatures will be accepted after the deadline).</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Application submitted by the deadline</p>
<p>2. Has at least three (3) member board, which meets at least twice a year. Sponsors must have a functioning multi-member board of at least three (3) members, which meets at least bi-annually and is representative of the community or neighborhood involved. Names and addresses of board members who are residents and who represent other organizations <u>must be listed</u> in the application, including a statement that the Board of Directors is not family-controlled or related by blood or marriage.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Board information completed in application</p>
<p>3. Has 501(c) (3) status prior to applying for proposal or partners with a 501 (c) (3). The sponsoring organization must provide proof it is a tax-exempt, nonprofit organization, i.e., IRS 501(c) (3) or equivalent tax-exempt status, authorized to do business in the State of Michigan.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> IRS Determination letter included <input type="checkbox"/> Nonprofit incorporation papers included</p>
<p>4. Has no unresolved government audit and monitoring problems (i.e., tax, legal, etc.). Sponsor cannot have unresolved government audit or monitoring problems and must be eligible to receive federal, state, and city funds.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Unresolved audit findings, federal, state, city</p>

<p>5. Has submitted most recent fiscal year cash flow statement, financial statement and if available, recent audit. Include all applicable statements, financial reports, and financial audit or 990 within the past (2) two years.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Cash flow statement <input type="checkbox"/> Financial statements <input type="checkbox"/> Financial audit <input type="checkbox"/> IRS form 990</p>
<p>6. Submitted current (2024) Non-Profit Corporation Information Update (Michigan Annual Non-Profit Report) Provide report as an attachment. Updates should have been filed with the State of Michigan on or before October 1, 2024.)</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Michigan Annual Non-Profit Attached</p>
<p>7. Submitted Articles of Incorporation. Provide certificate as an attachment.</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Articles of Incorporation attached</p>
<p>8. Submitted Certificate of Good Standing. Provide certificate as an attachment</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Certificate of Good Standing attached</p>

Selected applications must meet **all** the ARPA basic eligibility requirements to be considered for funding. **Applications that do not meet the eligibility requirement will be eliminated from consideration.** Your application will only be considered for funding if you meet the Threshold Requirements.

Proposals passing threshold criteria review will be ranked and scored on a 100-point scale, with 0 being the lowest and 100 the highest score. Proposals must score at least 80 points to be recommended for funding. Proposals will be ranked according to score and recommended for funding in rank order.

Application Selection Process

We expect to receive many highly competitive applications from across the city of Detroit. All applications that meet the basic eligibility requirements will go through an election and ranking process. Applications will be selected and funded based on the applicant’s ability to demonstrate their capacity to implement a successful program/activity, the City’s priorities, project ranking, and available funding. Successful applicants are more likely to receive a favorable score on the application if they demonstrate:

- Entities partnering with a 501(c)3 organization should have a registered LLC with the State of Michigan.
- Applicant has partnerships with the community in which they are working
- Program clearly demonstrates how it is addressing the impacts of COVID-19
- The organization has the capacity to comply with the program rules and guidelines
- A clearly defined Scope of Work and staff roles (Program goals are realistic and achievable)

- The Scope of Work and budget align
- Clearly defined success and performance standards/metrics/outputs and outcomes
- Program maximizes positive impacts in the community it serves and continues to expand and grow over time
- The program demonstrates a clear purpose to address health, economic, or racial disparities
- Responds to all the questions
- Meets all the Threshold Requirements

Phase II: The Selection Criteria

Proposals passing threshold criteria review will be ranked and scored on a 100-point scale, with 0 being the lowest and 100 the highest score. Proposals must score at least 80 points to be recommended for funding. Proposals will be ranked according to score and recommended for funding in rank order. The Scoring Criteria is as follows:

Organizational Information	30 points
Funding Need	25 points
Project Description	45 points
Total Score	100 points

Responses will be evaluated on a 5-point scale where a multiplier will be used (1, 2, and 3) to compute the total points for each area:

- 5 - Points: criterion is clearly, directly, and verifiably satisfied
- 4 - Points: criterion appears to be satisfied
- 3 - Points: criterion appears to be satisfied, but is lacking in clarity or documentation
- 2 - Points: criterion is only partially satisfied
- 1 - Point: criterion is not satisfied
- 0 - Points: question or questions are incorrectly answered or not answered completely

Technical Assistance

Pre-Award - Technical Assistance workshops and resources (e.g., templates, infographics, instructional videos) will be provided prior to the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) application opening, and small group technical assistance will be provided to help applicants prepare for their submission. Technical Assistance registration details and access to additional resources are available [online here](#) and at SPGrace.com/NOF-ARPA.

