Robison Foundation
for Jewish Elders

Applicant Guide

This document was created to help your organization prepare a strong grant application.

The mission of the Robison Foundation for Jewish Elders (RFJE) is to enhance the lives of elders in our Jewish community by supporting their social, spiritual and physical well-being.

Our commitment to our community is to build an enduring organization with strong, thoughtful grantmaking practices. These practices will reflect the values of Tzedakah (righteous giving), Chesed (loving-kindness), and B'tzelem Elohim (all are worthy of being treated with dignity and respect). Our goal is to strengthen and support the community, encouraging active engagement and meaningful collaboration. We seek to achieve this by allocating funds according to best practices in philanthropy and ensuring that those funds create the greatest possible impact.
To demonstrate our commitment to the community, we are choosing to move resources into the community — because we believe that change happens when we act together and learn together. In the future, the application process and funding priorities may look different as we learn more about the community's needs from our partnership with stakeholders and grantees.

In 2026, we will be conducting a series of community conversations to better understand the needs of older adults and their caregivers. We are listening deeply to understand the most urgent needs and the most exciting opportunities. The insights we gather will guide our future grantmaking and shape our long-term vision. We expect our priorities to grow and evolve as we learn, and we are eager to partner with those who are ready to imagine bold solutions and build a stronger, more connected future together for our elders.

At this time, we are especially interested in supporting efforts that focus on:

- Creative transportation solutions
- Accessible and reliable programs that nurture the social, spiritual, physical, and mental well-being of elders
- Cross-organizational collaboration and shared staffing models
- Innovative approaches to programs, services, or delivery methods
- Programs that result in direct financial assistance for under-resourced elders

Grant Application and Funding Process

- You must submit a full grant application before the deadline. No exceptions will be made for late applications
- Award recipients must sign and return the Grant Agreement and a W9. Following that, RFJE will release the funds to grantees.
- When grantees complete their program/project, they must submit a Final Report. This report will be no later than one year following notification of your grant award.
- Organizations are strongly encouraged to contact Robison Foundation of Jewish Elders Executive Director, Sonia Marie Leikam at soniamarie@rfje.org to schedule a phone

session before submitting the full grant application to discuss your proposal and to strengthen your application.

Review Criteria/Rubric

The Grant Review Committee will review each application thoroughly. The criteria below provide an overview of the key elements that the committee will be assessing as they review your application.

Criteria	Key Questions	Score Range
1. Quality & Creativity	• Does the proposal address one or more of RFJE's priority areas? • Are the project leaders and partners well-qualified? • If continuing an existing program, is there evidence of past success? • Is the program practical, innovative, and feasible (considering space, transportation, accessibility)?	1–5
2. Community Benefit & Impact	• How many Jewish elders (and others) will be served? • Does the project foster collaboration with any other agencies/organizations and create efficiencies? • Will it have meaningful, long-term benefits for elders and the community?	1–5
3. Planning & Organizational Capacity	• Is the project clearly described with clear measurable goals and objectives which match the project activities? • Does the proposal explain how this program will specifically reach Jewish seniors/caregivers? • Does the organization have the infrastructure, experience, and staff capacity to deliver? • Can funds be implemented within the next year? • Is there a strong track record of success (if previously funded)?	1–5
4. Budget & Financial Stewardship	• Is the budget realistic, responsible, and aligned with the project's scale and impact? • Does the quality and quantity of community impact align with the dollars requested? • Could the project succeed if partially funded? • Does the applicant have additional resources or other funding sources including in-kind support?	1–5

Scoring Guide:
1 = Weak / missing information
3 = Adequate but could be stronger
5 = Excellent, fully meets or exceeds expectations

Tips on Grant Writing

What are Goals?

We would like you to think of your goal as an overall statement of what you wish to accomplish i.e. the final impact or outcome that you wish to bring about. This should obviously link back to the overall problem described in your proposal. You may want to use words such as reduce, decrease, create, improve, increase.

Example 1: Decrease the number of Jewish seniors suffering from social isolation in Washington county.
Example 2: Increase the ability of homebound Jewish seniors to maintain their physical strength, balance, and mobility.

What are Objectives?

Measurable objectives are specific, quantitative and have a timeframe.

For example:

- "By December, 2026, at least 40 older adults will each have received at least 50 personal points of contact to reduce social isolation."
- "By March 30, 2025, clients in the program will indicate a 50% increase in their ability to access needed resources for medical care."
- "By the end of December, 2023, at least 35 Jewish seniors will be engaged as community educators and will lead over 250 hours of courses or workshops in their areas of specialty."

Suggestion: Use this model: By [date], [quantitative measure/number of people] will have [important achievement].

Creating The Project Budget

Feel free to use your organization's existing template for generating project budgets, but here are the types of things we would like to see included:

Revenues for the project, such as:
• donations from individuals (total combined $ amount)
• donations from corporations/sponsors or other grant funders
• Government grants
• In-kind donations and estimated dollar value

• fees your organization will receive as part of the program (i.e. if clients or participants pay any tuition, ticket or fees as part of the services provided) • funds your organization will internally contribute to the project out of its existing budget
• Loans or other financing

Expenses for the project, such as:
• Staff time- Only calculate the percentage of staff time that will be specifically working on this project. Please be aware that if the project appears to be an activity that should be part of your organization's standard activities, it may not be funded. Make sure to indicate if you will need to hire any staff specifically for this project and if relevant, include titles/project roles of staff.
• Supplies, materials
• Transportation and/or delivery
• Food costs related to the project
• Professional services for program (therapists, speakers, educators)
• Professional services for operating program (legal, accounting, consulting)
• Space (rental, improvements/modifications, construction) specific to the program
• Equipment
• Operations (prorated to the project, and/or for upgrades necessary to implement the project)
• Insurance (if project specific)
• Staff training, professional development (if project specific)
• Postage
• Marketing/advertising