

History

Bikes Belong Coalition is sponsored by members of the American Bicycle Industry. Our mission is to put more people on bicycles more often. The Grants Program was the first major on-going initiative undertaken by Bikes Belong.

Historically, the Grants Program strived to put more people on bicycles more often by funding important and influential projects that leveraged TEA-21 money and built momentum for bicycling. Since its inception in 1999 Bikes Belong has funded close to 100 grant proposals totaling \$823,460, leveraging more than \$431 million dollars in federal, state, and private funding. The facilities grants alone have helped build nearly 700 miles of bike paths and trails and linked more than 4,000 miles of trail facilities.

Strategic Plan

The Grants Committee developed this strategic plan to ensure overall alignment with Bikes Belong's mission of putting more people on bicycles more often. Keep the strategic plan in mind as you develop a proposal.

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 public transportation, and at the workplace, schools, and other destinations.
- Bicycling is the best activity and form of transportation in the world.
- There is a diversity of approaches we can take to generate more bicycle ridership.
 - Strengthening advocacy and advocacy/industry coordination.
 - Working with other groups that have similar goals.
 - Raising the visibility of bicycling.
 - Supporting and publicizing innovative and replicable ideas.
 - Supporting retailers that 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 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 projects:
 - Bicycle Facilities
 - Education
 - Capacity building
- Evaluate and coordinate with existing grantees
- Share success stories from funded projects
- 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. Capacity Building

For the **education** and **facility** categories, Bikes Belong will accept applications from non-profit organizations and from public agencies and departments at the national, state, regional, and local level.

For the **capacity building** category, Bikes Belong will only fund organizations whose primary mission is expressly related to bicycle advocacy.

If your organization is new, and you are not yet legally a non-profit organization, you may submit an application with the assistance of another non-profit 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, capacity, and education projects. Bikes Belong will also accept successor proposals from previously funded projects. In extremely limited cases, Bikes Belong will entertain applications requesting more than \$10,000.

All proposals must:

- Address the goals of the grants program strategic plan
 - Ridership growth
 - Promoting cycling
 - Building political support, and
 - Leveraging funding
 - Advocacy
- Address the project objectives of the facility, education, or capacity funding categories (see below).
- Propose a specific program or project that is measurable. **Bikes Belong will not fund general operating costs.**

Priority is given to:

- Organizations that are directly involved in building coalitions for bicycling by collaborating the efforts of bicycle industry and advocacy.

Review the specifics of the facility, capacity, and education programs (listed below) to ensure that your proposal meets our guidelines.
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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
- Innovative and unique high-profile projects

Generally, Bikes Belong will consider funding advocacy work, construction costs, and matching funds. 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
- Projects in which Bikes Belong is the sole funder. However, Bikes Belong will consider being the initial funder.
- Bicycles, equipment, and accessories.
- Events

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:

- Safe Routes to School
- Recruiting 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. Programs (such as Earn-A-Bike and bicycle recycling projects) 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 the Bikes Belong Grants Program Manager at (303) 449-4893 or Elizabeth@bikesbelong.org before submitting an application.

Bikes Belong will not fund education applications that request funding for:

- Helmets, bicycles, stickers, or other bicycle accessories.
- Travel.
- Projects in which Bikes Belong is the sole funder. However, Bikes Belong will consider being the initial funder.
- Events

Grant Guidelines and Selection Criteria (cont'd)

Capacity project objectives:

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

Eligible capacity projects include:

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

Generally, Bikes Belong will consider funding projects that have a reasonable degree of measurable success. Bikes Belong will only fund capacity projects in which the applicant's primary purpose is bicycle advocacy.

Applicants interested in applying for a capacity grant are strongly encouraged to contact the Bikes Belong Grants Program Manager at (303) 449-4893 or Elizabeth@bikesbelong.org before submitting an application.

