



CJSA Grant Policies and Procedures

Version 1.3

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Purpose

The Connecticut Junior Soccer Association (CJSA) has created the Grant Policies and Procedures document to outline the process for districts and member clubs to apply for non-capital grants and capital grants. The objective of the Grant Policies and Procedures is to help districts and member clubs:

- 1) Grow the number of players,
- 2) Grow participation meaningfully and sustainably; and
- 3) Support safe places to play

Definition of a Non-Capital Grant

A non-capital grant is a type of grant provided by CJSA to member clubs designed to retain existing players, increase player participation and support and grow the game of soccer in a safe environment. Non-capital grants include, but are not limited to:

- Increasing club membership through player retention initiatives and/or new player acquisition initiatives. Priority will be given to programs that target grassroots programs and underserved communities.
- Improving field conditions for play (e.g., field improvements, program equipment, maintenance and repairs, etc.).
- Strengthening club leadership through volunteer training or education
- Improving parents understanding of the game and behavior through education and other innovative ideas.

Non-capital grants **are not offered**, but not limited to, the following categories:

- Scholarships, sponsorships fees for individual players
- Player registration fees
- Tickets or transportation to professional sporting events
- One-time camps or clinics
- Equipment or clothing for coaches, outside of training equipment
- Items to be used for auctions or fundraising (i.e., professional team jerseys or other collectible items)



Definition of a Capital Grant

A CJSAs capital grant is money provided by CJSAs to districts or member clubs to assist with capital improvement projects.

A capital improvement project is defined as a long-term, large scale, high-value project with the express purpose of building or adding/improving a district or club's soccer facility or property. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Purchasing land for a soccer facility or developing existing land for a soccer facility
- Adding additional fields to an existing facility
- Adding lights to an existing facility
- Building a clubhouse (e.g., a building with a meeting room(s), restrooms, concession stand, storage, etc.)

Grant Submission Period:

The grant submission period is from November 1st through December 31st. Grant applications received prior to the submission period will not be reviewed prior to the submission period.

Grant Amounts

To sustain the CJSAs grant program, CJSAs will allocate up to \$100,000 for grants each year. The \$100,000 is a target amount which will be reviewed annually by the CJSAs Grant Committee. The target amount may be adjusted based on CJSAs budget constraints and market performance. The CJSAs Board of Directors (BOD) will review the Grant Committee's recommendation and set the target amount annually.

Generally, CJSAs will allocate \$30,000 for non-capital grants and \$70,000 for capital grants each year. The actual distribution of funds for non-capital and capital grants will be determined by the CJSAs Grant Committee and the CJSAs BOD based on the total number of grant requests submitted in a given period and the purpose for the grants.

Grant requests can range from \$2,500 to \$100,000. Requests under \$2,500 should be submitted to the Club's district treasurer.

If two or more clubs submit grant applications in a given calendar year, the grant budget will be distributed between the clubs assuming each grant is approved. See examples below:



- a) Club A requests a non-capital grant for \$3,000 and Club B requests a capital grant of \$25,000. Assuming each club's Grant Application is approved by the CJSO Grant Committee and the CJSO BOD, each club will receive its requested grant amount since the combined total does not exceed the \$100,000 annual grant maximum.
- b) Club A requests a capital grant of \$25,000 and Club B requests a capital grant of \$30,000. Assuming each club's Grant Application is approved by the CJSO Grant Committee and the CJSO BOD, each club will receive its requested grant amount since the combined total does not exceed the \$100,000 annual grant maximum.
- c) Club A requests a non-capital grant of \$5,000, Club B requests a non-capital grant of \$2,500, Club C requests a capital grant of \$50,000 and Club D requests a grant of \$20,000. Assuming each club's Grant Application is approved by the CJSO Grant Committee and the CJSO BOD, each club will receive its requested grant amount since the combined total does not exceed the annual grant maximum.
- d) Club A requests a capital grant of \$30,000 and club B requests a capital grant of \$100,000 and there are no other grant applications. Assuming each club's Grant Application is approved by the CJSO Grant Committee and the CJSO BOD, both club's grants will be reduced by the percent over the yearly grant maximum of 100,000. See example below.

	Club A	Club B	Club A + Club B	% over \$70,000 Max
Grant Request	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 130,000.00	46%
Amount over Max	\$ 13,846.15	\$ 46,153.85	\$ 60,000.00	
Updated Grant Amount	\$ 6,153.85	\$ 53,846.15	\$ 70,000.00	

- e) Club A requests a capital grant of \$25,000 and club B requests a capital grant of \$100,000 and there are several non-capital grant applications totaling \$30,000. The Capital grant amounts will be based on the \$70,000 allocated for capital grants.

