



## 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:

#### Letter of Intent (LOI)

As potential breakthrough ideas can occur every day, we accept LOIs from highly qualified and dedicated institutions all year round. LOIs are submitted online via our grant management system, [SmartSimple](#) and are assessed by internal staff and our Advisory Board for overall fit with our funding guidelines.

Only applicants with LOIs deemed most meritorious, falling within our Focus Areas, and aligned with our Freedom Philosophy will be invited to submit full applications.



### 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.

### Grant Review Committee

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

## Selection Criteria

### Impact on 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