

FREEDOM IN PRACTICE: PROGRAMMATIC GUIDELINES

Funding Focus

At Rising Tide Foundation, we believe the market economy, in concert with limited government and rule of law, holds the greatest promise of freedom and prosperity for all. Markets enhance individual flourishing by coordinating diverse interests through voluntary and peaceful exchange. The greatest advancements in human history result from such interactions between individuals who are free to act, exchange, and create value for themselves and others, not from the use of force or top-down planning of the state.

Poverty, in our opinion, cannot be “managed” by redistributing a perceived “finite” pie of wealth, nor by gaining control over limited resources. Instead, prosperity is when society respects the dignity of each person and his or her right to act as a moral agent. We seek to unleash this potential by supporting projects that open networks of productivity and exchange to the previously excluded. We believe that individuals in poverty must see themselves as active agents, not passive victims. They must seek and be given empowerment, not paternalistic protection as the key to prosperity.

Personal freedom and the free market economy, as ideals, are continuously threatened by the power of big-government and big-business, intervening to enhance “social justice”, “equity”, or “efficiency” in markets. But these efforts end up leading to the kind of crony capitalism that is so prevalent today – a system that claims to help everyone but benefits only the few at the expense of the many; it is a system that manages rather than solves poverty.

Our philanthropic strategy is to support projects that articulate and promote these core beliefs, projects that eliminate the obstacles which impede creative individuals, projects that give a “hand-up,” rather than just a “hand-out”.

Specifically, we seek to find projects that:

- Develop private sector solutions to societal problems
- Offer solutions to the problems created by government and crony capitalist interventions. Projects that offer strategies for making such interventions unnecessary and unattractive going forward
- Design and implement programs that enhance individuals’ capacities for self-determination, individual choice, and peaceful, voluntary cooperation in society
- Discover methods to teach freedom in more effective ways or to new, untapped audiences

Selection Process

The application process involves the following steps:

- [Pre-grant Application \(Letter of Intent\)](#)

As potential breakthrough ideas can occur every day, we accept letters of intent from highly

qualified and dedicated institutions all year round. Letters of Intent are submitted online via our grant management system, [SmartSimple](#) and are assessed by internal staff and the Advisory Board for overall fit with our funding guidelines.

- **Full Grant Application**

Full grant applications are accepted by invitation only. Only the most promising applications with the highest potential for sustainable, transformative impact will be invited to submit a full grant application online via SmartSimple. The full grant application is a lean process, which simply builds on the LOI with additional questions. It should include a concise project plan, milestones, and a detailed budget so that peer-reviewed evaluation by experts in the field is possible. Specific instructions will be provided to selected applicants for the full grant application.

Our full proposal will require applicants to address the following topics:

- Current problem and relevance of proposed solution
- Proposed solution (project description and methodology)
- Project history (description of wider initiative or previous pilot)
- Contribution to promoting greater freedom and prosperity, with a focus on the individual impact areas: (1) Private Sector Solutions, (2) Systems Change, (3) Empowerment of Individuals, and/or (4) Teaching Freedom
- Project objectives and expected results over time, including how the success will be measured
- Logic Model, including KPIs and targets
- Milestones, including expected impacts 3 years and 5 years after project closure
- Experience in running the project (results achieved thus far)
- Major risks and mitigation
- Sustainability (plan to continue with the project after grant closure)
- Brief description of your organization, including history, structure, main programs, and main achievements
- Capacity for success, including credentials of project leaders and reasons your team is best positioned to be successful with the project
- Budget breakdown (for overall initiative and for the amount requested to RTF)
- Financial resources (other organizations contributing funding towards the project)

Grant Review Committee

Full grant applications are reviewed by a Grant Review Committee, a panel of external experts that carry out a comprehensive review.

Selection Criteria

- **Impact to Society**

We look for projects that address an important problem and that empower individuals to achieve

social and economic autonomy. Projects should have the potential to create an impact within 3 years or less and solutions should offer exponential, sustainable and, if possible, scalable impact. After the grant term is complete, Rising Tide Foundation requires periodic (1-5 years) survey responses to gauge the long-term impact of its investment.

- **Feasibility**

The proposed approach, methodology, logistics, and technologies should be sound and chosen in such a way that successful completion of the project is cost effective and feasible. Aims, outputs, and outcomes should be measurable and likely to be achieved within the timeframe. Applicants should effectively anticipate difficulties and threats whilst considering alternative solutions.

- **Innovation & Originality**

Proposals should explore concepts, challenge existing paradigms that are applied in a new way, and/or employ innovative methodologies to improve an outcome. They should not significantly overlap or duplicate projects that already exist. Potential duplications and/or overlaps should be explained.

- **Budget**

Requested funds should be justified and reasonable. We don't normally fund overhead costs. Requests for travel costs should be clearly defined, planned, and justified. Reasonable travel costs are allowable only if such costs are an integral part of the project.

Funding Information

- **Grant Duration**

Projects can last up to 5 years. Project activation is expected within 6 months after funding notification and direct beneficiary impact must be achieved within 3 years.

- **Long Term Funding**

Creating financial dependencies and raising expectations for funding continuation is avoided. Applicants are challenged to plan out their projects from beginning to end. One-time funding is preferred. Second-time funding is considered under exceptional circumstances.

- **Funding Amount**

Funding amount is assessed based on the project's needs. We do not provide maximum or average award amounts as they tend to vary from project to project.

- **Geographic Focus**

Preference is given to regions where the political infrastructure is robust enough to allow free market principles to expand and grow.

What We Don't Fund

We are unable to support the following funding requests:

- Unrestricted donations
- Direct grants to individuals
- Political campaigns or legislative lobbying efforts
- Projects that exclusively serve religious purposes
- Building projects or renovations, including construction materials and labor costs
- Payment of debts, living costs, travel bursaries, or personal needs
- Organizations that are not tax-exempt
- Projects that do not fit our programmatic strategy
- Organizations that do not share our set of values and principles