

Policies for Determining Client Eligibility and Evaluation for the Seed Money Program

Mandate: Self Help, Inc. (“Self Help”) operates the seed money program to provide a resource for low-income individuals and families to find financial self-reliance by pursuing an educational opportunity or starting, repairing, or expanding a small business.

Areas served:

Los Alamos, Rio Arriba, or Taos Counties, or in the part of Santa Fe County north of the city line.

Maximum assistance provided:

Up to \$1,000.

Frequency:

The assistance is only offered on a one-time basis; approved applicants may not re-apply after the initial grant has been distributed.

Eligibility:

If client does not meet all eligibility criteria, their application will be denied.

- Client must be a resident of Los Alamos, Rio Arriba, or Taos Counties, or in the part of Santa Fe County north of the city line.
- Client must have a total household income not above 165% of the current Federal Poverty Guideline. [A chart of 2021 guidelines is available here.](#)
- Business or education opportunity must be in compliance with state, local, and federal law.
- Business or education opportunity must belong to the client (not on behalf of an employer or larger conglomerate).

Evaluation:

Assuming a case has met eligibility criteria, it is evaluated based on the following:

- Viability
 - Planning, thought, and research have been put into the business or education plan.
 - Business or education opportunity has a reasonable likelihood of success.
 - Client has the degree of stability and motivation needed to pursue the opportunity effectively.
- Effectiveness as a tool for self-reliance
 - If successful, business or education opportunity would make a significant difference in the client’s financial well-being.
- Usefulness of grant
 - Client has insufficient capital resources to pursue the opportunity on their own and needs our help.
 - Capital needs for the opportunity are small enough that a grant from Self Help will make a significant difference.
 - The specific goods requested in the client’s application align with the opportunity’s requirements.

Bonus criteria:

While not required for a successful application, additional factors may be taken into consideration, such as dependents who will benefit from the client’s increased financial well-being, or other community members who will indirectly benefit from the client’s work.