Grant for Technology Opportunities Program

Grant Reviewer Orientation

FY 2018 Grant Cycle

GTOPs Overview

Vision:

A community where all citizens have access to the internet, devices and knowledge needed to fully participate in digital society

Mission:

To provide matching grant funds to Austin organizations for projects that create digital opportunities and promote digital equity in innovative ways.

GTOPs Overview

Values

GTOPs values grassroots organizations who form community partnerships and work towards digital equity through creating innovative projects that surface good or best practices. GTOPs is meant to provide seed funding to start new programs that can become self sustaining.

Goals

- Increase use of digital and communications technology devices
- Increase knowledge and skills of digital and communications technology
- Increase access to and usage of the Internet

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GTOPs Overview

Funding Available

- TOTAL funds available of $200,000

Funding Award Amounts

- Grants are between $10,000 and $25,000

Device Award

- New for 2018 from the City's PC Community Loan Program
- Total of 291 devices available
- 10-30 devices available per request

The Process

Written Evaluations – Round 1
- Preliminary evaluation and elimination
- Written questions to applicants (DUE Jan 7, 2018)
- Responses from applicants (DUE Jan 15, 2018)
- Round 1 Scores (DUE Jan 29, 2018)

Oral Presentations – Round 2
- FEB 16, 2018 from top (15) ranked applicants
- Seven minute presentations followed by Ten minutes of Q&A
- Ten minutes of committee consensus and deliberation time

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The Process

Finishing Up

Scoring Round 2 (Feb 16, 2018) (Oral Presentations)

- Final Deliberation (February 19, 2018) (tentative)

  - review scores and rankings

  - discussion and adjustments if needed

  - discussion to determine final award amounts, based on ranking

Consensus

- True consensus is achieved when all reviewers give a similar score to a proposal

- Consensus increases confidence that a proposal has been accurately reviewed per criteria

- Consensus is not required -- we can agree to disagree so long as we understand why

- Consensus is achieved through discussion at: oral presentations, final meeting

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Confidentiality, Communication & Impartiality

Reviewer Identity

- The review process is a matter of public record. In order to allow judging with out bias or reprisal all forms and communications will be de-identified by the use of a confidential numbering system.

- The number is delivered during the orientation meeting.

Communication with applicants

- Reviewers must offer a commitment to NOT communicate directly with applicants. Reviewers are to send any questions to staff via email with a title such as "Reviewer 1 Question for Applicant #5." Staff will forward them, de-identified, to the program contact and post question via mass reply all to the reviewers when all responses are received, by the deadline.

- It is better to address specific and/or complex questions in writing BEFORE the oral presentations.

Confidentiality, Communication & Impartiality

Judging without bias

- All reviewers are to agree to and sign the Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Agreement

- Judging matrix will clearly designate "Recused" or "R" on the report. (Online form exception)

Scoring and Comments

- Reviewer scores and written comments are not only a matter of public record but will be shared with the applicants as a way to provide feedback.

- Reviewers are asked to be constructive and concise in feedback and comments.

- Experience shows that applicants take constructive reviewer feedback seriously, and return in succeeding years with improved proposals.

- Inappropriate or inflammatory language will not be accepted.

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Scoring Guidance

The judging process – Scoring by the numbers

- Questions are weighted by a points value
- Overall scores are graded by the 100 points scale
- Zeros should only be given if a question was left blank, is completely unreadable or nonsensical
- Full marks (100%) should only be given to perfectly written, thorough and complete answers

Score	0-5	0-10	0-15	Guidance
Low	1	1	1	Not related at all to the question
Mid	3	5.5	8	Sufficiently related/responsive to the question
Max	5	10	15	Significantly responsive to the question

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Application Scoring Criteria

I.---- Alignment with GTOPs Goals- 10 total

- This program plan has demonstrated alignment with the GTOPs Goals. *(10 pts)*

II.---- Community impact - 30 total

- The program plan and its objectives are well defined and serve a community need. *(10 pts)*

- This program plan demonstrates that if implemented it will have an ongoing/lasting positive impact on the community. *(10 pts)*

- This program plan has demonstrated that it has collaboration partners w/ in the community we are seeking to serve. *(10 pts)*

Application Scoring Criteria

III.---- Evaluation of success - 30 total

- This program has a clear plan for success. Its goals and objectives are achievable and its work plan is feasible. *(10 pts)*

- This program plan demonstrates its ability to evaluate its own success and reviewers agree that its proposed measures for evaluation are viable and appropriate. *(10 pts)*

- The organization has provided documentation of demonstrated success as an organization *(10 pts):*

Application Scoring Criteria

IV.---- Budget and fiscal responsibility - 30 total

- The organization that is executing on the program plan is a fiscally responsible organization that will use City funds and matching criteria of the grant appropriately if awarded this grant. *(15 pts)*

- This program plan has provided all required documentation, including its budget, which clearly shows its annual revenue and matching dollars (in-kind and/or cash). *(10 pts)*

- The program plan outlines a plan for sustainability of the program beyond the GTOPs grant. *(5 pts)*

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Application, Review, & Award Timeline

- **January 7, 2018:** Written Questions Due (from Reviewers)

- **January 15, 2018:** Written Responses Due (from Applicants)

- **January 29, 2018:** First Round of Scores Due

- **January 31, 2018:** First round scores sent to applicants

- **February 16, 2018:** Oral Presentations (Tentative date depending on location)

- **Week of February 19, 2018:** Final Deliberation (Tentative depending on location)

- **March, 2018:** Final awards announced

Digital Inclusion
City of Austin

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