

FY 2028 Arlington Community Development Fund

Track 3: Innovation Small Grants Track | Evaluation Criteria

Program Overview and Design: Max 10 Points						
Criteria	Definition	1 (Poor)	2 (Fair)	3 (Good)	4 (Very Good)	5 (Excellent)
<i>Program Design and Community Need</i>	Is the proposed program clearly described? Is the need specific and relevant to Arlington? Is there a clear connection between the need, the population, and the proposed program?	Program is unclear. Need is not defined or lacks relevance. No explanation of how the need is known.	Program or need is vaguely described. Limited explanation of how need was identified. Weak connection to population.	Program and need are generally clear. Some explanation of need (data, experience, or input). Basic connection to population.	Clear description of program and need. Strong explanation of how need is known (local experience, data, or input). Clear connection to population.	Compelling and well-defined program and need. Strong, credible evidence (experience, data, or community input). Clear and logical alignment between need, program, and population.
<i>Population, Service Location, and Access</i>	Is the target population clearly defined? Is the service location appropriate? Are barriers to access identified and addressed?	Population unclear. No location identified. No discussion of barriers or access.	Basic population or location described, but lacks clarity or relevance. Barriers minimally addressed.	Population and location identified. Some explanation of barriers and general approach to addressing them.	Clear population and location. Good understanding of barriers with practical strategies to address them.	Strong and specific understanding of who will be served and why. Location is well-justified. Barriers are clearly identified with thoughtful, well-integrated solutions.

Implementation and Program Results: Max 10 Points						
Criteria	Definition	1 (Poor)	2 (Fair)	3 (Good)	4 (Very Good)	5 (Excellent)
<i>Program Readiness and Capacity</i>	Does the application demonstrate that the organization is prepared to begin implementing the program, or is taking clear and reasonable steps toward implementation? Are roles, next steps, and supports identified, and does the response show a practical path to delivering the program?	No clear plan to implement the program. Roles, steps, and supports are unclear or missing.	Limited description of how the program will be implemented. Key roles, steps, or supports are vaguely described or incomplete.	Basic plan for implementation is described. Some roles, steps, or supports are identified, but detail or clarity may be limited.	Clear and reasonable plan for implementation. Roles, partners, and next steps are identified and show a practical path to launching the program.	Strong and well-defined plan for implementation. Roles, partners, and supports are clearly described and demonstrate readiness or meaningful progress toward delivering the program.
<i>Expected Results (Outputs and Outcomes)</i>	Are outputs and outcomes clearly defined and appropriate? Are they realistic and aligned with program activities? Does the application include clear, measurable indicators and a practical approach for tracking program performance?	Outputs and outcomes are missing or unclear. No distinction between them. No measurable indicators or evaluation approach provided.	Outputs and outcomes are vague or not clearly tied to activities. Distinction between them is unclear. Metrics are present but not measurable or loosely connected to the program.	Outputs and outcomes are identified and generally appropriate. Basic distinction is evident. Includes measurable indicators with general alignment to program activities.	Clear, realistic outputs and outcomes that align with program activities. Distinction is clear. Includes specific, measurable indicators and a reasonable plan for tracking progress.	Well-defined, realistic, and meaningful outputs and outcomes. Strong alignment with program design and clear benefit to participants. Includes clear, practical, and measurable indicators that demonstrate a thoughtful and feasible approach to tracking program performance.

Budget: Max 5 points						
Criteria	Definition	1 (Poor)	2 (Fair)	3 (Good)	4 (Very Good)	5 (Excellent)
Budget and Budget Narrative	Is the budget reasonable, complete, and aligned with program activities? Does the narrative explain how funds will be used?	Budget missing, incomplete, or inconsistent with program. No explanation provided.	Budget included but unclear or poorly aligned. Narrative limited or vague.	Budget is generally complete and aligned. Narrative explains major costs.	Budget is clear and reasonable. Narrative explains how funds support activities.	Budget is clear, realistic, and well-aligned. Narrative clearly connects costs to program activities and demonstrates thoughtful planning.

Scoring Rubric

Score:	Possible Score	
	Program Overview and Design	10
	Implementation and Program Results	10
	Budget	5
	TOTAL POSSIBLE	25