New Initiative Grant Application

Strong and Weak Response Examples

A learning tool for community applicants

Compare two versions of a fictional 2027 New Initiative application. The examples follow the nine narrative questions in the application. Teaching notes explain what information helps the Grant Review Committee understand the proposal.

A strong response answers the question with relevant, accurate details. A weak response may describe a worthwhile initiative but omit information needed to assess it. These labels describe the writing, not the value of an organization or its work.

How to use this tool

Read the weak and strong responses to the same question, then review the teaching note. Use the examples to plan your own answers. Complete the official 2027 New Initiative application and its required budget workbook.

All organizations, people, project details, partners, survey findings and financial figures in this guide are fictional. Do not copy the figures or claim partnerships, evidence or outcomes that your organization cannot support.

This is a learning tool only and should not be submitted. Use the official application form and guidelines for the specific grant program and funding year you are applying for. Examples are provided for learning purposes and do not guarantee funding approval.

The fictional initiative

Prairie Community Connections Society is proposing a new initiative called Digital Skills Together: six months of free, beginner-friendly digital skills workshops for Regina adults facing financial and digital-access barriers. It requests $18,000 from the Social Development Stream toward a $30,000 cash project budget. The initiative is new, while the fictional organization has experience running community learning activities.

New Initiative Grant Program

2026 Application Form (Example only)

Section 1: Organization and Program Information

Field	Sample entry
Legal organization name	Prairie Community Connections Society
ISC entity number	Fictional organization – no real number
Mailing address	Fictional address
City / postal code	Regina, Saskatchewan – fictional postal
Primary contact (staff)	Alex Morgan, Program Coordinator
Telephone / email	306-555-0101 / alex@example.org
Alternate contact (board)	Jordan Lee, Board Chair
Board contact details	306-555-0102 / jordan@example.org
Funding stream	Social Development Stream
Funding request	$18,000
Grant type	Major
Name of initiative	Digital Skills Together
Type of initiative	Program or service
Initiative dates	May 1 to October 31, 2027

Teaching note: Use the organization's legal name and a board member for the board contact. Check that the request, initiative name and dates match the budget and other parts of the application.

Section 2: Required Attachments

The New Initiative form asks for approved and signed annual financial statements, the CIGP Program Budget & Expenditure Verification Workbook and capital project documents where applicable. Letters of support are optional. Check the official form for the applicable requirements.

Weak example: The application says the budget is attached, but the budget workbook does not show which funding has been confirmed and leaves out some project costs.

Strong example: The project budget shows $30,000 in total cash expenses. The organization has confirmed $12,000 from other funding sources and is requesting $18,000 from the City. The organization also includes its most recent approved and signed annual financial statements. Letters of support are optional and should only be included when they explain what a partner will contribute to the project.

What makes the response stronger: A narrative does not replace required supporting documents. The funding request, total cost, other revenues and dates should agree across the application and workbook.

Section 3: Organizational Information, Experience and Capacity

1. Organization mission statement or mandate: Describe the mandate and the people or communities served.

Weak example: We make Regina better by offering programs that help everyone.

Strong example: Prairie Community Connections Society helps Regina adults with limited access to learning opportunities build practical skills and community connections. We deliver low-cost and free community learning activities, with a focus on adults who face financial or digital-access barriers.

What makes the response stronger: It identifies the population served and the organization's work. A mission statement does not need to list every project.

2. Organization experience and capacity: Explain relevant experience, people, responsibilities and resources.

Weak example: Our team is experienced and passionate. We know how to organize programs and are confident the project will succeed.

Strong example: Since 2023, our society has organized community learning sessions and volunteer-supported events. In 2026, we delivered 14 introductory learning workshops with 105 unique participants, tracked through registration records. These were not digital skills workshops, so we have arranged specialized instruction for this new initiative.

Our Coordinator will oversee scheduling, registration, accommodation requests and reporting. A contracted instructor with adult digital-literacy teaching experience will prepare and deliver sessions. Two trained volunteers will provide individual assistance; our treasurer will review spending monthly. We have identified a suitable community

classroom and will confirm its accessibility and equipment before registration opens.

What makes the response stronger: It links prior experience to the new work, acknowledges what is genuinely new, identifies delivery roles and describes financial oversight and practical resources.

Section 4: Initiative Information and Program Merit

3. Description of the initiative: Purpose, activities, schedule, participants, delivery and partners.

Weak example: We will offer helpful digital classes throughout the year. Participants will learn to use technology, and partners will support our important work.

Strong example: Digital Skills Together will provide 24 free two-hour workshops from May through October 2027 at a community classroom in Regina. Four sessions will take place each month. We expect to enroll 40 different adults, with up to 12 participants per workshop and approximately 240 total attendances, including repeat visits.

The program will cover smartphone basics, safe internet use, creating an email account, completing common online forms and accessing local services. Participants can attend individual sessions or a sequence. The instructor will use demonstrations and guided practice, with volunteer support and loaner devices.

Our society will manage registration and delivery. The Prairie Learning Hub has agreed in principle to provide space at a reduced rate; the booking is not yet final. The Neighbour Resource Centre has agreed to circulate information and refer interested adults

What makes the response stronger: The reviewer can identify what will happen, when, for whom, in what numbers and through which delivery arrangements. It distinguishes unique people from total visits and confirmed partnership commitments from preliminary ones.

4. Alignment with funding stream objectives: Explain relevant objectives and how activities contribute.

Weak example: Our project supports every City objective because digital skills are important for everybody.

Strong example: We propose this initiative for the Social Development Stream because it is intended to reduce barriers to participation and help adults access everyday information and community services. Free sessions and device loans are designed to support participants who cannot readily afford training or equipment. Guided practice in online forms and communications can help people navigate services more independently.

