



## **Advocacy Advance Grants FAQ**

### **General Grant Questions**

#### **How many grant cycles will there be in 2011?**

There will be only one cycle for Model and Capacity Building Grants this year. Rapid Response Grant proposals will be reviewed on an ongoing basis.

#### **How many grants will be awarded in 2011?**

This year, Advocacy Advance will award 2-5 Capacity Building Grant, 2-3 Model Grants, and a maximum of 20 Rapid Response Grants.

#### **What percentage of proposals do you anticipate funding?**

We anticipate receiving roughly 20-30 inquiries and inviting 5-10 organizations to submit full proposals for each grant type.

#### **Can my organization submit an inquiry proposal for both a Capacity Building Grant *and* a Model Grant?**

Yes, your organization can apply for multiple grants. The Advocacy Advance Team will determine which grant type, if any, you should submit a full proposal for.

#### **My organization has already been awarded an Advocacy Advance grant. Can I apply for additional funding?**

While priority may be given to groups that have not received Advocacy Advance funding before, past grantees are welcome to reapply, particularly in the Model Grants category.

#### **What is the application process like?**

There are two phases in the grant cycle. Inquiry proposals – brief yet specific overviews of your campaigns – are due 5pm on April 25<sup>th</sup>. Selected organizations will be notified May 18<sup>th</sup> and asked to submit a full proposal and project budget by June 20<sup>th</sup>.

#### **If my grant proposal is approved, what will the duration of the grant be?**

Grant duration and timeline differs for each of the three categories. Refer to the sections specific to each grant below.

**If my grant proposal is approved, when will I receive the funding?**

The funding timeline differs for each of the three grant categories. Refer to the sections specific to each grant below.

**When do I submit a report on a grant I received?**

Capacity Building Grantees will be required to submit one 6-month report as well as a final report at the end of the year. Model Grantees will submit interim reports every six months (up to five total). In addition, Capacity Building Grantees will be required to submit regular financial reports showing matching funds raised.

**What do I include in my final grant report?**

Grantees will be provided with a final report form that asks about the results of your project, metrics on increased biking and walking, review and setbacks of goals, overall reflections, ways to share results, a budget and description of how the funds were used.

**What other resources are available if my organization does not receive a grant?**

We understand that with limited funding this year, Advocacy Advance Grants will be extremely competitive. If your organization does not receive a grant from us, you are encouraged to look into the other trainings and resources Advocacy Advance provides to increase biking and walking. Action2020 Workshops will provide the critical knowledge to capitalize on funding opportunities at the local, state and federal level. The Alliance for Biking & Walking will tailor two Winning Campaigns Trainings in 2011 to match the specific topics and meet the targeted initiatives of Advocacy Advance. Policy reports and other resources can be found on our [website](#), and Advocacy Advance provides organizations with coaching and technical assistance. In addition, we will help you look for alternative funding opportunities for your campaigns.

**Who do I contact if I have any questions?**

You are encouraged to contact the Advocacy Advance team with any questions you may have. You are encouraged to email Brigid O'Keane, Advocacy Advance Program Manager, at [Brigid@AdvocacyAdvance.org](mailto:Brigid@AdvocacyAdvance.org) or call her at 202-621-5442.

**Model Grant Questions**

**What do you mean by doubling the federal investment in biking and walking?**

State and local decisions determine how federal funds really flow. We want to double the investment in biking and walking in states and MPOs where program choices are being made on how to spend safety, air quality, bridge, and local highway funding. In some states and MPOs we are doing a great job winning these decisions. We want to transfer how they do it to other places. By transferring these

winning strategies we believe we can double the investment in biking and walking in three years with existing and under- or un-utilized funding sources.

**If my grant proposal is approved, what will the duration of the grant be?**

Model Grants are multi-year grants up to three years. The cycle will run from August 1, 2011 to July 31, 2014.

**If my grant proposal is approved, when will I receive the funding?**

Model Grants are multi-year grants. Disbursements will generally be paid twice every year, reliant on the organization meeting its set goals and expectations.

