

History

Bikes Belong Coalition is sponsored by members of the U.S. Bicycle Industry. Our mission is to put more people on bicycles more often. The grants program, founded in 1999, was the first major, on-going initiative undertaken by the Bikes Belong Coalition.

Historically, the grants program strived to put more people on bicycles more often by funding important and influential facilities projects that leveraged TEA-21 money and built momentum for bicycling. These projects included bike paths, lanes, and routes, as well as mountain bike trails and BMX facilities.

At the end of 2002, the Bikes Belong board of directors decided to broaden the mandate of the grants program to include education and advocacy projects in addition to bicycle facilities. These important initiatives range from bicycling safety, youth and adult education, and encouragement programs that promote ridership growth, to projects that focus on advocacy and strengthen bicycle advocacy groups.

Strategic Plan

The Bikes Belong Board of Directors developed this Grants Program Strategic Plan to ensure overall alignment with Bikes Belong's mission. Please keep the strategic plan in mind as you develop a proposal.

Mission of the Grants Program: To put more people on bicycles more often.

Vision: A network of communities throughout the United States where people of all ages will have the accommodation and ability to bicycle for recreation and transportation.

Values:

- Bikes belong everywhere—on roads, trails and paths, on transit, and at the workplace, schools, and other destinations.
- Bicycling is the best activity and form of transportation in the world.
- There are diverse approaches we can take to generate more bicycle ridership. These include:
 - Building bicycle facilities
 - Promoting bicycle safety and education
 - Strengthening bicycle advocacy and advocacy/industry coordination
 - Working with other groups that have similar goals
 - Raising the visibility of bicycling
 - Supporting innovative and replicable ideas
 - Supporting retailers who sell and service bicycles in communities

Goals:

- Encourage ridership growth and increase bicycle industry sales
- Promote bicycling to the public
- Build political support for bicycling
- Leverage other sources of funding for bicycling
- Support bicycle advocacy groups that have the potential for significant impact on ridership growth

Action Plan:

- Accept and fund applications for three types of bicycle projects:
 - Facilities
 - Education
 - Advocacy
- Evaluate and coordinate with existing grantees
- Share success stories from funded projects through communications and promotional materials
- Re-evaluate grant guidelines annually to ensure alignment with Bikes Belong's mission

Who Can Apply

The Bikes Belong Coalition welcomes grant applications from organizations and agencies within the United States that are committed to putting more people on bicycles more often.

The Bikes Belong Grants Program funds projects in three categories:

1. Facility
2. Education
3. Advocacy

For the Education and Facility categories, Bikes Belong will accept applications from nonprofit organizations whose missions are bicycle and/or trail specific. We will also accept applications from public agencies and departments at the national, state, regional, and local levels, however we encourage these groups to align with a local bicycle advocacy group that will help develop and drive the project or program.

For the Advocacy category, Bikes Belong will only fund organizations whose primary mission is bicycle advocacy.

One of the primary goals of the Bikes Belong grants program is to support bicycling programs in as many places as possible. Because of our limited funds, we rarely award grants to organizations and communities that have received Bikes Belong funding within the past three years.

If your organization is new, and you have not yet acquired your nonprofit status, you may submit an application with the assistance of another nonprofit that has agreed to serve as your fiscal agent. You will need to provide a letter from the fiscal sponsor outlining their role in the project.

Bikes Belong will not fund individuals.

Grant Guidelines and Selection Criteria

Bikes Belong will accept requests for funding of up to \$10,000 for facility, education, and advocacy projects. Because of our limited funds, we rarely award grants to organizations and communities that have received Bikes Belong funding within the past three years.

All proposals must:

- Address the goals of the grants program strategic plan
 - Encourage ridership growth
 - Promote bicycling
 - Build political support
 - Leverage funding
 - Support bicycle advocacy
- Address the project objectives of the facility, education, or advocacy funding categories (following).
- Propose a specific program or project that is measurable. Bikes Belong will not fund general operating costs.

Priority is given to:

- Bicycle organizations, coalitions, and associations—particularly those that have not received Bikes Belong funding in the past.
- Projects that build coalitions for bicycling by collaborating the efforts of bicycle industry and advocacy.

Please review the following specifics of the facility, education, and advocacy programs to ensure that your proposal meets our guidelines.