	Non-Capital Grants	Club A Capital Grant	Club B Capital Grant	Club A + Club B	% over \$70,000 Max
Grant Requests	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 25,000.00	\$ 100,000.00	\$ 125,000.00	44%
Amount Over Max	\$ 0.00	\$ 11,000.00	\$ 44,000.00	\$ 55,000.00	
Split between Clubs	\$ 30,000.00	\$ 14,000.00	\$ 56,000.00	\$ 70,000.00	

Note: As mentioned above, the actual distribution of funds for non-capital and capital grants will be determined by the CJSO Grant Committee and the CJSO Board of Directors (BOD) based on the total number of grant requests submitted in a given period and the purpose for the grants.

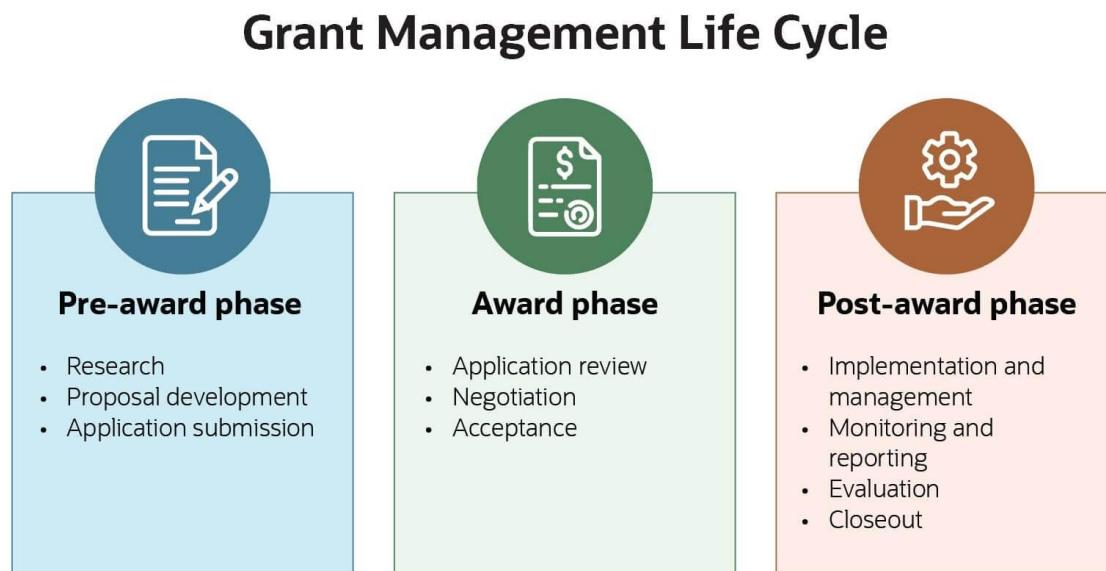


Grant Management Life Cycle

The CJSA grant life cycle consists of three phases:

1. **Pre-award phase:** This initial phase is about a district or club defining its capital project and completing a CJSA grant application.
2. **Award phase:** In this phase, CJSA reviews the grant application, requests additional information as needed, negotiates the terms and conditions of the grant if any, and formally awards or denies the funding to the district or club.
3. **Post-award phase:** This final stage centers on the implementation of the project, along with all the monitoring, reporting, evaluating and closeout processes.

Below is a chart that outlines the three phases:



Pre-award Phase

The pre-award phase involves the following steps:

1. **Pre-award Phase:** Districts and clubs must take the time to carefully plan and perform due diligence to determine the scope of its fundraising needs. This includes assessing whether it has the internal and/or external resources to properly execute its project and manage the grant process.



