

Participatory Grant Cohort – Application Scoring Rubric

Scoring Scale (for each question / criterion):

5 – Excellent, 4 – Strong, 3 – Adequate, 2 – Limited, 1 – Insufficient

1. Alignment & Experience with Free Play

Question: How does your organization’s mission connect to free, unstructured outdoor play for children ages 0-14? Describe past or current programs and key learnings.

Score	Indicators
5 – Excellent	Mission strongly aligns; extensive, clearly described experience providing free play opportunities; thoughtful articulation of lessons learned and impact.
4 – Strong	Clear mission alignment; solid experience; some reflections on lessons learned.
3 – Adequate	General alignment; some experience, though limited detail or clarity; minimal reflection.
2 – Limited	Weak or indirect alignment; minimal experience; little evidence of learning or impact.
1 – Insufficient	No clear alignment; no relevant experience; unclear or missing response.



2. Proposed Initiative Quality & Relevance

Question: What idea or initiative (new or existing) would you like to see funded, and why is it important?

Score	Indicators
5 – Excellent	Proposal is clear, feasible, highly aligned with Free to Play objectives; demonstrates strong community relevance and potential impact.
4 – Strong	Well-described proposal with good alignment and relevance; moderate impact potential.
3 – Adequate	Idea is understandable but may lack detail, clear rationale, or strong impact case.
2 – Limited	Vague, not well aligned, or unclear feasibility; little evidence of community relevance.
1 – Insufficient	No coherent proposal; weak or no connection to grant theme.

3. Collaboration & Collective Impact

Question: Describe a past collaboration and your strengths in a consensus-based cohort.

Score	Indicators
5 – Excellent	Provides a clear, compelling example of collaboration with demonstrated impact; articulates strong collaboration and consensus-building strengths.
4 – Strong	Solid example of collaboration; some discussion of strengths in consensus processes.
3 – Adequate	Provides an example but with limited detail or unclear relevance; basic articulation of collaborative ability.
2 – Limited	Limited or weak example; uncertain ability to contribute to consensus-based decision-making.
1 – Insufficient	No meaningful example; unclear or no demonstrated collaboration skills.

4. Community Engagement & Inclusion

Question: How does your organization engage children/families, and how do you ensure programs are inclusive and accessible?

Score	Indicators
5 – Excellent	Strong, ongoing, and participatory community engagement; clear inclusive practices; demonstrates deep responsiveness to community needs.
4 – Strong	Good engagement methods and inclusive practices; some evidence of responsiveness.
3 – Adequate	Basic engagement; inclusion noted but not well detailed.
2 – Limited	Minimal or inconsistent engagement; limited attention to inclusion or accessibility.
1 – Insufficient	No meaningful engagement or inclusion practices described.

5. Readiness & Fit for Participatory Granting

Question: What interests your organization in consensus-based decision making/ participatory granting, and what support might help you engage?

Score	Indicators
5 – Excellent	Shows deep understanding of consensus-based decision making; high readiness; clear commitment to shared decision-making; identifies realistic supports if needed.
4 – Strong	Good understanding and readiness; identifies reasonable support needs.
3 – Adequate	General interest but limited detail; readiness unclear.
2 – Limited	Weak understanding of participatory funding; concerns about readiness.
1 – Insufficient	No interest or unclear response; unlikely to engage productively.

Final Comment Prompts for Reviewers:

- *Potential for community impact*
- *Unique lived or local expertise*
- *Alignment with cohort diversity (geographic, cultural, programmatic)*

