By the american CAMP association®

CHARACTER AT CAMP GRANT PROGRAM

Network Planning Grant Application Packet

Summer 2025

Dear Camp Leader,

Welcome to ACA's Character at Camp Grant Program! Whether you are a seasoned camp leader or new to the field, we are glad you are considering applying for a grant to support character development at camp. This packet includes important background information about character and the grant program, details about eligibility and how to apply, and a copy of the Network Planning Grant Application.

The purpose of this program is to provide financial support, training, and technical assistance for camps starting new character-development programs, those enhancing or expanding existing programs, and those celebrating character at camp through communications, development, and/or community partnerships. By the end of the Character at Camp initiative, we anticipate camps in the US will represent one of the largest and most potent contexts for character development in the learning and development ecosystem.

Eligible organizations can apply for a Planning Grant, an Implementation Grant, or a Network Planning Grant. To help you decide which is right for your camp, here is a quick overview of each grant pathway:

Pathway	Planning Grant	Implementation Grant	Network Grant
Who Should Apply?	Organizations that need a year of planning, training, and capacity building before they can develop and implement a full character proposal.	Organizations that have a specific character proposal in mind, and sufficient capacity to successfully implement that proposal starting in 2026.	Organizations that serve as the coordinating entity for 6+ camps that are eager to plan and implement a character proposal with their on-site program teams.
Duration	One Year	Two or Three Years	One year for planning (if applicable); three years for implementation
Funding Amount	Up to $50,000	Up to $300,000	Up to $375,000 total ($75,000 for planning grants; $300,000 for implementation grants)

The information that follows outlines the **Network Planning Grant** application process. You can find the packets specific to the Planning Grant program and the Implementation Grant program on the Character Grant Program web page. After determining your organization's **eligibility** to apply for a Character at Camp grant, you should carefully consider which grant pathway is the best fit and apply for that grant. You'll find additional details on each grant pathway as well as resources — such as recordings of informational webinars, FAQs, grant program timeline, and access info for office hours with ACA's grantee success team — on the Character Grant Program web page.

On behalf of ACA's Character at Camp Grant Team, thank you for the work you do to support character development among the campers and staff you serve. Whether you apply for and receive a grant or expand your understanding of Character at Camp through ACA's Character Academy, we are glad you are joining us in this work. Only together can we reach our ambitious goal of elevating camp as an expansive and effective context for character development.

In the spirit of camp,

Laurie Pearson, PhD

Senior Director, Innovation and Learning
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Who Is Eligible to Apply for a Character at Camp Grant

Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations that are physically located in the United States and are exempt from tax under Internal Revenue Code (Code) section 501(c)(3) or are a government/municipal organization. Organizations that are exempt from tax under Code section 501(c)(3) must also be public charities under Code section 509(a)(1) (which incorporates Code sections 170(b)(1)(A)(i)-(vi)), 509(a)(2), or (509)(a)(3) Type I or Type II). Tax-exempt religious organizations (e.g., churches and church-related entities) are eligible to apply so long as they are Code section 501(c)(3) public charities.

Additionally, applicants must represent an organization that currently offers day and/or overnight camp programming, which means that each of the following criteria must apply:

- The organization delivers camp programs consistent with ACA's mission and values. Organizations operating at multiple sites and organizations offering camp programming on rented or leased sites are eligible to apply.

- The organization is currently offering programs and/or services that serve campers for at least one full session of three or more consecutive days during summer and/or non-summer months. Camps are welcome to apply for funds to start new programs if they serve campers according to these criteria in some other capacity. Camps offering sessions in a format other than three or more consecutive days are welcome to apply if you can justify in your application why it makes sense for your population for the camp session to be shorter and that you can still accomplish your proposed outcomes in that time.

- The organization is based in the US, and the camp programs for which the applicant is applying are primarily run in the US.

- The camp program(s) for which the applicant is applying for a grant has a primary audience of campers five years and older. *Applicants proposing projects that focus on adult participants must demonstrate the developmental focus (e.g., character programming for adult participants with special needs, or character programming for families attending a family camp) of the adult-serving program*.