Once this is complete, a district or club may seek a specific grant from CJSA that fits its revenue gaps. Some key steps/questions a district or club must consider at the pre-award phase include:

- **Defining the project:** Does the project plan include, but is not limited to:
 1. Conducting a feasibility study
 2. Developing a project plan
 3. Preparing engineering and architectural plans
 4. Obtaining required approvals from the town, including a building permit
 5. Establishing timeframes
 6. Preparing a budget
 7. Creating a project team(s)
 8. Implementing controls to monitor the project and budget to ensure that it is being well managed.
- **Define the funding objective(s):** Determine the funding needs and create a fund-raising plan.
- **Create a project team:** Have the volunteer and resource needs been identified to manage all phases of the project. This may include the creation of a fundraising committee to coordinate fundraising, and for a capital grant, a construction committee to oversee construction of the project and an overall project manager to oversee all phases of the project.
- **Complete the CJSA Grant Application** (see Appendix 1): Once preliminary planning has been completed and the campaign has reached 25% of its overall fundraising goal – in either donations or pledges, complete and submit the CJSA Grant Application with all required supporting documentation by the submission deadline. Note: the grant submission period is from November 1st through December 31st for grants for the upcoming year.

All grant applications received during the submission will not be reviewed until January of the following year. The reason for this is to ensure that all districts and clubs that submitted a Grant Application during the submission period have an equal opportunity to receive a grant.



Award Phase

The steps involved in the award phase include:

1. **Review application:** The CJSO Grant Committee will review all grant applications and supporting documentation to determine if they are complete if the supporting documentation is sufficient. The review process begins in January, following the submission period.
2. **Request additional information:** The CJSO Grant Committee may request additional information/clarification if necessary.
3. **Approve or deny grant:** The CJSO Grant Committee will recommend whether a grant should be awarded or denied. Note: The CJSO Grant Committee and BOD have complete discretion on whether to approve or deny a grant application and to determine the amount of the grant. If multiple clubs or districts submit grant applications, priority will be placed on grants that help to maintain or grow player participation. In addition, the CJSO Grant Committee will use a modified version of the U.S. Soccer Innovate to Grow Program criteria to help it assess a grant application (see Appendix 2).
4. **Determine how funds will be dispersed:** The CJSO Grant Committee will determine if the funds should be dispersed all at once or in stages and will determine if any terms or conditions should be attached to the grant.
5. **Review grant application with Board:** The CJSO Grant Committee presents its recommendations to award or deny grants with the CJSO Board of Directors. The CJSO Grant Committee will also review any terms or conditions it recommends for the grants with the CJSO BOD.
6. **Board approves or denies grant:** The CJSO BOD will vote to grant or deny the awards and approve any recommended terms and conditions.
7. **Disburse funds:** If the grant is approved by the CJSO BOD, the funds will be dispersed based on the terms and conditions defined by the CJSO Grant Committee.

Post-award Phase

1. **Implement and management:** This step involves the district or club starting the project or program outlined in the grant application, managing the budget and ensuring that the project is delivered as specified in the agreed-upon plan.



Projects may change over the course of a project, especially as an organization acquires more knowledge and information. The district or club should be prepared to explain divergences from its original plan to the CJSO Grant Committee overseeing the grant.

2. **Monitor and report:** CJSO requires an annual report that includes:

- A project update including, but not limited to:
 - a. Project progress (e.g., milestones completed)
 - b. Adherence to Project budget and timeline
 - c. Fundraising progress
- CJSO may perform on-site visits with district or club representatives.

3. **Undergo evaluations:** At the end of a project, CJSO will conduct an evaluation to determine if the grant was used in accordance with the terms and conditions of the grant. This step may involve a financial reconciliation and ensuring that all the requirements of the grant have been met.

4. Close out the grant process.





Frequently Asked Questions

Question: **Who can apply for a CJSA grant?**

Answer: Any district or club in good standing with CJSA can submit a Grant Application when its capital campaign has reached 25% of its overall goal – in either donations or pledges.

Question: **What is the minimum grant amount a district or club can apply for in a calendar year?**

Answer: The minimum grant amount a district or club can request is \$2,500 in a calendar year.

Question: **What is the maximum grant amount a district or club can apply for in a calendar year?**

Answer: The maximum grant amount a district or club can request is \$100,000 in a calendar year.

Question: **Can a district or club apply for a grant in multiple calendar years?**

Answer: No. A district or club can apply for only one grant.

Question: **When can grant applications be submitted to CJSA?**

Answer: Grant applications must be submitted to CJSA between November 1st and December 31st each year.

Question: **When will grant applications be reviewed by CJSA?**

Answer: CJSA will begin reviewing grant applications in January of the following year after the submission period. All grant applications received from January 1st to October 31st will not be reviewed until January of the following year. CJSA has limited funds to distribute each year, and it wants to ensure that all districts and clubs have an equal opportunity to receive a grant.



