Tips for Quality Clay Grant Applications

- **Applications should be developed collaboratively.**
    - Involve your circle officers and advisors in developing the application. Ensure that all parties have a chance to review it before it is submitted to check grammar and spelling, and ensure that it meets your institution's programming requirements.
- **The program must advance the cause of leadership**.
    - Clay Grants encourage circles to create or enhance leadership development programs. This is NOT a service project fund.
    - The program should include structured activities or curricula focused on areas vital to leadership-related skills, such as communication, decision-making, ethical reasoning, goal setting, collaboration, or strategic thinking. The program must involve active engagement, such as workshops, mentorship, experiential learning, or project-based components. Experienced facilitators should lead the program. Events featuring speakers or panels should include opportunities for attendees to engage with the speakers or panelists. Programs that showcase the achievements of leaders in the campus community are also encouraged.
- **Assume the review committee knows NOTHING about your program, and fully explain as if you are talking with someone who has never stepped foot on your campus**.
    - Most members of the National Awards Committee do not work on college campuses and may not be familiar with your campus, circle, or leaders. Write the proposal so that someone outside of OΔK can understand the proposed program, its goals, and how the circle plans to achieve them.
- **Clearly explain how the funds will be spent.**
    - The application requires a detailed budget breakdown. For example, if the program is a leadership conference, provide an itemized list of the program expenses, including food, printing, and speaker fees.
- **Grant funds cannot be used to make a donation or to purchase items that will be donated to non-profits.**

    - Clay Grant funds must support program costs and may not be used to donate to a cause or buy supplies for another organization, such as Toys for Tots.
- **Consider the longevity of the program you are suggesting.**
    - If you are planning a new program, provide an idea of how the grant will help it become a continuing program. If this is a long-standing program, explain how the funds will provide a new element to the existing program.
- **How much of your circle will be engaged in this event? OΔK will not fund others' events without members contributing to the planning, execution, and evaluation.**
    - A Clay Grant should support active circle participation. It is not acceptable for the circle to only be a co-sponsor without assisting in the planning and implementation of the event. Circle members simply planning to attend the grant-funded event is not sufficient. The application must demonstrate how OΔK members will participate in the planning and benefit from the program.
- **Fully explain your answers – maximize the available word count.**
    - All the committee has to consider when deciding how to allocate funding are the applications. There is no opportunity for follow-up questions, so if the committee needs more information after reading your application, it is unlikely that your program will be chosen for funding. Each written statement has a 250 word limit.
- **Make the best use of your available resources on campus. Partnerships should be secured <u>before</u> submitting the grant application.**
    - Collaboration is one of OΔK's five core values, and these partnerships help build the circle's brand and reputation. A benefit of OΔK is that its collegiate, faculty, and staff members represent many areas on campus. Maximize the benefits of available partners and clearly detail these collaborations in your application.
- **Use the Five Question Test when writing the proposal**
    - *Who* – audience, planners, funders
    - *What* – type of event, program, project
    - *When* – time, date proposed
    - *Where* – location(s) or platforms (Zoom, YouTube Live)
    - *Why* – what will be achieved through this program, and how will the participants and leaders gain leadership knowledge and skills from the event
- **Other things to check before submitting:**
    - Does this grant require approval from your campus's sponsored programs or human factors review board? This approval is often required **<u>before the application is submitted.</u>**
    - Are campus organizations permitted to receive funding from outside organizations?
    - What permissions for space, webinar platform, food, publicity, etc. are required?
    - If the program will be in person, do you have a virtual option as a backup plan? Be sure to note this in the grant application details.