Network Planning Grant Overview

For the purpose of the Character at Camp Network Planning Grant Program, a network organization is defined as a local, state, regional, or national tax-exempt organization that serves youth through day or overnight camp programs. The network organization serves as a central coordinating entity for a group of 6+ organizations or camp programs. A representative from the network organization should be preparing their grant application and will serve as the program or project lead if their application is selected for funding. The specific cohort of camp programs selected to participate in a Network Implementation Grant program or project do not need to be identified before applying for a Network Planning Grant — selected networks will identify and recruit the camp programs that will be involved in program or project implementation during the Network Planning Grant period.

In summary, a network organization is defined as:

1. A US-based, tax-exempt organization that includes day and/or overnight camps as a part of its youth-serving mission.
2. An organization that is the coordinating entity for 6+ organizations or camp programs.

Network organizations are first invited to apply for a one-year Network Planning Grant. The purpose of a Network Planning Grant is to provide support for network organizations as they develop a character-focused project. **Network Planning Grant recipients are expected to apply for a Network Implementation Grant following the end of their one-year planning period.**

The Network Implementation Grant application will be available to Network Planning Grant recipients. However, a network organization is not required to apply for and receive a Network Planning Grant in order to apply for a Network Implementation Grant. ACA recognizes that there may be situations in which a network organization has completed the planning stages outside of the Character Grant Program and is only interested in applying for the Network Implementation Grant. If you believe that this describes your network organization, please reach out to the Character Grant Team directly to inform us of your intention to skip the Network Planning Grant and only apply for the Network Implementation Grant. The Character Grant Team is also always available for consultation about what is the right process for your network organization's specific situation.

Network Planning Grants can be used to increase capacity to support the development of a Character at Camp Network Implementation Grant proposal, which could include, for example, programs or projects focused on improving or expanding an existing character-focused program or project, expanding access to and belonging within character-focused programs or projects, and/or celebrating camp as an important and effective context for character development. Network Planning Grant funds can be used for activities and/or personnel to support, for example:

- Strategic planning related to character development across a network of camp programs
- Planning and coordination related to a network-based character program or project
- Evaluating current offerings to identify which areas within a network should add character-focused programs or projects
- Travel to conferences, training, or to build relationships within the network and/or potential program partners (e.g., schools or community organizations)
- Other activities and/or personnel that will support the development of a Character at Camp Network Implementation Grant proposal

Network organizations can request up to $75,000 for a one-year Network Planning Grant that can be used to build capacity to develop a character-focused program or project. To apply for a Network Planning Grant, a representative from the network organization will complete the application that includes a brief description of the proposed planning activities and a budget to support those activities. Network organizations selected to receive a Network Planning Grant will be invited to work with the ACA Character at Camp Grant Team throughout the planning process. At the end of their one-year grant, network organizations will be expected to complete and submit a Character at Camp Network Implementation Grant proposal, which will represent their final year-end report.

If at any point a network organization realizes that they might not submit a Character at Camp Network Implementation Grant proposal, they should reach out to the Character Grant Team immediately to discuss and determine an alternate reporting plan.

If you are an organization with fewer than six camp programs, part of a small group of camp programs that does not have a network organization serving as a coordinating capacity, or a single camp program, then you should consider applying for a **Character at Camp Planning Grant** or a **Character at Camp Implementation Grant**.

Small groups of camp programs (fewer than six) interested in working together on a single character-focused program or project should submit a **joint application** as a part of the Implementation Grant program.

Funding is limited, and this is a competitive grant opportunity; not all applicants will receive awards. See below for additional guidance on how to decide which type of Character at Camp grant to apply for:

What grant should we apply for?