Question: **When will a district or club be notified if a grant has been approved by CJSA?**

Answer: There is no set timeframe for CJSA to complete its review of a grant application. The CJSA review timeframe will depend on:

- The completeness of the grant application
- The number of grant applications submitted in a given year
- The number of follow-up questions CJSA has and the timeliness and completeness of the responses

Question: **Why is there a \$2,500 minimum grant amount?**

Answer: The CJSA wants to encourage clubs to work with its district for grant amounts under \$2,500.

Question: **Why does CJSA limit the annual grant amount in a given calendar year to \$100,000?**

Answer: CJSA is funding the grants from the interest earned in its Morgan Stanley investment account. Historically, interest in the Morgan Stanley account has averaged approximately \$100,000 a year. To sustain the program, CJSA is limiting the annual grant total to \$100,000 annually.

Question: **What happens if a district or club starts a project and the scope changes? For example, the town denies a needed permit.**

Answer: The CJSA Grant Committee will oversee changes in scope on a case-by-case basis. Actions may include withholding of further awards or wholly or partly suspending the grant pending corrective action.

Question: **If a district or club's Grant Application is denied, can the district or club appeal?**

Answer: If a Grant Application is denied, the CJSA Grant Committee will specify the reason(s) why the Grant Application was denied (e.g., the club has not obtained the required building permit(s), has not met the minimum 25% fundraising object, etc.). Once the required documents are received, the CJSA Grant Committee will reconsider the Grant Application.

If the Grant Application was denied due to the project not meeting the definition of a capital project as described in the Definition of a Capital Grant section above, the district or club may request a meeting with the CJSA Grant Committee to explain why they think the project meets the requirements for a capital project.



Question: **Why does a district or club have to raise 25% of its overall goal – in either donations or pledges prior to submitting its Grant Application?**

Answer: Prior to awarding a grant, CJSAs wants to ensure that the district or club is committed to its project and has begun funding the project.

Question: **What evidence is needed to demonstrate that the district or club has raised 25% of its overall fundraising goal?**

Answer: Evidence includes, but is not limited to, a reconciliation of the project budget to its fundraising progress. This may include a bank statement showing donations received to date, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) from a donor, and a list of pledges received to date.



Version Control

Version #	Date	Author	Comments
1	01/28/2025	Tom Hayden	Initial draft of Policy
1.1	02/07/2025	Tom Hayden	Updated Policy to include non-capital grants.
1.2	01/22/2026	Tom Hayden	Added Amendment 1 Changed CJSO Finance Committee name to CJSO Grant Committee
1.3	02/16/2026	Tom Hayden	Updated Amendment 1 based on Board feedback - Clubs are limited to receiving one grant.



Amendment 1

The BOD recommended the following amendments:

1. Capital Grant Policies and Procedures are being implemented as a pilot project for three years and will be evaluated at the end of that period.
2. Clubs are limited to receiving one grant.
3. Due to some confusion regarding the approval of the Capital Grant Policies and Procedures, the submission period for 2026 Capital Grant Applications has been extended to June 1, 2026. The original submission period for 2026 Grant Applications was from November 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025. Note: Clubs that previously submitted grant applications in 2025 do not have to resubmit their application.



CJSA Grant Application

Eligibility

The CJSA Grant program is restricted to CJSA districts and member clubs in good standing with CJSA.

Districts and clubs may apply for a grant when its campaign has reached 25% of its overall goal in either donations or pledges.

Deadline to Apply

Grant applications must be submitted to CJSA between November 1st and December 31st each year.

All grant applications received from January 1st to November 30th will not be reviewed until January of the following year. The reason for this is that CJSA wants to ensure that all districts and clubs have an equal opportunity to receive a grant in any given year.

How to Apply

Please submit the completed application and attachments to the following email address:

- Treasurer@CJSA.org

ORGANIZATIONAL BACKGROUND

Organization's primary contact?

Club Name: _____

Club Contact: _____

Title: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____



Project Description

Describe the exact scope of the project (e.g., increasing the number of grassroots players by conducting a mail campaign, or building a new soccer field).

Describe the benefits of the project (increase in player participation, economic impact, organizational use, etc.).

Has the district or club received all required approvals from the town to complete the project?

- Yes: If yes, please attach copies of approvals (e.g., building permit, wetlands approval, etc.).
- No: If no, please describe the estimated timeframe for receiving the approvals.
- N/A.