**How much money is available for Model Grants and how many organizations will receive a grant?**

There is a total of \$75,000 available for Model Grants this year. We will fund 2-3 organizations \$20,000-\$50,000 per year for up to 3 years. This will be a very competitive process.

**What are you looking for in a successful application?**

A successful application will include the following elements:

- Identify established or potential partnerships between your organizations, agency staff, and elected officials;
- Explain why your organization and location is best suited for your campaign;
- Present an ambitious plan to *exponentially* increase funding for biking and walking through alternative sources of funding (beyond TE and Safe Routes to School funds);
- Present a well thought-out plan to work closely with Advocacy Advance team and share challenges, solutions, successes with other organizations throughout the entire grant

Review the [grant guidelines](#) for more information.

**Is agency staff (e.g. County Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator) eligible to apply for a Model Grants?**

Advocacy Advance grants are for organizations whose primary purpose is advocacy. If you are an individual or work in a government department, you are not eligible to receive a grant. However, we encourage you to contact your local advocacy group(s) to work together on this issue and prepare an application showing your partnership.

**What are some example campaigns that you would fund?**

Think big! We're looking for creative ideas that will create a big boost to increase public/federal spending to promote bicycling and walking. Think of what the opportunities are that you can capitalize on. The following are just a few examples:

- Campaigns to leverage highway safety funds;
- Campaigns that designate CMAQ dollars for bike/ped projects in your city, region, or state

- Increase staff capacity – hire/fund a staff person to work on this campaign full-time;
- Projects to preserve money that’s been obligated but not yet used;
- You have TE funds to cover a portion of your multi-use path network but your campaign is to pursue other funding opportunities to increase connections (bike lanes, cycle tracks, etc) to complete the network;
- Revise the CMAQ application process so bike/ped projects aren’t competing with other projects for funding (i.e. dedicated funding for a portion of the CMAQ money);
- Take TIGER funds that are already allocated and use them to leverage CMAQ dollars at the MPO level to complete a network that’s partially funded by a TIGER grant

*For more examples, read the [Advocacy Advance reports online](#) – replicate what’s been done or build upon successes. Learn from other organizations and don’t feel like you have to reinvent the wheel.*

**I don’t understand how this process of federal dollars works. How can I learn more?**

Contact the Advocacy Advance team ([info@AdvocacyAdvance.org](mailto:info@AdvocacyAdvance.org)) and we will assist you and help you identify where to get the information you need. In addition, visit the Advocacy Advance website to learn about our [Action2020 Workshops](#) that help train advocates, agency staff, and elected officials navigate this process.

**I’m just learning how federal transportation dollars are used at the regional, state and local level. What do you mean by leveraging federal dollars?**

Look at the funding streams that biking/walking infrastructure or programs are eligible for but are not currently being used. Go after reforms at the state/MPO level to get a policy process to open up that funding.

**Can I use a Model Grant as a local match for current and future federal funds?**

No, Advocacy Advance Model Grants cannot be used as a local match. Your proposal should show how this grant would leverage additional money.

**How do local bonds fit in?**

If a bond fits into a larger campaign or is part of the plan to draw down the federal dollars, your proposal would have a better chance to receive a Model Grant. You can use bonds as a local match for the federal dollars, and it’s valuable to leverage them to increase funding. However, funding a lobbying campaign for bond inclusion would not be an ideal Model Grants proposal. Bond initiatives may be a creative solution, but don’t lose site of the federal funding picture. Rapid Response Grants are more appropriate for a short-term bond campaign.

**Are mountain bike trail projects included in the grant round?**

There is no limitation in this regard, but you are encouraged to think about connectivity (e.g. bike paths to connect with mountain trails), and focus on what will bring in the most funding.

**Can I use grant money for an environmental assessment on a project that was using TE allocation?**

This is not recommended. A better use of the funds would be to run a campaign to reform the requirements that would allow bike/ped projects to be implemented more quickly or be exempted from the environmental review process.

**What is the baseline to measure whether or not we're successful in our goal to increase federal funding? We received ARRA funds that would be very difficult to exceed.**

We're looking to increase/open new funding of federal sources at the state and local levels. We will not evaluate or penalize based upon previous campaigns using ARRA funds. Include your successes in the application.