"We're a camp ready to invest in character work, but we don't have the capacity or experience to implement something new. We will benefit from a year of planning, training, and internal capacity building so that **we can propose and implement a program next year.**"

→ Apply for the **PLANNING GRANT**

"We're a camp that successfully implements new programs, we're excited about investing in our character work, we have a specific proposal in mind. **With a little support we'd have the capacity to implement that character program now.**"

→ Apply for the **IMPLEMENTATION GRANT**

"**We're the coordinating entity for a network of 6+ camps.** We are excited to plan, build capacity, and work with our on-site program team, and to connect with other networks doing similar work. If we get a Network Planning Grant, we intend to apply for a full Network Implementation Grant the following year."

→ Apply for the **NETWORK PLANNING GRANT**

Background

The American Camp Association (ACA) represents a community of camp professionals who share in the mission to create quality camp experiences that build a world of belonging and growth. Our work includes a national accreditation program, in-person and virtual opportunities for professional development and connectedness, research, and support for local, state, and federal advocacy — all fueled by a vast community of volunteers, thought leaders, affiliate partners, and collaborators. The Character at Camp Grant Program is part of a six-year initiative funded by Lilly Endowment, Inc. that is designed to increase and expand character development programs at camps in the US.

For over a century, day and overnight camps in the US have fostered character among young people through a diverse array of programs, facilities, and camper populations. While each camp is unique, most share common features such as an immersive setting, supportive relationships with peers and adults, opportunities for fun and challenging activities, and support for reflection and personal growth. ACA's National Camp Impact Study demonstrated that, together, these features promote campers' growth in ways that last over time and transfer to other settings, such as school and early work experiences. What's more, findings from ACA's recently released Economic Impact Study suggest the size of the camp industry — which exceeds 20,000 day and overnight camps — is more expansive than previously thought.

We also know that young people today are experiencing loneliness, isolation, and divisiveness within their schools and communities, which is why opportunities for young people to contribute to and thrive within these places are more important than ever before. Fostering character development in young people is increasingly important, and camps in the US are well positioned to do this. **Thus, the Character at Camp Grant Program provides grant support for starting, improving, expanding, and celebrating character development initiatives at camp.**

What Is Character?

Character itself can be defined in different ways, but one commonly used definition in the field of youth development is best stated by the Character Lab: "The intentions and actions that benefit both the individual and others." With this example of a broad definition of character in mind, we encourage organizations interested in applying to the grant program to think about the specific character strengths they are focused on, such as strengths of heart (e.g., empathy, kindness), strengths of mind (e.g., curiosity, creativity), and strengths of will (e.g., grit, self-control), and to submit proposals that focus on one or more specific strengths. While applicants will not be prioritized based on the character strengths they choose to focus on, we see a particular need for opportunities for young people to practice and cultivate honesty and integrity and thus encourage camps to consider if/how their camp might be positioned to focus in this area.

When considering if your organization should apply and what specific program or project you should request funding for from the Character at Camp Grant Program, we encourage teams to ensure they understand how character is defined and developed in youth development contexts like camp. To learn more about character development, we encourage applicants to check out any of the following widely used character resources:

- The Jubilee Center for Character and Virtues is a leading research center focused on character, virtues, and values in the interest of human flourishing. They've created frameworks for character education that can be used by all educators, and they produce influential research that shapes how institutions think about character development.

- Character.org is an organization comprised of educators, researchers, and business and civic leaders who advocate for character. Their 11 Principles Framework is a guide to cultivating character in your organization. They support educators to help them develop comprehensive character initiatives.
- Character Lab connected researchers with educators to create greater knowledge about the conditions that lead to social, emotional, academic, and physical well-being for young people throughout the country. Their playbooks are research-based guides to cultivating character, including recommended curricula, videos, and books. Their tips give actionable advice that all educators can use to enhance their work. While Character Lab has concluded their research, their existing resources continue to be available through their website.
- The VIA Institute on Character has developed the groundbreaking Character Strengths Survey validated assessment designed specifically to measure the 24 core character strengths in individuals. Nearly 35 million surveys have been taken around the world, and VIA supports the advancement of character science through research, personalized reports, books, and more.

