

## Seed Program & FAQs:

<https://grassrootsfund.org/grant-programs/seed-grants>

### Questions?

Contact Tess Beem at [tess@grassrootsfund.org](mailto:tess@grassrootsfund.org)



## Seed Application Scoring Rubric

Seed grants support newly forming community groups in New England with grants between \$700-\$1,000. Seed grants prioritize support for community groups whose work aligns with our [Guiding Practices](#) and are not being reached by other funders. Groups do NOT need 501c3 status or a fiscal sponsor to apply. We do not fund groups who have spent more than \$150,000 (all projects, all programs) in the previous calendar year.

### PROCESS

Below is the rubric Community Grantmakers and staff use to evaluate Seed applications. Every application is discussed and reviewed by a committee of Community Grantmakers and one staff member. The Community Grantmakers make the final decision on funding. The committee is composed of grassroots leaders, many of whom are our past grantees. For more details on our participatory grantmaking process see <https://grassrootsfund.org/decide>.

Applications are scored using the Grassroots Fund's [Guiding Practices](#). In addition, applications are evaluated on the extent to which providing funding would support "Resourcing Community Work." This means the group both leverages local (financial & non-financial) resources and has limited access to grant funding. There is also a category where readers score based on their gut feeling and are encouraged to interrogate their own implicit bias.

### SCORING

In each section, readers rate applications on a scale of 1-4, with 4 indicating that the applicant is excelling in that area. 1 = not at all aligned; 2 = unaligned, 3 = somewhat aligned, 4 = very aligned. Thus, the minimum total score an application can receive is 6 and the maximum is 24. At the bottom, you will see recommended funding levels based on different ranges of scores. These serve as an initial recommendation, the committee makes final decisions about award amounts.

	Score	Notes / Comments
<b>Eligibility considerations</b>	<b>Yes / No</b>	
<b>Budget:</b> Annual spending of no more than \$150,000 (prior calendar year)		
<b>Decision Makers:</b> Two or more organizers actively involved in decision-making on project priorities and actions		
<b>Geographic Scope:</b> Local focus, New England based		
<b>Repeat Applicants and Past Feedback</b> List 3 most recent grants below (ie. "Seed 2024", "Spring Grow 2025")		Insert specific past feedback (if available) AND/OR context about the decision (if given)
1		
2		
3		
<b>Project assessment</b>	<b>1-4</b>	
<b>Rooted Innovation</b>		
Applicant sets priorities informed by the whole community, rather than a small group. The application gives clear examples that: - Group understands the context and placement of their work within their local community. - Group takes a collaborative approach to working with other groups. - Group is working in direct response to identified community needs.		
<b>Shifting Power &amp; Decision-Making</b>		
Applicant practices group governance that intentionally shares power. The application gives clear examples that: - Group leadership directly represents the community. - Group composition is diverse across numerous self-identifiers or demographics. - Group has transparent feedback processes.		
<b>Equity in Participation</b>		
Applicant supports the fullest of all community members. The application gives clear examples that: - Group is prioritizing engagement of traditionally marginalized community groups. - Group is working to understand barriers to participation in their work.		
<b>Centering a Just Transition</b>		
Applicant integrates ecological and social justice in their vision for their community. The application gives clear examples that: - Group is working in intersectional and overlapping ways. - Group is working in regenerative and relationship-based ways. - Group is prioritizing community agency and self-determination.		
<b>Resourcing Community Work</b>		
Applicant faces barriers accessing grant funding otherwise, despite a track record of creatively leveraging resources for their group. The application gives clear examples that: - Group names specific challenges to receiving grant funding (ex. lack of 501c3 status, group operates as an all volunteer-effort, etc). - Group actively seeks in-kind donations and/or relies on knowledge and resources from community members to make its work happen.		
<b>Overall "Gut Feeling"</b>		
Recognizing that our rubric cannot capture everything about this project that might be worth up-lifting, this category speaks to the reader's overall assessment of the project.		

Total score			
Recommendation (%)			
Recommended funding level (\$)			
		<b>Total Score</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
			<b>Funding Level</b>
		21-24	100%
		17-20	85%
		13-16	70%
		1-12	0%
			\$1,000.00
			\$850.00
			\$700.00
			\$0.00