Post Award - Beneficiaries will receive technical assistance during the term of the grant. The purpose of technical assistance is to enhance operational capacity that will aid the organization in operating more effectively and efficiently, improve nonprofit grant

application literacy, and increase nonprofit access to federal and other philanthropic funding streams.

City of Detroit and SP Grace staff will work with the organization to provide one-on-one coaching, small and large group training sessions. This robust offering of technical assistance will help the organizations build capacity so they can fulfill their missions more effectively.

Technical assistance may include topics like:

- Board Development
- Grant Writing
- Leadership Development
- Organizational Development
- Strategic Planning
- Marketing
- Fiscal Responsibilities and Sustainability
- Program Development

Follow these steps to apply for this grant

- Make sure you register on the SP Grace NOF/ARPA Submittable portal. This can be accessed [online here](#) or at SPGrace.com/NOF-ARPA.
- Read the NOF/ARPA Information Packet for details about the program, who and what are eligible, assessment criteria, etc.
- Remember to use the Application Checklist to ensure that you attach all required documents to the application. Required documents that are not submitted could reduce total number of points.
- Complete ALL sections of the application. Remember to confirm submission at the end of the application.

Beneficiaries will be monitored to assess whether the organization program/activities have achieved its objectives and determine whether the program has maximized impacts and outcomes in the community and to the people being served.



Introduction to NOF/ARPA Grant Policies and Procedures

Administered by SP Grace, LLC in partnership with the City of Detroit (2024/2025)

Welcome to the comprehensive guide for the Neighborhood Opportunities Funds (NOF) supported by the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA), administered by SP Grace, LLC in partnership with the City of Detroit Housing and Revitalization Department (HRD) for the fiscal years 2024/2025. This document outlines the key policies and procedures designed to ensure that the grant administration process is accessible, fair, and beneficial to all eligible non-profit organizations within the City of Detroit.

In this guide, you will find detailed information on various aspects of the grant process, from application submission to fund disbursement. Our goal is to provide clarity and support to all potential applicants and beneficiaries, ensuring that they not only understand the requirements and opportunities of the NOF ARPA grant but also feel supported at every step of the application and implementation process.

Each section of this document addresses specific areas of the grant process:

- The **Equitable Access Policy** details our commitment to a user-friendly application process and wide-reaching promotional efforts to ensure all eligible organizations have the opportunity to apply.
- The **Application Review Process** explains how applications are assessed and awarded based on merit and adherence to established criteria, ensuring a just evaluation of all submissions.
- The **Financial Payment Policy** provides a transparent overview of how grant funds are disbursed to successful applicants, emphasizing compliance and timely execution.
- Finally, the **Appeals Process** offers a recourse for applicants who wish to contest the evaluation of their applications, ensuring every organization's right to a fair review is upheld.

SP Grace, LLC and the City of Detroit aim to foster a transparent, equitable environment that supports the vital work of non-profits in our community.



Equitable Access Policy for NOF ARPA Grant Opportunity

SP Grace, LLC is committed to ensuring equitable access to the NOF ARPA grant opportunity for all eligible non-profits within the City of Detroit. The following measures are designed to facilitate a fair and accessible application process:

- 1. User-Friendly Submission Platform:** Our platform is designed for ease of use and includes technical support to assist applicants with their submissions.
- 2. Informational & Instructional Sessions:** We will present information about the opportunity in each city district during the council person's monthly meetings. We will host a minimum of three in-person technical assistance sessions (east side location, west side location, mid-city location) and a virtual session prior to application portal opening to assist organizations interested in applying.
- 3. Supportive Resources:** Our application platform will feature instructional aides and templates, providing samples of necessary documents to aid applicants in understanding submission requirements during the application process.
- 4. Broad Promotion:** We will distribute electronic promotional materials to all city council members for dissemination within their respective districts and networks. We will promote the grant opportunity on the city's official website and through non-profit "umbrella" organizations (e.g., non-profit leaders groups, faith leaders groups, community leaders groups). We will send promotional emails to CDBG recipients, City of Detroit neighborhood & community organizations in all districts (from city website), previous ARPA applicants who were not awarded, organizations who attended previous round informational meetings and did not apply in Round 1, SP Grace non-profit email distribution list.
- 5. Feedback on Submissions:** Applicants will be promptly notified of any missing documents in their applications and will be given one week (7 days) to provide the necessary information.
- 6. Infographics:** To further aid understanding, we will provide infographics that clearly explain the application process.
- 7. Flexibility in Requirements:** During the initial application phase, we will not penalize applicants for lacking a SAM government registration number, provided they can show

