Western New York Foundation  
Letter of Intent (LOI) Competitive Grants Question Guide

The purpose of this guide is to help develop and define your LOI narratives. Answer to your best ability, understanding that some of these questions may not be relevant to your organization. You do not need to repeat the question unless it is necessary for clarity.

Organization Narrative

Organization Mission Statement - Clearly state your mission statement.

Organizational Background - Please provide details about your organization's mission, goals and growth objectives. Include any distinguishing characteristics and factors that contribute to organizational excellence.

Programming - Explain how programming is aligned with the organization's mission and goals. Include any distinguishing characteristics and factors that contribute to programmatic excellence. Outline the organization's process for evaluating program effectiveness and measuring program impact. Describe how the organization assesses program relevance to current community and client needs.

Strategic Plan - Is there a planning document associated with this project? If yes, please upload the plan in the Optional section of the application.

Collaboration and Community Support - Who are your community partners? How does the organization work collaboratively with other non-profit organizations? How do you determine if there is an overlap of services, and if identified, how do you address this?

Community Impact - How do you know whether you are making an impact in your community and what evidence do you have to support this?

Optional: You may upload any documents of your choice supporting this organizational narrative.

Project Narrative

Request Description - Please provide a detailed description of your proposed capacity building or organizational restructuring request. What kind of organizational assessment has been done and by whom? What are the organizational opportunities or challenges that this project will address? Be specific as to how this request will develop the strength and effectiveness of your organization and why this is crucial to your organization at this time. How will any subsequent operating costs be financed in the future? What further action will be taken if the Western New York Foundation is not able to fund the full amount requested?

Relevance to Western New York Foundation - Explain how this request meets our guideline criteria and outcome goals.
**Project Oversight** - Who will implement the project? What is his/her experience in this area? Explain why this project is a priority for this person and how you plan to avoid distraction with competing priorities and other urgent work distractions?

**Board Support and Commitment** - Discuss the process you conducted to initiate and advance this capacity-building grant idea with the board of your organization. Demonstrate that the board is committed to the effort.

**Developing and Leveraging Partnerships** - Explain how this capacity building request might attract new financial partners or leverage philanthropic dollars. Explain how this capacity building request might develop strategic partnering opportunities. Describe how it might strengthen your agency’s ability to work with a broader range of constituents and allies.

**Outcome and Evaluation Narrative**

**Outcomes** - What are the top three specific outcomes your organization hopes to achieve? Outcomes should include the effects on the organization's overall operation, programming, and clients (change that will occur) because of the action(s) taken.

**Project Evaluation** - How will you determine if the improvements to your systems or infrastructure resulted in a stronger and more effective organization? Describe the organizational assessment that you will undertake post-project and how the results will be reported to us?