Grant Guidelines and Selection Criteria (cont'd)

Facility Project Objectives:

“To connect existing facilities or create new opportunities; leverage federal, state, and private funds; influence policy; and generate economic activity.”

Eligible facility projects include:

- Bike paths, trails, routes, lanes, parking, and transit
- Mountain bike facilities
- BMX facilities
- Innovative and unique high-profile projects

Generally, Bikes Belong will consider funding construction costs and matching funds for facilities projects. We will also consider funding advocacy work for bike facilities on a case-by-case basis. (Please call our office before submitting an application of this nature.) Projects with a limited impact, such as the installation of a small number of bike racks, are unlikely to be successful.

Bikes Belong will **not** consider facility applications that request funding for:

- Master plans and other policy documents or litigation.
- Signs, maps, and travel
- Trailheads, information kiosks, benches, and restroom facilities
- Bicycles, helmets, tools, and other accessories
- Events
- Projects in which Bikes Belong is the sole funder. However, Bikes Belong will consider being the initial funder.

Grant Guidelines and Selection Criteria (cont'd)

Education Project Objectives:

“To change behavior towards cycling, thereby encouraging the public to accept cycling as a safe, fun, healthy, efficient, and practical activity.”

Eligible education projects include:

- Unique and replicable cycling safety programs
- Efforts to recruit large numbers of new riders
- Innovative pilot projects

Generally, Bikes Belong will consider funding projects that have significant potential for changing behavior and that have **measurable success**. Unique projects that combine education with political effectiveness are preferred. It is also important that these programs impact a significant number of people, and that programs have the potential to grow beyond the initial or pilot project.

Programs—such as earn-a-bike and recycle-a-bike initiatives—that are already well established throughout the country, and unlikely to add to the existing body of bicycle education knowledge or have political impact, are unlikely to be funded.

Applicants interested in applying for an education grant are encouraged to contact Elizabeth Train, Bikes Belong's Grants & Research Director at (303) 449-4893 or Elizabeth@bikesbelong.org before submitting an application in order to confirm project eligibility.

Bikes Belong will not consider Education applications that request funding for:

- Helmets, bicycles, tools, or other bicycle accessories
- T-shirts, stickers, or promotional materials
- Rental fees, including facility rental, automobile rental, etc.
- Travel
- Events
- Projects in which Bikes Belong is the sole funder. However, Bikes Belong will consider being the initial funder.

Grant Guidelines and Selection Criteria (cont'd)

Advocacy Project Objectives:

“To build the strength of bicycle advocacy organizations that have the potential to increase bicycle ridership and build coalitions with the bicycle industry.”

Eligible Advocacy projects include:

- Initiatives that will make a newer group sustainable **and** have tangible long-term goals
- Programs that make existing organizations significantly more effective at generating ridership
- Innovative pilot projects
- Programs that will have a significant political impact

Generally, Bikes Belong will consider funding projects that have a reasonable degree of measurable success and future sustainability. Bikes Belong will only fund advocacy projects where the applicant's primary purpose is **bicycle advocacy**.

Applicants interested in applying for an Advocacy grant are encouraged to contact Elizabeth Train, Bikes Belong's Grants & Research Director, at (303) 449-4893 or Elizabeth@bikesbelong.org, before submitting an application in order to confirm project eligibility.

Bikes Belong will **not** consider advocacy project applications that request funding for:

- General operating costs
- Staff salaries
- Rides and event sponsorships
- Planning and retreats
- Organizations whose primary mission is not expressly related to bicycle advocacy
- Bicycles, helmets, tools, water bottles, and other accessories or equipment

How to Apply and the Evaluation Process

Overview

Applicants with projects or programs that meet Bikes Belong's grant guidelines are welcome to submit applications. Please bear in mind that the Bikes Belong application and review process is fairly rigorous, and we are able to fund roughly 20% of the applications we receive. Eligible grants are reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Grants Committee.

Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to contact Bikes Belong to ensure the proposal's eligibility before applying. Inquiries should be directed via phone or email to:

Elizabeth Train, Grants & Research Director
Elizabeth@bikesbelong.org or (303) 449-4893

Evaluation Process

Applications received by Bikes Belong will be initially reviewed by the Grants & Research Director and the Executive Director to determine eligibility.

All grant applicants will receive an e-mail acknowledgement confirming receipt and letting them know if the proposal is complete, eligible, and when it will be reviewed.