evidence of a pending application. Awarded beneficiaries must provide their final SAM unique identification information to enter into a contract with SP Grace.

8. Technical Issues Contingency: Should there be any non-user error technical issues with the Submittable platform that prevent successful application submission by the deadline, we will accept applications within 24 hours after the issue is resolved, without penalty.

9. Early Application Encouragement: We encourage all applicants to submit their applications early, as available funds will be awarded on a rolling basis until the application closing date or all funds have been allocated (whichever happens first). Applicants will also be encouraged to initiate their SAM registration at SAM.gov well in advance to avoid delays.

10. Appeals Process: If an organization believes their application was not assessed correctly due to procedural errors, misinterpretations, or conflicts of interest, an appeals process is available. Organizations can submit a formal appeal within 10 business days of receiving their grant decision notification. The appeals will be reviewed by an independent committee, which will not include any members involved in the initial decision. This committee will assess the appeal based on the provided evidence and issue a final decision within 30 days of the appeal submission.

These strategies are designed to create a level playing field, ensuring that all non-profits, regardless of size or resources, have an equal opportunity to apply and benefit from the NOF ARPA grant.



NOF ARPA Grant Application Review Process

SP Grace, LLC in partnership with the City of Detroit Housing and Revitalization Department (HRD), administers a meticulous and equitable review process for the NOF ARPA grant applications. This process ensures that grants are awarded based on objective criteria to qualifying non-profit organizations, supporting their crucial work within the community.

Application Submission and Review Timeline

Applications are evaluated based on their adherence to the threshold criteria and the achievement of a consensus review team score of 80 points or higher.

1. Order of Review

- Applications will be reviewed in the order received but will only be awarded based on the fulfillment of all required threshold criteria and achieving the necessary 80 points or higher consensus score.

2. Review Teams

- Depending on staff availability, there will be 3 or 4 review teams, each consisting of three members, with one member acting as the team leader to facilitate consensus meetings.
- Teams will include individuals from both SP Grace and HRD. Alternate members may step in if a regular member is unavailable or has a conflict of interest.

3. Scoring and Evaluation

- Reviewers will score applications using a detailed scoring rubric designed to ensure consistent and fair evaluations. Teams will convene weekly to discuss applications and finalize a consensus score for each application, which will be documented in the Submittable platform.

4. Handling of Incomplete Applications

- Applicants with incomplete submissions will be notified and given 7 days to provide the required documents. These applications will be re-evaluated based on the date all documents are received.

5. Conflict of Interest

- Both applicants and reviewers must submit conflict of interest affidavits. Reviewers with potential conflicts must recuse themselves from evaluating the respective applications to maintain the integrity of the review process.

Awarding of Grants

- Grants will be awarded as long as there are available funds, and only to applications that meet the specified criteria and score requirements, ensuring a transparent and equitable distribution.

Feedback for Unsuccessful Applicants

- Applicants not selected will receive feedback, including their consensus scoring, in their notification letters to provide insights and guidance for potential future submissions.



Financial Payment Policy for Beneficiary Payments

Purpose

This Financial Payment Policy outlines the procedures and requirements for the disbursement of grant funds to beneficiary organizations awarded under the NOF ARPA grant program administered by SP Grace. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all payments are executed in a timely, secure, and compliant manner according to federal and state regulations.

Policy Scope

This policy applies to all organizations that have been awarded grant funds following the successful fulfillment of all required compliance documentation and contractual agreements with SP Grace.

Payment Procedure

1. Contract and Documentation Requirements

- Beneficiary organizations must submit a signed contract agreeing to the terms and conditions of the grant.
- Alongside the signed contract, organizations must submit a completed ACH Direct Deposit Form. This form must be signed by an authorized agent or official signer of the organization and must include the bank's routing number and the organization's account number.
- A copy of a voided check from the organization's bank account must be provided to verify the account information.

