



## Peer Due Diligence

# Funding Request Evaluation Rubric and Instructions

## V.1

### Trial Review and Ranking Instructions:

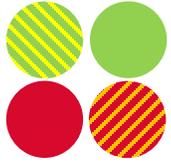
- › Please read each funding request received. When you have read the proposal and the Funding Request Evaluation Rubric, complete a google ranking form using the Funding Request Evaluation Rubric as a guide for each of the funding requests under consideration. You must complete the entire form for your ranking to be recorded.
- › In many cases, you may feel you do not have enough information to provide an accurate ranking, but please do your best. Final funding decisions will not be made based on the first ranking of a request.
- › If you have a conflict of interest with an application, please do not rank it. If you are unsure, please do not rank it.

Special thanks to Village Capital for allowing adaptation of Peer Due Diligence Framework

# SCORE CARD: MxG Project Funding Support

## What green and red look like:

-  **Green (4):** Gold Standard, obvious path to success with no determined obstacles and fully aligned with MxG principles
-  **Amber Green (3):** Path to gold standard, aligned with MxG principles, with more opportunities than obstacles
-  **Amber Red (2):** Uncertain how to incorporate MxG principles, with more obstacles than opportunities
-  **Red (2):** No alignment with MxG principles, with no real path to success as currently designed

Ranking Criteria	Score 1-4 in each area
<p><b>Focus Area Fit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Entrepreneurial &amp; Innovative Customers/ Audience</li> <li> Community and Culture</li> <li> Access to talent, capital and/or markets</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Connectivity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Collaboration</li> <li> Complementary</li> <li> Connection</li> <li> Commitment</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Program Design with Learning Approach</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Collaborative Program Design</li> <li> Customer Discovery &amp; Feedback</li> <li> Honest Evaluation</li> <li> Continuous Improvement</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Impact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> Connection to MxG metrics indicators</li> <li> Organizational or Team Capacity</li> <li> Program Sustainability</li> </ul>	

## Category #1: Focus Area Fit

Sample questions:

Does the project or event focus on growth of entrepreneurial and innovative companies, communities and/or people in a clear and well-articulated way? What is definition of “entrepreneurial” or “innovative” expressed by team? How does it strengthen community of entrepreneurs or culture of innovation? What strategies support increased access to talent, capital and/or markets for Maine entrepreneurs or enterpris-

Definition	What red looks like	What green looks like
<b>Focus Area Fit</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Entrepreneurial &amp; Innovative Customers/Audience</b> Targeted customers, audiences or clients for the effort are entrepreneurial or innovative companies, communities and/or people	Mostly traditional, non-innovative small businesses or sole proprietors served, with less encouragement towards growth and more towards the status quo	Entrepreneurs or companies served are all aspiring to disruptive innovation, or high growth multi-million top line (INC 500 worthy)
<b>Community &amp; Culture</b> Effort strengthens the community of entrepreneurs Effort celebrates and encourages the culture of innovation, risk taking, new ideas and aspiration	Effort is not focused on connecting entrepreneurs to each other or incorporating an innovative approach to the ecosystem	Effort has identified strategies to systematically develop more entrepreneurs with higher aspirations
<b>Access to talent, capital and / or markets</b> Entrepreneurs have identified these three areas as barriers to growing a company in Maine		Team has identified strategies for improving one or more of these three areas of access for Maine companies based on solid evidence

## Category #2: Connectivity

Sample questions:

Have multiple organizations and a diverse group of people been involved in the program design? Have leaders looked around to see who else is doing similar things and invited input? Are there unexplored opportunities for alignment and collaboration? Is project an opportunity to improve on what is already offered?