Applications that are complete and eligible will be considered by the Bikes Belong Grants Committee on a quarterly basis. The Committee will either recommend approval, rejection, or request more information. If the committee:

- Approves the application, it is sent to the full Board of the Directors for final approval. The applicant will be notified of the proposal's outcome shortly afterward.
- Rejects the application, the proposal is denied and the applicant will be notified.
- Requests more information, the Grants & Research Director will contact the applicant to resolve outstanding issues, then re-submit the proposal to the committee.

If your proposal is denied, it is not likely to be funded in a future cycle. Please do not resubmit a rejected proposal unless asked to do so.

Grants Committee members are volunteers from the Bikes Belong Board of Directors. Applicants who attempt to lobby individual members of the Committee will hurt their proposal's chance of success.

Incomplete, faxed, or emailed applications will not be considered.

Deadlines

2006 Grants Cycle

Applications Postmarked By:

February 27, 2006

May 29, 2006

August 28, 2006

November 27, 2006

Committee Decision By:

April 28, 2006

July 31, 2006

October 30, 2006

January 29, 2007

Grant Application Schedule

Bikes Belong reviews applications on a quarterly cycle. Applications must be postmarked by the due date in order to be considered for the ensuing decision date.

Please send six copies of the completed application to:

Elizabeth Train
Bikes Belong Grants & Research Director
P.O. Box 2359
Boulder, CO 80306

If you plan to send your package by UPS, Federal Express, or other carriers, please use our physical address:

1920 13th Street, Suite A
Boulder, CO 80302

Grant Application

The grant application package consists of four parts. Please submit the following information in the order provided.

1. Cover letter introducing your organization and proposal
2. Administrative Information form
3. Grant Application Narrative that details the specifics of your proposal
- 4. Support letters from the local bicycle industry in your area**

Make a strategic link between your proposal and Bikes Belong's mission of *putting more people on bicycles more often*.

Additional information is not encouraged unless it is absolutely essential to our understanding of your project. We will contact you should we need further information on which to base a decision.

We cannot accept emailed or faxed applications at this time.

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Send **six** copies of the complete application package to:

Elizabeth Train
Bikes Belong Grants & Research Director
P.O. Box 2359
Boulder, CO 80306

If you plan to send your package by UPS, Federal Express, or other carriers, please use our physical address:

1920 13th Street, Suite A
Boulder, CO 80302

Administrative Information

Organization Information

Legal Name of Organization		Date of Application
Type of Proposal (e.g. facility, education, or advocacy)	Name of Project or Program	
Address		
City, State, Zip	Telephone	Fax
Type of Corporation (501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), etc.)	State of Incorporation, Year Incorporated	Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN)

Staff and Board Information

Contact person		Title
Direct Phone #	Email Address	
Number of Staff: Full Time Paid	Number of Staff: Part Time Paid	Number of Staff: Volunteer

Financial Information

\$ Amount Requested	\$ Total Project Budget	\$ Total Organization Budget
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Authorization

Authorized Signature		Title
Print Name		Date

Grant Application Narrative

Provide the following information in narrative form. Throughout the narrative, list a reference before each section. For example, put a header that says, "Purpose of the Grant – Specific Activities – Goals," when describing the proposal's specific goals.

The narrative, excluding attachments, should not be more than 7 pages. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

A. Organizational Information

1. Summary of your organization's mission, long-term goals, and history.
2. Description of successes in recent projects and programs.

B. Purpose of the Grant

1. Situation
 - (a) Need—Why is your proposal important and necessary right now?
 - (b) Environment—Describe the current bicycling conditions in your proposal's market area. Include descriptions of infrastructure, programs, allies, and resistance that must be overcome.
2. Specific Activities
 - (a) Goals of the project or program.
 - (b) Action Plan that will meet the project or program's goals. Be specific—include individuals or groups assigned to tasks, and due dates for achieving the goals.
 - (c) Personnel who will execute the action plan and their qualifications.
3. Impact of Your Work—Describe the measurable outcomes of your project. Include the projected number of new cyclists. (This is very important.)

C. Evaluation

1. Explain strategies and plans for determining success.
2. Describe how other organizations can learn from your experiences. How is your project replicable?

D. Project Budget

1. Describe the total budget for the project, and how the funding from Bikes Belong will be spent. Be specific.
2. Please note all other sources of funding (committed, pending, or proposed) besides Bikes Belong.

