

2027 TMF Scoring Criteria

These guidelines help grant reviewers identify weak responses and evaluate applications fairly. Reviewers should look for clear evidence of community need, strong organizational capacity, detailed implementation plans, and measurable outcomes.

Each section of the scoring rubric guides reviewers in assigning points based on specificity, clarity, feasibility, and connection to community needs. The packet ensures all reviewers use consistent standards and understand what strong digital equity projects include.

1. Grant Reviewer Guidelines

A. Specificity and Detail

Strong applications describe the organization's unique experience, named partners, specific programs, and clear connection to the target community. Weak applications use generic statements that could fit any organization.

B. Community Evidence and Customization

Strong applications include specific data, community feedback, and clear descriptions of who will be served and why. Weak applications only mention vague barriers without evidence or population details.

C. Implementation and Feasibility

Strong applications include detailed timelines, staffing plans, outreach strategies, and program schedules. Weak applications describe activities without explaining how they will be carried out.

D. Measurable Outcomes and Evaluation

Strong applications describe clear metrics, tools, and processes for collecting and analyzing data. Weak applications rely on broad statements such as "participants will gain confidence."

E. Budget Clarity and Reasonableness

Strong applications explain each budget line, provide justification, and describe how funds will be monitored. Weak applications only mention general categories like staff time or devices.

3. Scoring Rubric

A. Organization Background and Partnerships (10 Points)

- 0-3: Generic description of organization with few details.
- 4-6: Basic explanation with limited connection to digital equity.
- 7-8: Clear explanation of mission, community role, and partnerships.
- 9-10: Strong, specific description of mission, equity role, partners, and unique experience.

B. Project Summary (20 Points)

- 0-5: General barriers listed without evidence.
- 6-10: Some description of population served but lacking detail.
- 11-15: Clear explanation of community need and target population.
- 16-20: Strong evidence, detailed population description, and clear rationale.

C. Project Plan (30 Points)

- 0-10: Activities listed with few details.
- 11-20: Basic staffing and timeline provided but missing depth.
- 21-25: Clear timeline, staffing plan, and outreach strategy.
- 26-30: Highly detailed plan including roles, timeline, outreach, devices, and curriculum.

D. Project Impact (20 Points)

- 0-5: Outcomes vague or not measurable.
- 6-10: Some evaluation methods listed but lacking clarity.
- 11-15: Clear metrics and tools described.
- 16-20: Strong, equitable evaluation plan with detailed data collection and analysis.

E. Budget & Community Match Narrative (20 Points)

- 0-5: Budget described generally with no justification.
- 6-10: Some explanation provided but lacking monitoring details.
- 11-15: Clear and reasonable costs with match described.
- 16-20: Strong justification, detailed match, and strong monitoring plan.

4. Evaluating AI-Generated Responses

AI responses are too general and could apply to almost any digital equity project. They do not explain what makes the organization uniquely prepared or experienced. They also fail to show how the project is customized to the specific community the organization serves.

The responses describe broad concepts, like offering classes or providing devices, but do not explain how these activities will be implemented day-to-day. Without details about staff roles, outreach strategies, timelines, methods, and evaluation tools, reviewers cannot fully understand the project's feasibility or impact.

The responses lack measurable outcomes, data sources, partnerships, or concrete evidence of community need. As a result, the application appears generic instead of demonstrating a strong, community-centered project.

1. Organization Background and Partnerships

Our organization works to make sure everyone in our community can use technology in their daily lives. We focus on digital equity by helping people who have limited access to devices, internet service, or computer skills. We serve low-income families, seniors, immigrants, English-language learners, and people with disabilities.

Many residents face barriers like high internet costs, broken or outdated devices, low digital confidence, or difficulty understanding online forms. To address this, we run digital skills classes, one-on-one help sessions, free device support, and workshops on internet safety. Digital equity is a key part of our mission because people need technology to apply for jobs, help their children with school, talk with doctors, and stay connected.

We partner with the local library, two neighborhood service centers, the school district's family support team, and several nonprofits that serve seniors and immigrant families. These partners help us reach more residents and make sure our services fit with the wider network of community support. Our role in this network is to provide hands-on digital help and teach skills that other partners cannot offer.

2. Project Summary

Many people in our community still struggle to get online or use basic digital tools. The biggest barriers include slow or unreliable internet, old or broken devices, and limited digital skills. Recent surveys from our library and neighborhood service center show that more than 40% of families in the area do not have a working laptop at home, and many say they feel nervous using online government or health forms.

We chose this project location because it serves a neighborhood with some of the lowest internet access rates in Seattle. Most residents live in older apartment buildings or shared housing, and many are immigrants, seniors, or families with young children. These groups have told us directly that they need more digital support.

The project will help residents with schoolwork, job applications, medical appointments, and connecting with family. By improving access to devices, internet, and digital skills, we will make everyday tasks easier and reduce stress for hundreds of people.

3. Project Plan

This project is an expansion of our current digital help program. We will add more classes, more open lab hours, and more one-on-one sessions. The project team includes two digital instructors with experience teaching adults, one bilingual community navigator, and one tech support volunteer who helps repair devices. All staff will complete a two-day onboarding training focused on curriculum, privacy, and working with residents who have low digital confidence.

Our timeline includes:

- **Month 1:** Outreach, registration, and device distribution
- **Months 2–11:** Weekly classes, small-group lessons, one-on-one support, and monthly community workshops
- **Quarterly:** Progress check-ins and data review
- **Month 12:** Final evaluation and reporting

Outreach will be led by our navigator, who has strong relationships with immigrant families. We will use flyers, text messages, partner referrals, and community events to recruit participants. To address outreach challenges, we will offer materials in multiple languages and visit nearby apartment buildings.

Devices such as laptops and hotspots will be loaned to participants who need them for school, work, or health. Digital literacy lessons will cover basic computer use, email, job searches, video calls, and how to access city services. Internet access will be provided through our upgraded WiFi network and hotspot lending program.

4. Project Impact

Our goal is to help residents build confidence, use technology independently, and reach long-term goals like stable employment, better access to health care, and improved school support for their children. We expect participants to increase their digital skills and be able to complete important online tasks on their own.

We will evaluate the project using surveys, attendance records, skill checklists, and feedback conversations. Staff will collect the data and review it monthly. We will measure success by tracking improvements in skills, device access, and how often participants can complete tasks without extra help. Our data methods are simple, fair, and designed so all participants can share what they learned, even if English is not their first language.

5. Budget & Community Match Narrative

The project budget includes staff time, devices, internet upgrades, class materials, translation, outreach, and evaluation. Each part of the budget supports daily project activities, like teaching classes, helping residents one-on-one, and providing devices and internet access.

Our community match includes donated space from the neighborhood center, volunteer hours from two tech helpers, and shared outreach support from our partner organizations. This match lets us reach more people and reduces the cost of running the project.

The requested costs are reasonable because they pay for essential items that directly support residents' digital needs. We will track spending through monthly budget reviews, receipts, and an internal approval system to make sure funds are used correctly. We also save money by sharing space, partnering with local groups, and using volunteers whenever possible.