**What funding source should I look at? What should I build my proposal around?**

Look at your local/state/regional bicycle master plan. Go to the end of the funding section and see what's there besides TE and Safe Routes to School. Review your state transportation improvement project. See what your state is spending and where the funding is coming from. Talk to agency staff to see what they're trying to achieve and what they need public support for. Also review [Advocacy Advance Reports](#) to see other suggested funds. If you need help finding this info, contact the Advocacy Advance team.

**Guideline # 5 is that the campaign will serve as a replicable model. What does that mean?**

Every state has a slightly different way of doing these and we understand there may be challenges with the replicable nature of the grants and how it's applicable in other areas. We are looking for the chance to have this be a transparent process, where you're working closely with the Advocacy Advance team to highlight and share with other advocates challenges you face and how to overcome them, lessons learned, successes, etc. so it's a benefit to other organizations along the way.

**What performance measures are you looking for by the end of the grant part regarding advocacy? How do you value non-monetary advocacy efforts?**

We are looking to increase biking and walking and decrease crashes, using money as the benchmark. Put together a plan that shows the big picture, but don't lose sight of the funding piece. You can propose a campaign to reform the process so more money is being used.

**What are the restrictions regarding lobbying and working with congressional delegation?**

The decisions to where federal funds go are local decisions. There are significant funding opportunities that are un- or under- utilized. Model Grant applications should be targeted on getting the local agencies to work with federal dollars – work with local MPOs, city and state DOTs to figure out how to get more money spent.

Advocacy organizations with 501(c)(3) status can and are encouraged to lobby. For more information on legal activities and restrictions on non-profit organizations, visit the [Alliance for Justice website](#).

## **Capacity Building Grants**

### **If my grant proposal is approved, what will the duration of the grant be?**

Capacity Building Grants are one-year grants (August 1, 2011 – July 31, 2012).

### **If my grant proposal is approved, when will I receive the funding?**

Capacity Building Grants will be disbursed throughout the grant cycle as matching funds are raised. An initial installment of up to 25% of the grant total may be awarded up front to help get things rolling but still must be matched before additional payments are made.

### **How much money is available and how many organizations will receive a grant?**

There is a total of \$25,000 available. We will fund 2-5 organizations between \$5,000-\$15,000 this year. This will be a very competitive process.

### **What are you looking for in a successful application?**

We are looking for proposals that demonstrate a proven track record, capacity to achieve the proposed work plan, presentation of 2-3 clear and winnable campaigns, and a plan to further leverage matching grants. In addition, we would like to support organizations that, through this grant, will build organizational capacity with increased/dedicated staffing, have a complimentary campaign to leverage federal funding, will build public support, political power, media coverage, and the organizations' infrastructure. Review the [grant guidelines](#) for more information.

### **What are some example campaigns that you would fund?**

We're interested in the innovative projects that will be implemented through this grant and the matching funds received. These can be safety programs, bike education, the passing of legislation and, in particular, we are encouraging organizations to look into ways to attain or leverage underused funding opportunities and infrastructure improvements. We encourage you to look at some of the [campaigns of past grantees](#) for examples.

### **Can a membership or fundraising plan be one of our campaigns?**

This is not recommended, as building membership or general fundraising is not a campaign. They are essential elements in organizational development and you should include your membership goals, outreach strategy, and fundraising plan in your proposal, but not under Part (B) of the inquiry proposal form.

**Looking at the accomplishments of past grantees, are there any particular trends of successful outcomes?**

In addition to attaining success in a campaign, we are interested in grant outcomes that are replicable and can be shared with other organization. This may include reports, resources, lessons learned, advocacy tools, hosting trainings, speaking at mutual aid calls, etc.

**Can my organization submit more than one Capacity Building Grant application? Should we submit an application for each campaign we plan to work on?**

An organization should submit only one Capacity Building Grant application. Describe the multiple campaigns you are working on in the inquiry form.

