

# Innovative Service Development Grant Rubric

Applications that repeat content across sections, fail to follow section instructions, and/or do not clearly distinguish between need, design, and innovation may receive reduced scores across affected sections.

## **EVIDENCE OF NEED (0–10 points)**

### **System Gaps & Existing Services (0–4)**

- 4: Specific gap clearly defined; strong understanding of existing services and limitations. Clearly describes how the current project is addressing previously identified gaps and/or identifies remaining or newly emerging gaps that the proposed continuation will address.
- 2–3: General gap; limited understanding of existing services. Provides limited information about how the project is addressing previously identified gaps.
- 0–1: Vague or does not distinguish from existing or past services. Does not provide any information related to the current project.

### **Impacted Population, Trip Purpose, Scale and Urgency of Need (0–3)**

- 3: Clearly identifies specific population and/or trip purpose with meaningful detail and, the scale of urgency of the need
- 2: Identified but lacks detail
- 0–1: General or unclear

### **Supporting Data & Documentation (0–3)**

- 3: Strong, relevant data with clear citations
- 2: Some data, weak connection
- 0–1: Minimal or no support

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION & IMPLEMENTATION (0–15 points)**

### **Service Design & Coverage (0–5)**

- 5: Clear, complete description (service, area, hours, destinations)  
Changes to the existing project, if applicable, are clear and easy to identify. A brief summary of the services provided, and riders served to date was included.
- 3–4: Mostly clear description of service with minor gaps
- 1–2: Limited detail
- 0: Missing or unclear

### **Operational Plan (0–5)**

- 5: Clear process for trip request, scheduling, service delivery, and outreach
- 3–4: Some gaps
- 1–2: Minimal detail
- 0: Missing

### **Rider Eligibility Process (0–5)**

- 5: Clear and Complete - Defines eligibility criteria (e.g., age, disability, income) and outlines a step-by-step process, including intake, verification, staff roles and recordkeeping
- 3–4: Partially defined – Includes some criteria or process steps but lacks detail
- 1–2: Vague – Provides minimal detail; criteria and process are unclear or not well explained
- 0: Missing – No eligibility process described

### **PROJECT INNOVATION (0–25 points)**

#### **Type and Degree of Innovation (0–10)**

- 9-10: Clearly new or significantly different service or approach; not currently available in service area
- 6-8: Meaningful improvement or enhancement to existing services (e.g., expanded service days/hours, new geographic coverage, or improved coordination), including continued delivery of an approved innovative service model that remains distinct from standard services.
- 3-5: Limited or moderate change to an existing service model with some impacted on rider experience
- 1-2: Minimal change; largely replicates existing or previously funded service
- 0: No meaningful change or not described.

#### **Clarity & Specificity of Innovation (0–7)**

- 6-7: Clear, specific, and well defined; innovation and how it differs from existing services is easy to understand
- 4-5: Generally clear but lacks some detail or distinction from existing services
- 2-3: Vague or only partially described; limited explanation of how it differs
- 1: Very minimal or unclear description
- 0: Not described

#### **Connection to Identified Need (0–8)**

- 7-8: Strong, direct connection to identified transportation need(s); innovation clearly addresses a gap in existing services
- 5-6: Good connection to need; addresses a service gap or limitation
- 3-4: Some connection, but not fully developed or clearly tied to a gap
- 1–2: Weak or unclear connection to need
- 0: No connection to need

### **PROPOSED OUTCOMES (0–15 points)**

#### **Measurable Outcomes (0–4)**

- 4: Specific, measurable outcomes in addition to trips/riders (e.g., access, reliability, wait time, mobility improvements); for existing projects, includes outcomes that reflect continuation or improvement based on prior performance
- 2-3: Some outcomes defined but partially output-focused or incomplete
- 1: Mostly outputs only (e.g., trips)
- 0: Missing or incomplete

**Reliability of Projections (0–5)**

- 5: Projections clearly supported by prior data, reports, or documented assumptions; data is available for collection.
- 3-4: Some justification
- 1-2: Weak or assumption-based estimates
- 0: Unsupported

**Evaluation & Data Capacity (0–6)**

- 6: Clear plan to collect, track, and evaluate performance (metrics, methods, reporting); existing projects demonstrate established data collection and reporting
- 4-5: General plan with limited detail
- 2-3: Minimal tracking/evaluation detail
- 0–1: Missing or unclear

**PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY/CONTINUATION PLAN (0-25 points)****Sustainability Approach (0–10)**

- 8-10: Clear, well-defined approach to address sustainability
- 5-7: General approach described but lacks full detail or feasibility
- 2-4: Minimal, vague, or largely unsupported approach
- 1: Mentioned but incomplete or not developed (e.g., brief statement without explanation)
- 0: Not addressed

**Funding Strategy (0–5)**

- 5: Specific funding sources identified OR clear explanation of how the project will be sustained within existing resources.
- 3–4: Potential funding sources identified OR general explanation of internal absorption.
- 1–2: Mentions funding or cost coverage without detail.
- 0: No financial sustainability approach identified.

**Integration into Current Operations(0–5)**

- 5: Clearly integrated into ongoing systems, operations, or partner systems
- 3–4: Some integration planned but not fully defined
- 1–2: Limited or unclear
- 0: Not addressed

**Feasibility (0–5)**

- 5: Sustainability plan is supported by commitments, prior progress, or concrete implementation steps
- 3–4: Reasonable but limited supporting evidence
- 1–2: Weak or uncertain
- 0: Not feasible or unsupported

## **OTHER REQUIRED ELEMENTS (0–10 points)**

### **Budget (0–4)**

- 4: Complete, reasonable, and justified
- 2–3: Adequate
- 0–1: Missing or unclear

### **Rates / Cost Structure (0–3)**

- 3: Clear, reasonable, and supported
- 1–2: Some concerns
- 0: Missing or incorrect

### **Project Personnel (0–2)**

- 2: Key staff with relevant experience
- 1: Some gaps
- 0: Missing

### **Local Match (0–1)**

- 1: Clearly identified
- 0: Missing

## **COLLABORATION & PARTNERSHIP (+5 BONUS)**

### **Partners Identified (0–2)**

- 2: Relevant partners clearly identified (e.g., agencies, nonprofits, healthcare, employers) that align with project goals
- 1: Some partners identified but limited relevance or unclear connection
- 0: No partners identified

### **Roles & Commitments (0–3)**

- 3: Clear description of each partner's role, responsibilities, and level of commitment
- 2: Roles described but lack detail or commitment is unclear
- 1: Minimal or vague description of roles
- 0: Not described