Rural Champion Scoring Rubric

The following are the review criteria the review team will use to score each grant application for the Rural Champion Grant. Each grant will be rated based on the criteria listed and given a score out of one hundred.

	Exemplary	Exceeds Expectations	Meets Expectations	Needs Improvement	Insufficient Evidence
(1) Champion Selection **20 Points Possible**	The application identifies a skilled and engaged, yet underutilized local champion who can dedicate a full year to successfully addressing the community identified challenge. This person has specific skills that will aid in addressing the identified challenge. (18-20 Points)	A champion has been identified as one that could lead this project for a full year and is currently somewhat engaged in this process or this work. Champion background is not directly related to the identified challenge but has time and is a proven volunteer in the community. (15-17 Points)	Multiple champions identified, or champion has not officially accepted offer for rural champion initiative but has been identified. Skills are strong and would likely be successful in leading this project for the full year and has agreed to this year-long term. (11-14 Points)	Champion is already working part-time for the organization or other employer but is not fully utilized or working full-time. Identified champion does not have strong leadership skills or any prior experience in community work or volunteerism but is willing to put forth the effort for the full year. (6-10 Points)	Champion has not been identified or provided in the application, or champions do not have any skills, time, or capacity to lead this project successfully. (0-5 Points)
(2) Identification of a critical challenge and plan **15 Points Possible**	Critical, tangible, and **unique** challenge identified by the community that could not be resolved without dedicated staff, resources, and training. This challenge is significantly hindering community prosperity, growth, or vitality. (14-15 Points)	Somewhat detailed and tangible project that the community has worked on to address but has been unable to make any significant progress. Additional staff and resources are needed to address this issue that is hindering community prosperity. (10-13 Points)	Basic challenge overview provided but unclear explanation for why this project could not be accomplished without outside support and staffing. Rationale for selecting this challenge is not clearly explained or is not a tangible problem that could be solved with additional staffing or resources. (7 -9 Points)	Limited or unclear description of the community challenge or why this was selected. Needs more support and resources from sponsoring agency. Minimal feedback from community identifying challenge. (4-6 Points)	Little to no information about the rationale for selecting the challenge for the grant. Similar challenge has previously been thoroughly addressed through our Rural Champions program in other communities. No feedback from community identifying challenges. (0-3 Points)

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(3) Community Engagement and Support **20 Points Possible**	A compelling and well-detailed plan that was created in partnership with multiple community groups and leaders with multiple opportunities for engagement by residents. Dedicated mentor selected to support champion throughout the project. (18-20 Points)	The narrative provides a clear outline of action steps and people involved in the project with minor gaps in detail. Group or board available to support rural champion throughout grant term. (15-17 Points)	The narrative identifies basic action steps and lists some of the people involved but lacks detail or depth. Some funding or resources have been identified to support champion, and at least a part-time mentor. (11-14 Points)	The narrative is unclear or incomplete in identifying a clear need for the project, lack of engagement with the community for project selection. Support for Champion not addressed in narrative. (6-10 Points)	No community involvement identified in narrative and no action steps mentioned to solve the challenge. Little to no information provided on the people or mentors that will be involved with the project. (0-5 Points)
(4) Capacity **10 Points Possible**	The organization demonstrates strong institutional capacity with dedicated project staff that will help mentor the champion. A clear plan is in place to expand capacity through both staff and volunteer engagement throughout the entire champion year. (10 Points)	The organization shows solid potential with at least part-time staff assigned to the project and some prior grant management experience. The community has an active group of volunteers that will support the champion and help encourage community participation. (8-9 Points)	The organization is emerging or has limited staff time to provide mentorship for the champion but have listed multiple contacts to help support the champion. Community involvement appears minimal for the challenge selection process and to support the champion during the year. (6-7 Points)	Plans for capacity development are either vague or absent, and no specific mentor, volunteer board, or other organization is clearly defined that would support the champion as a mentor throughout the year. (4-5 Points)	The application lacks the necessary information to assess organizational capacity or capability to complete the champion project. More detail is required to evaluate readiness and growth potential. (0-3 Points)

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(5) Funding Need **10 Points Possible**	A compelling and well-detailed narrative that clearly outlines the need for a champion to be dedicated full time to addressing the challenge and why this could not be accomplished without the resources and work of the champion program. (10 Points)	The narrative provides a clear outline of why this project could not be accomplished without a dedicated champion but lacks detail on why this is being addressed now. (8-9 Points)	The narrative identifies basic project funding need but lacks detail or depth on why the champion program is critically needed to address this challenge. (6-7 Points)	The narrative is unclear or incomplete in identifying project funding needs and the need for a single person dedicated to this project for a year. (4-5 Points)	Little to no information is provided on the project funding need, or need for another person to work part or full time on this specific challenge. (0-3 Points)
(6) Project Timeline with Milestones **10 Points Possible**	A comprehensive and highly detailed project timeline with specific, measurable milestones. Champion has agreed to serve for the entire year of the project. (10 Points)	Well-developed project timeline with specific milestones. A few areas may need further clarification or adjustment, but overall, the timeline is solid. Champion has agreed to serve for the entire year of the project. (8-9 Points)	The timeline is sufficient with basic milestones but lacks detail or specificity. The likelihood of successful project completion is adequate. Champion is available to serve for the full year of the project, but no agreement was provided. (6-7 Points)	The timeline is vague or incomplete, with few specific milestones, making it difficult to assess the likelihood of successful completion. Champion is available to serve for the full year, but no agreement was provided. (4-5 Points)	No project timeline or milestones are provided. No agreement or acknowledgement of the year-long commitment by the champion was provided. (0-3 Points)
(7) Project Budget **10 Points Possible**	Highly detailed budget that is comprehensive, realistic, and aligned with project goals. Clear justification of all budget items. (10 Points)	A detailed budget that is mostly realistic and aligned with project goals. Some minor gaps in justification. (8-9 Points)	Basic budget provided with sufficient alignment to project goals but lacking detail or justification for some items. (6-7 Points)	Incomplete or unrealistic budget with significant gaps in alignment to project goals or lack of justification. (4-5 Points)	No budget provided or the budget is severely lacking in detail and justification. (0-3 Points)

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(8) Technical Components **5 Points Possible**	Well-documented support letters, documentation of community input, or documentation of community challenge are provided. Photos, letters of support, or other materials clearly support the narrative. (5 Points)	Support letters, photos and applicable attachments that provide clear support for the project narrative with minor gaps in detail. (4 Points)	Support letters, photos and attachments lack detail and correlation to the project narrative. (3 Points)	Little to no information is provided regarding photos or other supporting documents. Support letters are generic and not specific to the challenge identified in the narrative. (2 Points)	Missing support letters or other documentation that demonstrates a community led decision process related to identification of the challenge. (0-1 Points)
Total: 100 Points Possible					