

What Exactly is a "What If..." Mini Grant?



"What if..." Mini Grants are designed to foster growth in neighborhoods and strengthen the capacity of Syracuse residents who seek to make positive changes in their neighborhood.



These Mini Grants are only available to grassroots groups or individuals within the City of Syracuse. The Gifford Foundation supports "What if..." projects up to \$5,000.00.

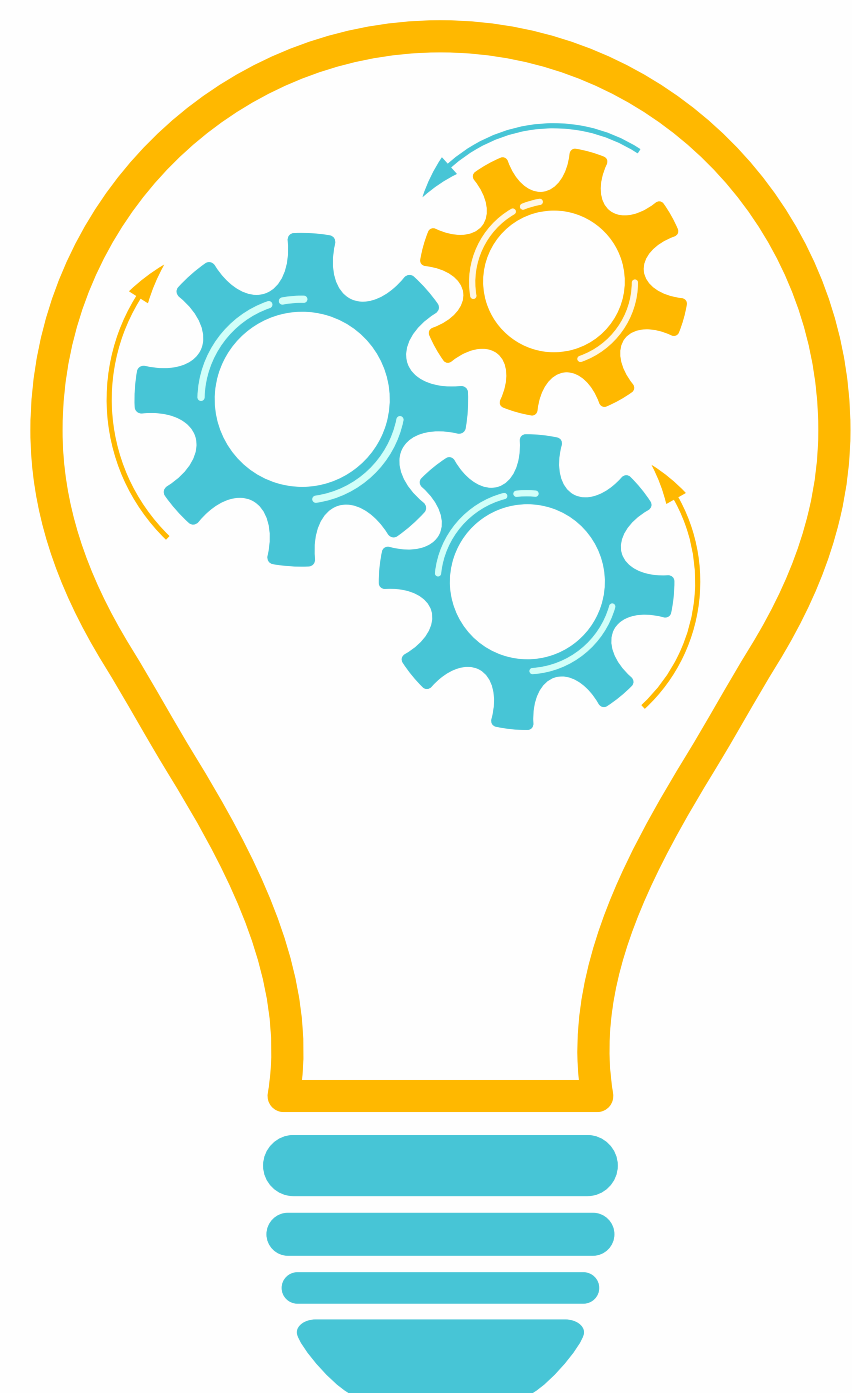


"What if..." Mini Grants are unique because they allow individuals and grassroots groups to receive support for their ideas without having to compete with larger, more established nonprofit organizations.

Learn More at GiffordFoundation.org/What-If

Tips for Writing Your Application

- ❁ Don't be shy about assuming you don't even know where to start! Feeling that way in the beginning is completely normal.
- ❁ Make sure you have an assessment of your real needs: Consider every angle of your project to prepare yourself for its execution.
- ❁ Develop a system for tracking how you spend money and also how you acquire money to support your project. We can help provide budgeting templates for you to use.
- ❁ Try to isolate the main reasons why you feel your idea is important. Being clear about these points will strengthen your application.
- ❁ Find a friend or adviser to help you brainstorm your idea and read over your application, especially someone who has applied for funding before.



Questions?

Contact Sheria Walker at
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RECORDS



Tracking Money and Materials

- Break down your project into tasks and items.
- Calculate the cost of each item in the task list and add up the total.
- Find a way to track materials:
 - Did you give out materials to the community?
 - Who is in charge of the equipment you are using?
- Use our budget template (included in application form) as a guide.
- If you are buying a product or service, you can simply submit the name of the item and the cost in your application. When appropriate, consider asking for several estimates from different professionals to make sure you are getting the best deal.

Analyzing Budget and Impact



- Review your records to make a list of everything you purchased and how much it cost.
- Consider if your original estimates were accurate. Did you spend more or less than you expected?
- How many people did you reach? Was the impact less than or greater than what you anticipated?
- What did you learn? How would you do this differently if you were to do it again?
- What kind of feedback did you get from your volunteers and from the community?

HOW TO ORGANIZE A SUCCESSFUL EVENT

- ✿ Always schedule your event taking into account the season. Check the weather forecast and have a plan in case of a lot of sun, rain or snow.
- ✿ Remember to include an option for children so that parents can actively participate in planned activities.
- ✿ Consider the means of transport available to get to the venue, especially for your target audience.
- ✿ Make a checklist with descriptions of those responsible for each part of the event so that each person can focus on their designated activity.
- ✿ Be realistic when calculating audience expectations. Overall, a third of guests show up for events.
- ✿ Call ahead: does the space require a permit for use? Do you need to make a deposit to reserve it? Does your activity fit within the rules of the venue?



HOW TO WORK WITH VOLUNTEERS

- Keep your volunteers engaged and up-to-date on how they're making a difference in your initiative.
- Combine volunteers' talents and interests with a role that fits their motives for volunteering.
- Ask for their opinions and ideas - give them a sense of ownership of the process.
- Tap into their networks: it is likely that your volunteers can help promote your project or even connect you with other sources of support.
- Be flexible and considerate of your volunteers' time and schedules. Even though they have agreed to help, they have other responsibilities and commitments.
- Train your volunteers ahead of the event - things will run smoother if they arrive prepared.

