



Tips for Quality Clay Grant Applications (Programs in the age of COVID!)

As we are all aware, the current pandemic has challenged everyone to rethink programming because of social distancing mandates. Clay Grant programs can still happen, but may require some additional creativity. From online webinars, to video watch parties, to book discussion groups, and even online commercial leadership training programs, there are an ever-increasing number of ways to bring leaders together when they cannot gather in person. The basics of the Clay Grant programs are the same. WHERE and HOW may be different.

- **The program or service must advance the cause of leadership.**
 - Clay Grant are designed to encourage circles to create or enhance leadership development programs on the campus. This is NOT a service project fund. If the grant is for a service project, the funds should be targeted at how leadership is expanded or developed through the project.
- **Provide a basic overview of the program you plan to put on using Clay Grant funding.**
 - Be sure you include at the beginning of the application a brief description of the program or event. Use a sentence or two to say what the event involves, such as, “The circle will hold a panel discussion open to the entire university for which the topic will be women in leadership. It will last about an hour and there will be an informal reception and networking event to follow.” [Note – this kind of program can easily happen via online webinar platform.]
- **Funds cannot be used to purchase items that will be donated to non-profits.**
 - Clay Grant funds may not be used to buy supplies for another organization such as food for a shelter or toys for Toys for Tots. The funds must directly support the program.
- **Clearly explain the outcomes of the programming and how the funds will be spent.**
 - The more detail the better. Explain what will be purchased. If the program is a leadership banquet, the provide an itemized list of the program expenses including food, printing, and speakers.
- **Consider longevity of the programs you are suggesting.**

- If you are planning a new program, provide some idea of how the grant might help it to be a continuing program. If this is a long-standing program, explain how the funds are contributing to the enhancement of the event.
- **How much of your circle will be engaged in this event?**
 - A Clay Grant should support ACTIVE circle participation. Using a Clay Grant to assist with the funding of a larger program is acceptable but only if the circle can demonstrate how OΔK members will participate in the planning and benefit from the program.
- **OΔK should not be just providing funding to others' events without contributing to the planning, execution and evaluation.**
 - Similar to the previous item, OΔK members must be involved in the program or service that the Clay Grant supports. It is not acceptable for the circle to simply write a \$500 check to another organization to be a co-sponsor. The OΔK circle must be involved in the planning and execution of the program.
- **Fully explain your answers – aim for a few hundred words in your responses.**
 - Be detailed yet concise. Explain in as few words as possible but make sure you explain fully what you plan to do. Most Clay Grants can be explained in 500 words or less for all parts.
- **Make best use of your available resources on campus – partnerships should be secured before submitting the grant, if you are planning to partner with organizations or offices on campus.**
 - Remember, OΔK was founded on the concept of collaboration. Circles that plan leadership events that involve a wide variety of campus groups are more likely to receive grant funding even if the funding only covers a fraction of the total event cost.
- **Assume the review committee knows NOTHING of your program and fully explain as if you are talking with someone who has never seen your circle or initiatives before.**
 - Members of the OΔK National Awards Committee all have higher education backgrounds in some form. They do not, however, know your campus, your circle, or your leaders. Write the proposal so that someone even outside of OΔK will understand what you want to achieve and how you will achieve it.
- **Use the Five Question Test when writing the proposal**
 - Who – audience, planners, funders
 - What – type of event, program, project
 - When – time, date proposed (more than one event?)
 - Where – location(s) (more than one location?) or platforms (Zoom, YouTube Live?)
 - Why – what will be achieved through this program, how will the participants and leaders gain leadership knowledge and skills from the event.

Other things to check before submitting:

- Does this grant require approval from the sponsored programs or human factors review board on your campus?
- Are campus organizations permitted to receive funding from outside organizations?
- What permissions for space, webinar platform, food, publicity, etc. are required? If you receive the grant, will you be able to hold the event or program?
- If the program is planned to be in person, do you have a virtual option as a back up plan? Be sure to note this in the grant application details.