Definition	What red looks like	What green looks like
<b>Connectivity</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>Collaboration</b> Program and events demonstrate significant collaboration, involve multiple organizations and/or disparate individuals</p>	<p>Nominally collaborative but mostly on the surface. Unclear how decisions will be made, but some collaboration might happen. Community growth might happen but unclear magnitude of impact.</p>	<p>Involves and/or impacts appropriate number of different organizations, communities, and individuals, especially including many organizations involved in creating high-growth, high-impact ventures. Operates with best practice collaborative governance. Demonstrates a strong sense of “team” and community working together</p>
<p><b>Complementary</b> Programs and events are complementary and/or not duplicative of similar activities in the relevant region or demonstrate how new effort will improve on an existing program, event or service currently available  Program design is not simply to split the award between partners but to push partners to excellence</p>	<p>Awareness of other efforts but no demonstrated connection or improvement to existing program or event</p>	<p>Team clearly understands similar programs or events, the differentiation from those events, how different needs are met, and how referrals, co-marketing or other forms of collaboration are used to connect similar programs; or how effort will improve on existing programs using fact or data-based evidence</p>
<p><b>Connection</b> Programs and events help build and connect the larger network and community</p>	<p>While it markets to people, organizations, and communities whose primary mission is one other than entrepreneurial support, perspectives from these groups are not reflected in the planning and implementation of the program</p>	<p>Fully engages people, organizations, and communities whose primary mission is one other than entrepreneurial support in the planning and implementation of the program</p>
<p><b>Commitment</b> Preference is given to those who have committed time and resources to growing the entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystems</p>	<p>Team members rarely demonstrate values of helping and celebrating others in the ecosystem and supporting programs not directly owned by the applicant. Applicant rarely celebrates the success of Maine’s entrepreneur or ecosystem supporters</p>	<p>Team members demonstrate values of helping and celebrating others in the ecosystem and supporting programs not directly owned by the team. Team celebrates the success of any Maine entrepreneur regardless of whether they are a client or within a specific community. Team asks first “what can I do to help?” and actively demonstrates a belief that we are better together, and pushes others towards excellence</p>

### Category #3: Program Design and Learning Approach

Sample questions:

Is there an openness to new ideas from others who will improve outcomes? Has team looked at what is working well within their community, Maine and outside of Maine to learn lessons from others in its program design? Has the effort improved over time by incorporating customer feedback and input? Are there clear and established feedback loops in the program design? Does the team value honest evaluation?

Definition	What red looks like	What green looks like
<p><b>Program Design &amp; Learning Approach</b></p>	<p><b>1</b></p>	<p><b>4</b></p>
<p><b>Collaborative Program Design</b> Program and event leaders are be open to expertise, knowledge, and desire to participate by other organizations and people that will improve outcomes</p>	<p>Team devotes minimal attention to collaboration as a means to improve outcomes</p>	<p>Team is well known for actively seeking input and diverse opinions when developing events and programs; proposed project demonstrates significant collaboration in preparation of the application and throughout the program/event</p>
<p><b>Customer Discovery and Feedback</b> Team has established customer feedback loop(s) and evidence of customer discernment or demand in designing the program or event. They regularly look for feedback and input from customers (and other stakeholders if relevant) through well-established and easily accessible mechanisms. They learn from everything they do and share the learnings with others</p>	<p>Proposed project seems to be driven by applicant's needs/wants rather than clear market demand. Little evidence is presented of input from customers, and there are few if any feedback mechanisms to shape future program efforts</p>	<p>Team presents strong evidence to validate market demand and the proposed activities/program fit well with expressed needs/wants. Some participating entrepreneurs/companies (customers) are already committed. The activities include mechanisms to adjust future activities in response to feedback gathered during the program. The proposed project includes a number of ways in which learnings will be shared</p>
<p><b>Honest Evaluation</b> Funded programs/events team leaders evaluate and share impact as well as lessons learned honestly, transparently, and in a timely manner</p>	<p>Team seems reluctant to discuss weaknesses and risk factors of the proposed project. Minimal effort is proposed for project evaluation and lessons dissemination</p>	<p>Team openly engages in dialogue about strengths and weaknesses of the proposed project, has a clear and well-structured plan for project evaluation and sharing learnings, and is well known for modeling best practices in honest evaluation on past projects</p>
<p><b>Continuous Improvement</b> Learning and improving from what is learned is built into the program design</p>	<p>Minimal or token input, feedback, and/or adjustment of how program is delivered</p>	<p>Team has a well thought out process for improving program. This includes gathering diverse and appropriate input before, feedback after, and adjustment as a result of what is learned</p>

## Category #4: Impact

Sample questions:

Could effort impact the density of new and young firms in Maine? Or the remixing of populations key to idea generation? Or connectivity between programs, entrepreneurs, strategic dealmaker networks? Or diversity including economic specialties, immigrant assimilation, or improving income mobility? Does the organization or team proposing work have the capacity to deliver the program well over time? Has the team paid attention to longer term viability of the program in its design?