**Can my organization submit an inquiry proposal for both a Capacity Building Grant *and* a Model Grant?**

Yes! But we do encourage you to contact Brigid O’Keane at 202-621-5442 or [Brigid@AdvocacyAdvance.org](mailto:Brigid@AdvocacyAdvance.org) if you need assistance figuring out which grant type might be most ideal for you to apply to.

**What are examples of the match?**

Matching funds can be raised through a variety of sources including donations, new membership dues, foundation support, and sponsorships. These should be new funds above what you already receive or have dedicated so you are building the funding capacity of your organization overall.

**Will we get extra points if our proposal shows matching funds that exponentially exceed our grant request?**

It excites us to see ambitious proposals and matching goals. However, these goals should be realistic and accompanied by a clear plan for meeting the anticipated match.

**Can we use a monetary value of volunteer hours in our matching amount?**

No. We appreciate how valuable hours volunteered by your organization’s members are, but we want to help you build your fiscal resources and so only monetary matches will be counted.

**Can the Advocacy Advance Capacity Building Grant be used as a match for a grant already received?**

No. Capacity Building Grants are matching grants intended to leverage *additional* funding.

**I am confused about Part (A) vs. Part (B) of the Inquiry Proposal form. What is the difference between strengthening the organization and the proposed campaigns?**

Part (A) of the Inquiry Proposal form gives us background information about your goals regarding your internal organizational development and capacity in general.

This is important for us to know when evaluating applications because we want to see the big picture of your organization. Part (B) addresses the specific deliverables that you want to accomplish with the support of this grant. They are the external *campaigns* your organization is/plans to work on. Remember, campaigns are winnable and have a specific timeframe.

**Does grant money going towards staff have to support the work of the executive director? Could we instead hire a membership person, for example?**

Hiring staff isn't necessary if your organization currently has positions that can take on these projects, and grant money can be used to hire another staff member rather than to support the work of the ED. You should be clear in your application about how your campaigns would tie into the role of current or future positions, and how any gaps would be covered by staff, including the ED.

**What about hiring a part-time consultant or administrative assistant?**

Consultants can be valuable on specific needs, but don't necessarily build the organization's capacity since they are not hired on as long-term staff. We understand the value of bringing on administrative assistance to help a half-time executive director (for example) focus on the campaign issues, but, again, encourage moving in the direction of having or hiring a full-time executive director.

## **Rapid Response Grants**

**When can I apply for a Rapid Response Grant?**

Now! Proposals are accepted on an ongoing basis.

**If my grant proposal is approved, what will the duration of the grant be?**

There is no set timeline for Rapid Response Grants, but we anticipate most campaigns should be for 2-6 months.

**If my grant proposal is approved, when will I receive the funding?**

Funding, if approved, will be paid within one month.

**What are you looking for in a successful application?**

Ideal Rapid Response grant proposals will show that the opportunity faced by your organization to win, increase, or protect funding is immediate and within a specific timeframe and proposes a campaign that is winnable with measurable results.

Refer to the [grant guidelines](#) for more information.

**I have a campaign that needs funding, but it is to secure state/local funding, not federal funding. Can I still apply for a Rapid Response Grant?**

Yes, you can apply for a Rapid Response Grant to win, increase, or preserve state/local funding for biking and walking projects. Your application will be even

stronger if you make a tie with federal funding, and how this grant can leverage additional investment.

### **What are examples of campaigns?**

Rapid Response Grants are intended to help short-term campaigns or push campaigns into the end-zone. Some examples include:

- Opportunities to increase Enhancements, HSIP, CMAQ or other federal program funding sources through inclusion on TIP/STIP
- Campaigns centered around transportation bonds or ballot initiatives that affect state, regional or local transportation funding.
- A short-order campaign, proposal, webinar, trainer, expert, etc. to help attain and spend public funding
- Development of specialized tools and materials to reach targeted audiences who will influence the decision for increased funding for biking and walking
- Campaigns to preserve existing allocations of public funding at risk of being cut

### **Where can I get more information about the Advocacy Advance partnership and available grants?**

Visit our [website](#) or contact Brighid at [Brighid@AdvocacyAdvance.org](mailto:Brighid@AdvocacyAdvance.org) or 202-621-5442.