



Marketing Mini Grant Scoring Rubric

All grant applications will undergo a comprehensive review process consisting of five sections, with each response evaluated using a standardized five-point scoring rubric. Reviewers will assess the quality and completeness of evidence provided in each answer, assigning scores based on the following criteria:

5 points	4 points	3 points	2 points	1 point
indicates strong, clear evidence with all necessary details fully provided	reflects good evidence where minor clarifications or additional details may strengthen the response	denotes fair evidence where some aspects require further detail or clarification	signifies minimal evidence that lacks sufficient details	indicates no evidence was provided or the answer is missing entirely

This uniform scoring approach ensures consistent, objective evaluation across all applications and allows reviewers to identify both the strongest proposals and those requiring additional information. Applicants are encouraged to provide comprehensive, well-documented responses that directly address each question with specific examples, supporting data, and clear explanations to maximize their scores in each section.

Below are examples of high, medium and low score answers.

	Question 1 Describe in detail your marketing project	Explanation
	What marketing project are you proposing to do? How will the mini-grant funds be used? What are the specific tasks, elements, and timeline of your project?	
Score: 5	<i>We are proposing an upgrade to our current packaging for our locally sourced cookies. We will use the mini-grant funds to buy the first 2000 branded packages. We will order the packages in two parts, so that we are able to keep up with an anticipated increase of sales. We will need more outlets to sell our cookies, and we have already been in touch with five potential independent grocery stores that are interested in selling our cookies but require more formalized packaging. We have the design for the packaging completed, and estimate that it will take about 20 days to confirm the proof and receive our first 500 packages. We will be able to deliver our first orders within the first month of receiving the mini-grant money.</i>	The marketing project is specific and makes sense. There is an established timeline and benchmarks where goals can be evaluated, and clear numbers to measure success. Numbers seem reasonable, and the scope of the marketing project is achievable and fits within the larger marketing plan. Research has been done to accurately predict expenses and potential sales.
Score: 3	<i>We are proposing an upgrade to our current packaging for our locally sourced cookies. We will use the mini-grant funds to buy the first 2000 branded packages. We will need more outlets to sell our cookies, and we have already been in touch with five potential independent grocery stores that are interested in selling our cookies but require more formalized packaging.</i>	Gives information about the marketing project and explains how it will increase sales, but doesn't give any specific numbers regarding sales or reach. While the big goal is described, benchmarks and evaluation criteria are not clear. Research is minimal and little to no hard numbers are included.
Score: 1	<i>We are proposing an upgrade to our current packaging for our locally sourced cookies.</i>	The general marketing project makes sense, however there are no details or numbers to back up assumptions. The marketing project is based on general assumptions rather than research.

	Question 2 Fit into Business & Marketing Plan
	How does this marketing project fit into your overall business and marketing plan? Will this project enhance ongoing strategies or help to create new marketing tools and strategies?
Score: 5	<i>We have set a two year plan to increase our reach 50% by expanding our customer base to include small independent grocery stores in Southern Maine, focusing from Portland down to Kittery. We will do this by participating in winter farmers markets and expanding our word-of-mouth network, sending out direct to customer newsletters, and boosting social media in the areas where we know there are potential wholesale opportunities in independent grocery stores. Our improved packaging will allow us to present ourselves as more professional in these new grocery stores. It will support our ongoing online strategies by being consistent with our brand, so that even if customers only know us from our online presence they will recognize the common branding of our packaging immediately. Improved packaging is essential to the next step in our marketing plan.</i>
Score: 3	<i>We have a plan to expand our customer base to include small independent grocery stores in Southern Maine, focusing from Portland down to Kittery. Our improved packaging will allow us to present ourselves as more professional in these new grocery stores. Improved packaging is essential to the next step in our marketing plan.</i>
Score: 1	<i>Our improved packaging will allow us to present ourselves as more professional in these new grocery stores.</i>

	Question 3 Describe the benefit and impact
	How will this grant benefit and impact your business? Will this project allow you to extend your business connections? Will it strengthen your brand/increase visibility for your business? How many new customers and/or amount of increased sales will this project allow? How will you evaluate the impact of this marketing project?
Score: 5	<i>Having improved packaging will allow us to extend our business connections because more professional packaging will give us opportunities to compete with other local brands at independent grocery stores. We anticipate that having brand-aligned, eye-catching packaging will increase our sales by at least 50% because while now we only sell at farmers markets, having our brand in grocery stores will increase our reach. We hope to have five new stores in two years, and conservatively estimate each store can increase our sales by 10%. We will evaluate the impact of this project by measuring sales increases after each quarter. We will also evaluate how many new wholesale accounts we are able to establish with our new packaging.</i>
Score: 3	<i>Having improved packaging will allow us to extend our business connections because more professional packaging will give us opportunities to compete with other local brands at independent grocery stores. We will evaluate how many new wholesale accounts we are able to establish with our new packaging.</i>
Score: 1	<i>Having improved packaging will allow us to extend our business connections because more professional packaging will give us opportunities to compete with other local brands at independent grocery stores.</i>

	Question 4 Budget
	Please provide a budget outline for this marketing project. Please include price quotes. If your project exceeds \$1,000, please indicate how much you will contribute to the project.
Score: 5	<i>We have already designed our packaging and established prices with Packlane.com. We will order 1000 packages for \$0.50 each and then after we see how quickly they are selling we will order the next 1000 with any adjustments that might need to be made. Any additional costs such as taxes and shipping will be covered by the company. This project has already begun and we have spent a lot of time branding our new packaging and establishing potential wholesale customers. We are confident that with the new packaging we will reach our growth goals!</i>
Score: 3	<i>We will order 1000 packages from an online platform and then after we see how quickly they are selling we will order the next 1000 with any adjustments that might need to be made. We are confident that with the new packaging we will reach our growth goals!</i>
Score: 1	<i>The new packaging will take up the entire \$1000 budget.</i>