Timeline for Network Planning Grants

(Note: all dates subject to change)

July 29, 2025	Network Planning Grant application process opens
October 15, 2025	Network Planning Grant application process closes
December 2025	Awards announced, grantees notified
January 2026	Planning period begins, grant funds distribution begins
Fall–Winter 2026	Network Implementation Grant application process opens

Network Planning Grantee Expectations

We understand that each network organization is unique and will pursue character programs or projects that are relevant to the camps within that network. Network organizations are also effective vehicles for developing and disseminating character practices at scale; thus, the network organizations receiving Network Planning Grants will be asked to develop their character-focused programs or project alongside other peers from other network organizations and in coordination with the ACA Character at Camp grant team.

Network organizations will be asked to identify and designate two members of their leadership team to serve as grant leads. These individuals should be the people at the network organization who are directly responsible for the success of the grant and will be actively involved in the grant implementation. Please read the following grantee expectations as you consider who will serve as your two-member team. If selected to receive a grant, network organizations will be expected to:

1. Complete necessary paperwork and reports at the start and end of the one-year Network Planning Grant program.
2. Use grant dollars according to the proposed budget and report any unanticipated changes to their spending.
3. Maintain camp membership to ACA (membership funding can be written in the proposed budget if the camp is not already a member).
4. Participate in around three virtual meetings with peers from other network organizations receiving Network Planning Grants.

5. Meet with the ACA Character at Camp Team to coordinate elements of character-focused programs and projects where possible, such as evaluation and dissemination of program and project outputs to the larger field.
6. Attend optional (but encouraged) in-person meetups at ACA regional and national events (travel funding can be included in the proposed budget).

Please note: We recognize that staff and staff capacity can change frequently and sometimes unexpectedly. If selected to receive a grant, grantees are encouraged to communicate these challenges as they arise to determine alternatives to the requirements outlined above.

In addition, we recognize that many camps are led primarily or entirely by volunteers. In this case, at least one of the two individuals assigned to this project should be the camp director/executive director, the chair of the board of directors. or whomever in the organization is accountable for financial management and accounting.

Network Planning Grant Application Instructions

This application is designed to be completed by staff from the network organization with appropriate support and involvement of senior leaders within the network organization. We recommend that you bring together a team to work through the self-assessment portion of the application and identify the character work your network may want to undertake. While multiple team-member participation is not a requirement, the self-assessment will benefit from multiple perspectives.

We suggest you prepare your answers in a separate document before completing the application in our online grant software, GLM by Foundant, as technology always has its surprises. However, the online grant software saves your responses as you go through each section. You can collaborate on a single application with others on your team; find more about that here.

You will need the following documents to complete the application:

- IRS determination letter and eligibility criteria form.
    - *If your organization does not have an IRS determination letter (some governmental or municipal organizations and some religious organizations may not be required to obtain an IRS determination letter), you may still be eligible for this grant. Please contact the ACA Character at Camp grant team to confirm if any additional information may be needed for your organization.*
- The network organization's most recently filed IRS Form 990.
    - *If your organization does not file a 990, you may still be eligible for this grant. Please contact the ACA Character at Camp Grant Team to confirm if any additional information may be needed for your organization.*
- Board roster
- Organizational chart, or at least the dimensions of the network organization that include camp programs and the network organization staff who will serve as the grant leads on the Network Planning Grant application and, if selected, Network Planning Grant activities.
- Strategic plan or any reports/documents that demonstrate the role of character within/across the network organization.

If you do not have an organizational chart, you can use free templates in Creately, Google Slides, or Microsoft PowerPoint to create one.

Camp Information

1. **What is the name of the network organization submitting this application?**

   Network organization name:
   Network organization website:

   Affiliation, if applicable (e.g., Girl Scouts of the USA, Salvation Army, Camp Fire, SeriousFun Children's Network, YMCA, faith-based organization, college or university):

2. *Does the network organization submitting this application have current status as a tax-exempt organization under Code section 501(c)(3) or government/municipal or religious entity?*

   [Check box]

   If yes, please upload documentation verifying your camp's nonprofit or government/municipal entity status here: [Upload]

3. **What is the network organization's primary mailing address?**

   Street address:
   City:
   State:
   Zip code:

4. **What is the network organization's mission? Please provide the network organization's mission statement in the space below.**

   [Text entry – 1000 characters]

Grant Team

While the successful implementation of any proposed grant activities relies on many hands to get the work done, leadership is critical to the grant's success. The following section requests background information on the two grant lead staff most responsible for carrying out the grant activities as well as the key personnel required to implement the grant activities.

