



## Tips for Quality Clay Grant Applications

- **Applications should be developed collaboratively.**
  - Involve your circle officers, including advisors, in developing the application. Ensure that all parties have a chance to review the application before it is submitted, not only to check things like grammar and spelling, but to be sure that the application meets your institution's programming requirements and rules.
- **The program must advance the cause of leadership.**
  - Clay Grant are designed to encourage circles to create or enhance leadership development programs. This is NOT a service project fund. If the grant will support a service project, the program brief should make very clear how leadership development is the primary focus of the program.
- **Assume the review committee knows NOTHING of your program, and fully explain as if you are talking with someone who has never stepped foot on your campus.**
  - Most members of the National Awards Committee 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.
- **Clearly explain how the funds will be spent.**
  - A detailed budget breakdown is required as part of the application. If the program is a leadership conference, for example, then provide an itemized list of the program expenses including food, printing, and speaker fees.
- **Grant funds cannot be used to make a donation, or to purchase items that will be donated to non-profits.**
  - Clay Grant funds must support program costs, and may not be used to donate to a cause, or to buy supplies for another organization such as toys for Toys for Tots.
- **Consider longevity of the program you are suggesting.**
  - If you are planning a new program, provide an idea of how the grant will help it to be a continuing program. If this is a long-standing program, explain how the funds are contributing to the enhancement and continuation of the event.

- **How much of your circle will be engaged in this event? OΔK will not provide funding to others' events without members contributing to the planning, execution and evaluation.**
  - A Clay Grant should support active circle participation. It is not acceptable for the circle to only be a co-sponsor without assisting in the planning and implementation of the event. Circle members simply planning to attend the grant-funded event is not sufficient. The application must demonstrate how OΔK members will participate in the planning and benefit from the program.
- **Fully explain your answers – make the most of the available word count.**
  - All the committee has to consider when deciding how to allocate funding are the applications. There is not an opportunity for follow-up questions, so if the committee is left asking lots of questions after reading your application, it is unlikely that your program will be chosen for funding. Each written statement has a maximum of 500 words. Don't be repetitive or add in details for sake of just adding in more words, but do provide the committee with plenty of information so all their questions are answered.
- **Make best use of your available resources on campus – partnerships should be secured before submitting the grant application.**
  - Collaboration is one of OΔK's five core values, and these partnerships help to build the brand and reputation of the circle. A benefit of OΔK is that its collegiate, faculty and staff members represent many areas on campus. Make the most of available partners, and detail these collaborations in your application.
- **Use the Five Question Test when writing the proposal**
  - *Who* – audience, planners, funders
  - *What* – type of event, program, project
  - *When* – time, date proposed
  - *Where* – location(s) and/or platforms (Zoom, YouTube Live)
  - *Why* – what will be achieved through this program, and 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? This approval is often required **before the application is submitted.**
  - 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 backup plan? Be sure to note this in the grant application details.