

# How to Strengthen a Safety Funding Grant Application



Safety funding grants are highly competitive and limited in number. Local and national safety [mandates often go unfunded](#). As a result, schools, hospitals, and other organizations across the US are competing to receive a finite number of dollars for safety infrastructure improvements.

To secure funding for comprehensive safety systems, organizations must strive to create the strongest possible safety grant application. This guide offers insights to help organizations enhance their safety grant funding applications and secure the necessary funding to create a culture of safety.

## Grant Applications: the Fundamentals

Organizations that win grant funding demonstrate that their institutions face critical shortages or gaps that need to be addressed. Their proposed projects are:

- Urgent
- Aligned to real needs
- Backed by evidence

## General Tips



### Tell a complete story

Clearly explain your organization's situation and needs. Compose your story under the assumption that grant reviewers know nothing about your organization.



### Get a head start

Gathering materials and data takes time, as does the writing process. To save time, repurpose materials used in previous applications. But don't rush through the process.



### Follow instructions carefully

Adhere strictly to all formatting and content requirements in the application guidelines. Failure to do so can result in automatic disqualification.



### Seek expert feedback

Your application should be reviewed by internal team members and external experts. This will help you catch errors and improve its overall quality.



### Make your request focused and reasonable

Do not request the maximum amount simply because it is available, or include a laundry list of requests. Instead, tailor your request to your organization's specific needs.

# Safety Grant Applications: the Specifics

Your organization must provide a clear understanding of the safety gaps that need to be addressed and how your proposed solution will fill these gaps. For example, instead of "Our organization needs systems to facilitate communication," explicitly state: "Our organization has no emergency alert system that alerts staff of an incident."

Safety grant applications should convey your organization's needs in the following categories:



## Current Security Gaps

- Identify specific weaknesses. Name the infrastructure, hardware, or software that your organization needs to implement safety plans.
- Tie security shortfalls to state or federal laws. For example, for school districts, your application may state, "We lack a safety alert system that meets the Alyssa's Law requirements for direct communication with first responders and law enforcement."
- Identify specific solutions. For example, "CENTEGIX CrisisAlert™ is the solution that will enable us to meet Alyssa's Law requirements."
- Identify the impact if your organization does not address safety gaps. Be explicit about how not implementing your proposal will increase risk to staff, students, visitors, or others.



## Crime and Incident Data

- Provide local and building-level incident data. Your evidence should demonstrate that your organization is facing urgent, critical challenges. Be sure to retrieve your statistics and evidence from credible sources. These can include internal incident tracking, police reports, and local partnerships.
- Partner with law enforcement. Secure a letter of support from local police that describes incidents that have occurred on campus, and how comprehensive safety technology will reduce response times.



## Demographics and Community Risk

- Explicate the characteristics of your organization that correlate with increased security needs, such as factors like high poverty levels or rural locations distant from law enforcement
- Explain clearly how your demographics correlate to specific and urgent safety risks. For example: "Our current emergency response system does not include a means of communication that is accessible to non-English speakers. An alert system that includes visual strobes would fill this gap."



## Past Assessments and Recommendations

- Include and explain existing threat assessments. Grant reviewers should receive a clear idea of your organization's vulnerabilities.
- Enlist experts to perform these assessments. These experts include local law enforcement, representatives from local or state Homeland Security, or other external authorities.
- Detail the vulnerabilities these experts identified and explain how your proposal addresses these specific vulnerabilities.



## Lack of Local Funding

- Explain your specific budget limitations and competing infrastructure needs. For example, state "Our hospital has allocated additional staffing to address a critical increase in needed behavioral health services and allocated funds to repair the roof, resulting in a lack of budgeted funds for safety technology."
- Be explicit: "Without this grant, we cannot fund this purchase."