Bikes Belong will not fund capacity project applications that request funding for:

- General operating costs
- Rides and event sponsorships
- Planning and retreats
- Organizations whose primary mission is not expressly related to bicycle advocacy
- Bicycles, equipment, and accessories

How to Apply and the Evaluation Process

Overview

Applicants that have projects or programs that meet Bikes Belong guidelines are encouraged to submit applications.

The Bikes Belong application and review process is fairly rigorous. Eligible grants are reviewed on a quarterly basis by the Grants Program Subcommittee.

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

Elizabeth Train, Grants Program Manager
(303) 449-4893 or Elizabeth@bikesbelong.org

Evaluation Process

Applications will be initially reviewed by the Grants Program Manager and the Executive Director to determine eligibility.

All grant proposals will receive written acknowledgement informing the applicant if the proposal is complete, eligible, and when it will be reviewed.

Applications that are complete and eligible will be considered by the Grants Program Subcommittee on a quarterly basis. The Subcommittee will either approve, reject, or request more information about the project. If the Subcommittee:

- Approves the application, we will notify the applicant shortly.
- Rejects the application, the proposal is denied and the applicant will be notified.
- Requests more information, the Grants Program Manager will contact the applicant to resolve outstanding issues and then resubmit the proposal to the Subcommittee.

Grants Program Subcommittee members are volunteers from the Bikes Belong Board of Directors. Applicants who attempt to lobby individual members of the Subcommittee or the Bikes Belong Board will hurt their proposal's chance of success. However, board members may write letters of support for projects if they are so inclined.

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

Deadlines

Grant Application Schedule

Bikes Belong uses a quarterly application for reviewing grant applications. Applications must be postmarked by the application due date to receive consideration for the ensuing decision date.

2005 Grants Cycle

<u>Due</u>	<u>Decision By</u>
February 28	April 29
May 30	July 29
August 29	October 28
November 28	January 30

Send six copies of the completed application to:

Elizabeth Train
Grants Program Manager
1245 Pearl Street, Suite 212
Boulder, CO 90302

Grant Application

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

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 local bicycle businesses (retailers, manufacturers, distributors, etc.).

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 will not accept emailed or faxed applications.

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

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

Elizabeth Train
Bikes Belong Grants Program Manager
1245 Pearl Street, Suite 212
Boulder, CO 80302

Grant Application Administrative Information

Organization Information

Legal Name of Organization		Date of Application
Type of Proposal (e.g. facility, education, or capacity)	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.

Proposal Narrative

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 current bicycling conditions in your proposal’s market area. Include descriptions of infrastructure, bicycle 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 your goals.
 - (c) Personnel that 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 your project’s 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.
- (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? Is Bikes Belong a foundation?

Bikes Belong is sponsored by members of the American bicycle industry. Suppliers, distributors, dealers, and anyone who derives revenue from bicycling within the United States is eligible to become a member. Bikes Belong members pay dues as a proportion of their overall revenue.

Bikes Belong is not a foundation and does not have an endowment. The Grants Program funding is derived from the overall operating budget on an annual basis.

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.

Capacity 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 501[c]3 non-profits and affiliated with the Thunderhead Alliance (www.thunderheadalliance.org).

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

Yes. Non-profits and public agencies or departments at the local, regional, and national level may apply for facility and education grants. Capacity 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 business?

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 non-profit organization 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. In very limited cases, Bikes Belong will consider amounts over \$10,000. Requests of over \$10,000 will generally be viewed unfavorably unless the applicant has an extremely compelling case that the proposal is of unique and/or national importance.

How many grants are awarded a 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 months.

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, provide us with a description of how you arrived at the projection.

What is the market area for my proposal?

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?

Yes. Bikes Belong will accept requests for additional funding for a previously funded project on an annual basis.

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. It is important to outline a strategy for securing future funding.

Have a question that's not explained in the guidelines or listed here?

Contact Elizabeth Train, Grants Program Manager at (303) 449-4893 or Elizabeth@bikesbelong.org.