2. Banking Requirements

- The organization's bank account must be held at a financial institution with a physical presence within the State of Michigan, registered to conduct business in Michigan.
- Beneficiaries' bank accounts must be titled in the name of the organization, and personal accounts are strictly prohibited for the receipt of grant funds.
- The use of online-only banks, or payment platforms such as PayPal, CashApp, or similar services, is not permitted for receiving grant funds.

3. Disbursement of Funds

- Upon receipt and verification of all required documents, SP Grace will process the payment of funds via ACH transfer.
- **Fixed Award Amount:** Payment will be made strictly in the amount of the grant award as approved. SP Grace is not authorized to disburse any funds exceeding the specified award amount. No additional funds will be provided to cover any incidental or unforeseen expenses incurred by the beneficiary, including but not limited to banking fees, interest payments, or other financial charges. Beneficiary organizations are solely responsible for any such costs that may arise from their receipt or use of the grant funds.

Compliance and Monitoring

Beneficiary organizations must comply with all federal and state regulations applicable to the receipt and use of grant funds. SP Grace reserves the right to audit or request additional documentation from beneficiaries to ensure compliance with the terms of the grant and this payment policy.

Amendments

This policy may be amended from time to time in response to changes in federal or state legislation, regulatory requirements, or any other circumstances deemed necessary by SP Grace.

Contact Information

For inquiries or further clarification regarding this policy, beneficiaries may contact SP Grace's administration office at 313-263-1750.

Additional Considerations and Recommendations:**Tax Compliance**

It is the responsibility of the beneficiaries to be aware of and meet their tax obligations regarding the receipt of grant funds. It is recommended that they work with their tax professionals to assist them with this.

Record Keeping

Beneficiaries are strongly encouraged to maintain detailed records of their expenditures of the grant funds for auditing purposes.



Appeals Process for NOF ARPA Grant Application Decisions

At SP Grace, LLC in partnership with the City of Detroit, we are committed to ensuring a fair and transparent evaluation of all grant applications. We understand the importance of accuracy and integrity in our review process and recognize that errors, while rare, can occur. Therefore, we provide an appeals process to address any concerns applicants might have regarding the evaluation of their applications. This process is designed to ensure that every applicant has a fair opportunity to be heard and to correct potential mistakes in the initial assessment of their grant application.

Please note, the opportunity for an appeal is meaningful and can potentially alter the outcome of an application, provided there are still funds available within the grant program. If all funds have been allocated by the time an appeal is processed, we will be unable to grant the appeal even if it is justified. This underscores the importance of submitting complete and accurate applications initially and responding promptly to any requests for additional documentation during the review period.

We encourage all applicants who believe there has been a genuine oversight or error in the handling of their application to engage with this process. This document outlines the steps to initiate an appeal, the grounds on which an appeal can be made, and the procedures we follow to ensure every appeal is reviewed thoroughly and impartially.

Grounds for Appeal

An appeal may be considered under the following circumstances:

- Procedural Errors -- The applicant believes there was a significant procedural error or oversight during the review of their application that materially affected the outcome.
- Misinterpretation of Application Content -- The applicant believes that the facts of their application were misinterpreted or misunderstood during the review process.
- Conflict of Interest -- The applicant has evidence that a conflict of interest was not properly disclosed or managed, potentially influencing the decision.

Appeals Procedure

1. Initiating an Appeal

- Applicants must submit a written appeal within 10 days of receiving their notification of the grant decision.
- The appeal should clearly state the grounds for the appeal and include any relevant evidence or documentation to support the claim.

2. Review of the Appeal

- To ensure impartiality, appeals will be reviewed by an appeals committee, which is comprised of three NOF/ARPA grant application reviewers who were not involved in the initial review of the application.
- The appeals committee will review the submitted materials and may request additional information from the original review team or the applicant.

3. Decision

- The Appeals Committee will aim to provide a decision within 2 weeks of receiving the appeal. The decision will be final and communicated in writing to the applicant.
- The committee may decide to uphold the original decision, revise the score, or request a re-evaluation of the application.

In administering this grant opportunity, the highest standards of fairness and transparency are upheld. All applicants are ensured a thorough and just review of their applications. Engagement in this appeals process is handled with the utmost care and attention to detail.