Definition	What red looks like	What green looks like
<b>Impact</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>
<p><b>Connection to Ecosystem Metrics Indicators</b> MxG has adopted the Kauffman Foundation’s four broad indicators of Entrepreneurial Ecosystem System Vibrancy: density, fluidity, connectivity and diversity (*see below)</p> <p>MxG is open to other systems of measurement to evaluate progress in strengthening community of entrepreneurs or culture of innovation and/or increasing access to talent, capital and/or markets that allow companies to scale and has track record measuring against these metrics.</p>	<p>Team does not link project outcomes to MxG Metrics. Method of tracking and reporting actual results is unclear. Impact on MxG metrics is expected to be minor</p>	<p>Team clearly links project outcomes to MxG metrics; clearly articulates expected quantitative and qualitative results and how actual results will be tracked and evaluated; impact is likely to be significant on one or more metrics</p>
<p><b>Organizational or Team Capacity</b> Organization or project team has the capacity or path for developing capacity, in terms of talent and finances, to be successful at proposed effort. For large requests or signature programs, organizational capacity is critical to continuity of the proposed program.</p>	<p>Organization or team is under-resourced in talent and/or funding, requiring pursuit of funding that does not connect with organizational mission; organization does not have a clear funding model for support of operations or staff</p>	<p>Organization or team has strategic priorities well aligned with proposed project and a stable operational plan and budget</p>
<p><b>Program Sustainability</b> Projects, Program or event has an identified path to sustainability over time. <b>Large/Signature:</b> programs the focus is to ensure maximum ROI over time <b>Smaller existing:</b> the focus is on incremental impact. <b>Adapting best practices and new/experimental effort:</b> the focus is</p>	<p><b>Large/Signature:</b> Team understands the need but has not identified what steps may need to take place for the program to become sustainable <b>Smaller existing:</b> Team has secured some other support, but has not identified what steps may need to take place for the program to become sustainable over time</p>	<p><b>Large/Signature:</b> An appropriate and sustainable funding model is in place, with good visibility into funding streams including MxG, and realistic contingency plans <b>Smaller existing:</b> Program/event is sustainable without MxG funding, but MxG funding would provide strong incremental impact</p>

## Category #4: Impact (continued)

Sample questions:

Could effort impact the density of new and young firms in Maine? Or the remixing of populations key to idea generation? Or connectivity between programs, entrepreneurs, strategic dealmaker networks? Or diversity including economic specialties, immigrant assimilation, or improving income mobility? Does the organization or team proposing work have the capacity to deliver the program well over time? Has the team paid attention to longer term viability of the program in its design?

Definition	What red looks like	What green looks like
<b>Impact</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>
the institutionalization of what is learned	<b>Adapting or new/experimental:</b> Team addresses sustainability but has not identified steps to identify/validate a sustainable model should the approach prove promising. Minimal efforts devoted to ensuring transfer of learnings.	<b>Adapting or new/experimental:</b> Team has identified analogous programs that are sustainable, factors critical to their success, or has a plausible sustainable funding model. Team understands the process to validate sustainability of proposed effort, including incremental investment/go-no go checkpoints. Resources are in place to fully transfer learnings should the project prove not viable long-term.

- **Density:** density of new and young firms, defined as the number of new and young companies per 1,000 people in a geographic area; share of employment in new and young firms; and density within important sectors.
- **Fluidity:** population flux, or the level at which people move between cities or regions, providing a constant remixing that is key to idea generation; labor market reallocation, or people's ability to find the right match of jobs within a region; and number of high-growth firms.
- **Connectivity:** program connectivity, or how connected entrepreneurs are with resources and each other; spinoff rates, which indicate the extent to which successive waves of new companies are created; and dealmaker networks, which inform entrepreneurial leaders about how effectively deal professionals are establishing relationships and facilitating new firm formation.
- **Diversity:** economic diversification, which ensures that a region is not overly reliant on a particular industry; immigration, or how effectively the ecosystem attracts and assimilates immigrants, who tend to start companies more frequently than the native born do; and income mobility, or how well the entrepreneurial ecosystem diversifies economic opportunity.