



AMATEUR RADIO DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

# Instructions for Submitting an ARDC Grant Application

## Getting started

1. **Review our [grantmaking goals](#) to make sure your project aligns with our work.** In particular, please note that projects that are not open source and open access are not eligible.
2. **Make sure your organization is eligible for a grant.** Eligible organizations include:
  - US based 501(c)(3) Public Charities, government agencies, schools, and universities
  - International charities, nonprofits, schools, and universities
  - Radio clubs and groups who are NOT nonprofits may be eligible if you work with a US-based, nonprofit fiscal sponsor. If you are unable to find a fiscal sponsor, please contact us.
  - Individuals may be eligible if you work with a fiscal sponsor. US & international for-profit businesses are currently not eligible for ARDC grants.
3. **Review our application questions.** You may fill out these questions in our [online application form](#) or upload a PDF file, if you prefer. Skip any questions irrelevant to your work.
4. **As you design your project, keep in mind the following to help us understand what you want to do:**
  - What will you do if you get the grant from ARDC? What is the project's end result
  - Why do you want to do this project? How will this project make your community or the world a better place?
  - Who will carry out the work? Does your team have the capabilities to do the work? If not, who could be added to the team?

## Filling out the application

Please submit your application in the English language. Also, keep in mind that quality is valued over quantity. We want you to be thorough, but please keep your application brief.

Include letters of support from any organizations that you'll be partnering with, such as government agencies or non-profit corporations.

As you write your proposal, keep in mind that **the review committee will ask the following questions as they evaluate your application.**

- How well does the project meet ARDC's goals?
- Is the project's budget appropriate for the stated outcomes? Does it have a reasonable chance of success with the equipment requested?
- How well-organized is the project in terms of the people, expertise, time, and organizational structure? Does the project plan have what it needs to be successful in meeting its goals?
- What geographic area will the project serve? International projects, projects in areas where few other grants have been, and projects serving low-income areas are preferred.
- Are the project outcomes sustainable? When appropriate, will the impact of the work continue beyond the lifetime of the grant?
- Does the project contribute to human knowledge? This is important for a research and development project, but less so for amateur radio infrastructure projects.
- Does the project have community support? This can be in the form of financial support, donated equipment, or volunteer time.
- What kind of reach and impact will this project have? Will the project serve many people or impact a few greatly? Projects that serve a small group with minimum impact are NOT preferred.
- Will the project serve under-represented communities in amateur radio or technical fields, such as youth, women, BIPOC, and countries outside of the United States?
- Does this project have that something special? In the spirit of innovation and flexibility, we may fund exceptional projects that don't align with stated criteria or categories.

If it's your first time writing a grant, the video [How to Write a Grant Proposal Step-by-Step](#) may help. You can disregard the recommended page lengths and sections mentioned in this video under "What Goes in a Grant Proposal." Instead, focus on answering the questions on our application. You can make your answers as long or short as you need to fully explain your project idea. You can also skip listening to the information in this video after the 21:45 mark.

## Creating your budget

You can submit your budget in any format, though spreadsheets are preferred. Your budget may include:

- **Personnel.** This includes salaries and benefits for individuals working on the project (unless everyone is a volunteer.) Include an estimate of how much time you expect these individuals will work on this project.
- **Supplies and equipment.** List the supplies and equipment that you will need for the project. Don't forget about shipping costs, taxes, and any fees. It's okay to round up slightly to give yourself room for these costs. Be specific about any radio equipment or big-ticket items that you want to buy.
- **Travel.** Include any travel costs that are directly related to the project

- **Marketing.** Include costs for marketing materials that are directly related to the project. For example, include the cost of printing flyers or purchasing social media ads to advertise a class.
- **Other costs.** List other costs that are directly related to your project, such as costs for building permits, if needed.
- **Indirect costs.** You may include up to 20% for indirect costs, such as phone, internet, rent, accountants, software, bank fees, HR, lawyers, small supplies, contingency for unexpected project costs, and anything else that can be hard to itemize. You can use these funds for any additional overhead costs. If your organization's indirect cost rate is more than 20%, we ask that you cost-share any indirect amount over 20% to allow us to maximize the funds we can distribute to others.
- **Other funds that are available for this project.** Please tell us about funds from other donors who are supporting this project and money already set aside for this project. It's okay if ARDC is the only funder, but it can be a bonus to know if other funders or people in your community are willing to invest in your project, especially if it's a big one.

#### **Your budget should not include:**

- **Funds for lobbying.** Advocacy work is okay, but trying to specifically influence elected officials to vote in a particular way is something we can't legally fund. See the National Council of Nonprofits' [Advocacy vs. Lobbying](#) for more details.

## **Tips**

If it's your first time creating a grant budget, here are some tips:

- The short video, [Writing a Budget for a Grant Proposal](#), has many good tips on what to include (and what not to include) in your budget.
- Search online for the prices of the specific supplies you will need. This will not only give you a feel for how much money you'll need, but also help you identify suppliers.
- Your budget proposal is a best guess at what you will need to carry out the project. It's okay if the price of coax changes slightly or if you decide to buy a different piece of equipment later on. For now, be as specific as you can be.
- It's okay to group small things together like "building supplies (screws, paint, tape, etc.) \$200." When you do that, giving a few examples of what is included in that category can be helpful. Avoid grouping major expenses like "New Ham Shack \$30,000" since this doesn't give us a good idea if the budgeted amount (\$30,000) is a realistic cost. Separate out any costs for materials, labor, and any other fees that might be included (such as permitting).

## **Questions?**

A pre-application meeting is not necessary to apply for a grant, but if you have questions, you may email us at [giving@ardc.net](mailto:giving@ardc.net) to set up a time to talk. Our staff can answer questions about our process or give you

advice on if we think a proposal for your project is likely to be successful before you begin. If you need technical assistance with designing your project plans, please include a little bit about your project and the type of help you need in your email. We may be able to connect you with a volunteer to help, or may refer you to another resource.