E. Attachments

1. Financials

- (a) Financial Statements from your most recently completed fiscal year. (Municipalities need send only ONE copy of their financials.)
- (b) Organizational Budget for the present year.

2. Other Support Materials

- (a) List of Board Members and their affiliations.
- (b) Map/plan of the project and area (if applicable).
- (c) Media articles if available.
- (d) **Support letters from the local bicycle industry are required.** Additional support letters are encouraged if relevant.

Frequently asked Questions

How does Bikes Belong funding work?

Bikes Belong is sponsored by members of the U.S. bicycle industry. Suppliers, distributors, dealers, and others who derive revenue from bicycling within the United States are eligible for membership. Bikes Belong members pay dues in proportion to their overall revenue.

My proposal was rejected. Can I reapply?

If a proposal is rejected, it is unlikely that Bikes Belong will fund the same idea in the future. However, on a limited basis, Bikes Belong may ask an organization to revise a rejected proposal for the next grant cycle.

Additionally, Bikes Belong will accept applications for other projects or programs from organizations that have had previous requests denied.

Advocacy grants are only open to bicycle advocacy organizations. What is a bicycle advocacy organization?

Bicycle advocacy organizations must have a mission and activities directly relating to bicycling. They typically work to improve bicycling conditions and affect positive change on a local, regional, state, or national level. Most are incorporated 501c3 nonprofits, and affiliated with the Thunderhead Alliance (www.thunderheadalliance.org).

Can I apply if I'm not a bicycle advocacy organization?

Yes. Nonprofits and public agencies or departments at the local, regional, and national level may apply for facility and education grants. However, we encourage these applicants to partner with a local bicycle advocacy group in order to ensure that the project or program is supported and utilized by bicyclists. Advocacy grants are the only category restricted to bicycle advocacy organizations. Bikes Belong does not fund individuals.

Frequently asked Questions (cont'd)

What qualifies as a support letter from the local bike industry?

The letter can come from a business that derives revenue from bicycling in your area. Examples include retailers, suppliers, and distributors. The letter should mention the proposed project or program and describe how it will improve revenue for the local bicycle business. A letter from a nonprofit organization or municipality does not qualify as a support letter from the local bike industry.

Where should I focus my efforts in the grant application?

The most important part of the grant application is Section B – Purpose of the Grant. Applicants should describe in detail how they will reach the goals outlined in their proposal. The Grants Committee analyzes proposals for impacts on bicycle ridership and other measurable results.

What's my proposal's likelihood of success?

It depends on the number of applications received by Bikes Belong. Currently, about 20% of completed applications are awarded funding.

How much can I apply for?

Applicants can request up to \$10,000. Requests of more than \$10,000 will be viewed unfavorably.

How many grants are awarded each year?

It depends on the level of funding for each successful grant. Bikes Belong averages 15 grant awards per year.

If my project is approved, when will I receive the funding?

The disbursement of funds can vary anywhere from 1 to 3 weeks after the award announcement is made.

Frequently asked Questions (cont'd)

How do I measure the projected number of new cyclists created by my project/program?

Use your best judgment, relying on existing census data for population and travel mode, current and future bicycling conditions, and documented examples from similar programs or projects. Whatever logic you use to determine the number, please provide us with a description of how you arrived at the projection.

What is the market area for my proposal?

You need to identify the geographic region where your proposal will have a measurable and significant impact. For example, if a proposed path is likely to draw a large number of visitors from surrounding towns, then those towns would be included in the market area.

My proposal was rejected. Can I reapply?

If a proposal is rejected, it is unlikely that Bikes Belong will fund the same idea in the future. However, Bikes Belong will accept applications for other projects or programs from organizations that have had previous requests denied.

Bikes Belong awarded a grant to my organization. Can I reapply for additional funding?

While priority is given to groups that have not received Bikes Belong funding before, past grantees are welcome to reapply. However, because of our limited funds, we rarely award grants to organizations and communities that have received Bikes Belong funding within the past three years.

What's the difference between an "initial" funder and a "sole" funder?

Bikes Belong as a "sole funder" means that there will be no other funding from any other source for the project or program. "Initial funder" means Bikes Belong will be the first funder for a project, and additional revenue for the project or program will be secured by the applicant in the future.

Have a question that's not explained in the Guidelines or FAQs?

Contact Elizabeth Train, Bikes Belong's Grants & Research Director at:
Elizabeth@bikesbelong.org or (303) 449-4893