What makes the response stronger: It describes a plausible connection between activities and intended benefits without asserting every objective is met.

5. Calls to Action or Calls for Justice: Identify numbered Calls directly addressed, where applicable.

Weak example: We welcome Indigenous participants and therefore support all Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.

Strong example: We are not claiming that Digital Skills Together directly addresses a particular Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action or National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Call for Justice. We will welcome Indigenous participants and respond to relevant access needs, but that alone does not demonstrate a direct response to a numbered Call. If a directly relevant component is developed, we will identify the specific Call and explain the activities and any confirmed Indigenous involvement.

What makes the response stronger: It avoids an unsupported claim. This application question is optional when it does not apply; applicants with directly relevant work should identify the correct numbered Call and describe the connection.

Section 5: Community Need and Impact

6. Community need: Explain need or opportunity and support it with relevant evidence.

Weak example: Lots of people struggle with technology and need these classes. We know the community will benefit.

Strong example: In a March 2027 needs check, 31 adults who attended our other learning activities answered a short survey. Twenty-four said they had difficulty with at least one common online task, and 19 said cost had kept them from attending technology training. Eleven asked specifically for help with online forms. Staff also recorded 16 inquiries about digital learning between January and March 2027.

These findings suggest demand among the people already connected with our organization. Before launch, we will confirm topics and preferred times with interested participants and local referral partners.

What makes the response stronger: It names the source, date and scale of the evidence. Need is demonstrated rather than assumed.

7. Expected outcomes and community impact: Describe realistic changes and how they will be measured.

Weak example: Everyone will become confident with technology. The program will reduce poverty and improve lives across Regina.

Strong example: Our delivery targets are 24 workshops and 40 different participants over six months. For participants completing both an initial and final skills check, our goal is that at least 75% will independently complete two common tasks, such as sending an email and locating a reliable online service. We aim to gather paired checks from at least 25 participants and will report the actual number.

The instructor will use short practical demonstrations and optional spoken or supported feedback. Attendance records will distinguish unique participants from repeat visits. We will also ask whether participants feel more comfortable attempting an unfamiliar online task. These measures can show individual learning and confidence.

What makes the response stronger: It separates outputs from outcomes, uses a timeframe and measurable targets, explains data collection and avoids claiming impact beyond the evidence.

A useful distinction

Type	New Initiative example
Activity	Teach a beginner internet-safety workshop.
Output	Deliver 24 sessions for 40 different adults.
Outcome	Participants can complete more everyday online tasks independently.
Evidence	Compare baseline and final task checks and report the number assessed.

Teaching note: Select measures that are achievable for your project. Explain when and how information will be collected; report the actual number responding.

Section 6: Accessibility

8. Accessibility: Identify likely barriers and practical measures to reduce them.

Weak example: Our workshops are open to everyone, and the building is accessible. We will help people as needed.

Strong example: The workshops will be free, and participants will be able to register by telephone, email or in person. We will offer loaner devices so that owning a smartphone or laptop is not required. Staff will provide printed and large-print step-by-step guides and use plain-language demonstrations. Participants may work at their own pace and request one-to-one help.

Before sessions begin, we will verify step-free access, an accessible washroom, usable seating and reliable internet at the venue. The coordinator will ask privately about access requirements and arrange reasonable alternatives, including breaks, flexible support and a quieter work area. Where transportation costs prevent attendance, a limited bus-ticket budget is available. We will communicate any accommodation limitations early and seek other options where possible.

What makes the response stronger: It identifies financial, equipment, communication, physical and transportation barriers and pairs them with concrete, realistic responses. It avoids treating “everyone is welcome” as an accessibility plan.

Section 7: Financial Need

9. Need for City funding: Explain the funding gap, other sources and reduced-funding scenario.

Weak example: We depend on grants and need City support to make the project possible. Without it, the program will be badly affected.

Strong example: The six-month project has a $30,000 cash budget. Our society has confirmed $7,000 from fundraising and $5,000 from a private foundation, leaving an $18,000 request to the City. We are also seeking donated devices.

The City request would support instructor fees ($9,000), device rental and data access ($3,000), room rental ($2,000), participant transportation ($2,000) and accessible learning materials ($2,000). These amounts total $18,000, and the completed budget workbook presents the project cost and funding sources.

If the City awarded $9,000, we would seek to deliver 12 workshops for approximately 25 adults, with fewer device-loan and transportation supports. With no City funding, we would not launch the proposed 24-session initiative; we would seek other funding instead.

What makes the response stronger: It reconciles project cost, confirmed cash, requested funding and eligible expenses, and explains proportionate consequences of partial or no funding. The required budget workbook remains the financial source of detail.

Section 8: Capital Initiatives – additional example

This section applies only if your proposed initiative is a capital project. Digital Skills Together is a program/service example, so it does not require capital documentation. The following independent fictional example illustrates the type of information a capital applicant may need to provide.

Weak response example: We plan to improve a playground. The community supports the idea, and we will provide drawings after approval.

Strong response example: A fictional community association proposes replacing two aging play components and improving an accessible route in a neighbourhood playground. Its application includes a letter from the property owner confirming approval in principle and identifying who will be responsible for long-term maintenance. It also includes a site plan showing the proposed location and conceptual drawings of the work. If the project will be completed in phases, the association provides a short description of each phase.
Because the project involves a playground, the association also submits the required playground checklist, play components list, and layout and colour plans identified in Section 8. The association understands that, if funding is approved, the playground design must be reviewed and approved by the City before equipment is ordered.

What makes the response stronger: For capital initiatives, explain what is being built or changed, where it will be located, ownership responsibilities and the project status. Section 8 lists extra playground documents; other detailed plans, specifications and permits may be requested following approval. For landscaping on City property or in a City park, contact the City before submitting as instructed in the application.