Requested Amount:

Requested Amount: _____

Note: The requested amount must be between \$2,500 and \$100,000

Attachments:

Please list all attachments that are being submitted to support the Grant Application:

Signature

Club Representative: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

CJSA Use Only

Date Received: _____

Recommendation: _____





Appendix 2

U.S. Soccer Innovate to Grow

Evaluation Criteria - Modified for CJSAs

Following initial review for completeness, good standing, and adherence with applicable Connecticut Junior Soccer Association standards and guidelines, the review committee will use the table below to facilitate scoring of proposed grants. Each section will be weighted based on its relative priority. Note: The table below is just one of the criteria that CJSAs will be using to evaluate grant applications.

Alignment (40 points maximum, 35% weight)			
Criteria	Yes (20 points)	Somewhat (10 points)	No (0 points)
Fit with Required Program Themes	Program fits at least one of the following program themes: 1) grow the number of players, 2) grow participation meaningfully and sustainably; or 3) support safe places to play	Program somewhat fits one or more of the specified themes	Program does not fit any of the specified themes
Program Background	Program background information outlines the need for the program, who it is trying to reach, its goals and objectives, and how it fits into the larger activities and plan for the organization	Program background information somewhat outlines the need for the program, who it is trying to reach, its goals and objectives, and	Program background information is incomplete or unclear



		how it fits into the larger activities and plan for the organization	
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Planning & Implementation (40 points maximum, 25% weight)				
Criteria	Excellent (9-10 points)	Good (7-8 points)	Fair (4-6 points)	Poor (0-3 points)
Program Plan / Approach	Program plan / approach is exceptionally reasonable and appropriate	Program plan / approach is mostly reasonable and appropriate	Program plan / approach has some reasonable and appropriate elements, but has gaps	Program plan / approach is unreasonable and inappropriate
Member Capacity	Demonstrates strong capacity to implement the proposed program	Demonstrates adequate capacity to implement the proposed program	Demonstrates some capacity to implement the proposed program but has notable concerns	Demonstrates little to no capacity to implement the proposed program
Metrics & Targets	Includes comprehensive and appropriate metrics to monitor activities and measure success, with realistic and appropriate targets	Includes adequate metrics to monitor activities and measure success, with mostly realistic and appropriate targets	Includes some metrics and targets, but they are insufficient or partially unrealistic	Lacks appropriate metrics and targets, or they are unrealistic
Budget	Budget is highly reasonable and appropriate for the proposed program	Budget is mostly reasonable and appropriate for the proposed program	Budget has some reasonable elements but also notable concerns	Budget is unreasonable and inappropriate



Sustainability & Stakeholders (40 points maximum, 30% weight)

Criteria	Excellent (9-10 points)	Good (7-8 points)	Fair (4-6 points)	Poor (0-3 points)
Sustainability Plan	Program has clear, comprehensive, and realistic plan for long-term sustainability	Program has plan for long-term sustainability that is mostly realistic	Program has plan for long-term sustainability, but is not sufficiently clear or realistic	Program has little to no planning for long-term sustainability
Partnerships	Program includes strong, well-defined partnership with one or more other organizations with clear roles, responsibilities, and plan for sustainability	Program includes mostly defined and appropriate partnerships with some sustainability	Program includes partnerships, but they are poorly defined or lacking in detail	Program does not include appropriate or sustainable partnerships
New Markets / Participants	Program seeks to serve new markets or participants extensively	Program seeks to serve some new markets or participants	Program seeks to serve new markets / participants minimally	Program does not seek to serve new markets or participants or has not provided sufficient clarity

Criteria	Excellent (9-10 points)	Good (7-8 points)	Fair (4-6 points)	Poor (0-3 points)
Budget for Underserved Populations	Points based on the percentage of the budget allocated to programs for underserved populations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10 – 100% • 9 – 90-99% • 8 – 80-89% • 7 – 70-79% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 – 60-69% • 5 – 50-59% • 4 – 40-49% • 3 – 30-39% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 – 20-29% • 1 – 10-19% • 0 – 0-9% 	

**Competitive Priority (40 points maximum, 10% weight)**

Criteria	Yes (20 points)	Somewhat (10 points)	No (0 points)
New to CJSF Funds	Organization has never received CJSF funds	Organization has received CJSF funds, but not within past two cycles	Organization has received CJSF funds within the past two cycles

Illustrative Weighting Based on Maximum Scores

Criteria	Maximum Raw Score	Weight	Maximum Weighted Score
Alignment	40	35%	14
Planning & Implementation	40	25%	10
Sustainability & Stakeholders	40	30%	12
Competitive Priority	40	10%	4
Total	40	100%	40