We will ask you to confirm the two grant lead positions who will be most responsible for carrying out the grant activities, as well as what support other personnel will provide.

5. **Who is the first grant lead at the network organization who will oversee the grant award and planning activities described in this application?**

    First name:
    Last name:
    Job title:
    Email:
    Phone:

6. **What best describes this person's employment at the network organization?**

    Full-time year-round
    Part-time year-round
    Full-time seasonal
    Part-time seasonal
    Volunteer
    Other, please describe:

7. **What is this person's role/title at the network organization? Please include here if/how this person supports camps within the network as a part of their role.**

    [Text entry]

8. **Please provide a brief bio for this person, including past experience in camps, experience with character development, and/or experience preparing/receiving grants.**

    [Text entry]

9. **Who is the second grant lead at the network organization who will oversee the grant award and the planning activities described in this application?**

    First name:
    Last name:
    Job title:
    Email:
    Phone:

10. **What best describes this person's employment at the network organization?**

Full-time year-round
Part-time year-round
Full-time seasonal
Part-time seasonal
Volunteer
Other, please describe:

11. **What is this person's role/title at the network organization? Please include here if/how this person supports camp programs within the network organization as a part of their role.**

[Text entry]

12. **Please provide a brief bio for this person, including past experience in camps, experience with character development, and/or experience preparing/receiving grants.**

[Text entry – 1500 characters]

13. **What is the name and contact information for the network organization's leadership?**

First name:
Last name:
Job title:
Email:
Phone:

14. **Is the network organization leader identified above aware and fully supportive of this grant application?**

[check box]

Character at Camp

When defining character, the Character at Camp Initiative draws upon well-established resources, including Character Lab. While there are many definitions of character, [Character Lab](#) defines it as "Intentions and actions that benefit other people as well as ourselves" and defines character strengths as strengths of heart, mind, and will.

For the following question, you should identify (up to) three character strengths that your network organization will prioritize to cultivate through the character-focused programs and projects that this grant would help you propose and implement. The options we provide do not constitute an exhaustive list of all possible character strengths. Please feel free to write in an additional character strength under "Other" if necessary.

Your network organization likely has more than three character strengths that you seek to cultivate in your participants, but within the context of this grant proposal your network organization should select the three character strengths on which you will focus. You will refer back to these three character strengths throughout the rest of the grant application.

15. **What are (up to) three character strengths that your network organization aims to support in your character-focused programs and projects?**

- Kindness
- Respect
- Confidence
- Teamwork
- Appreciation of diversity
- Leadership
- Compassion
- Curiosity
- Creativity
- Integrity
- Honesty
- Perseverance
- Gratitude
- Autonomy
- Critical thinking
- Self-control
- Volunteering
- Motivation
- Humility
- Judgment
- Spirituality
- Responsibility
- Resilience
- Independence
- Community-mindedness
- Other [Text entry]

16. **Why did you select these character strengths? Please describe, in your own words, the rationale behind identifying these character strengths as those that your organization focuses on over all others.**

    [Text entry – 3000 characters]

Character at Camp Self-Assessment

The purpose of this self-assessment is to help the network organization understand where and how support for character development can be found **at the network organization level** and/or **across some or all camp programs within the network**. As a self-assessment, there are no right or wrong answers; instead, we are interested in how you link the results of the assessment to your potential character-focused program or project ideas. **It might be helpful to think about your responses both in terms of the network organization and across the camp programs within the network.**

The grant program is open to networks organizations at all stages in this work, thus a higher score on the self-assessment does not mean your network organization is more suitable for funding.

The self-assessment has seven sections: prioritization, programming, training, staff support, evaluation, communication, and community engagement.

Please use the following scale to complete the self-assessment, taking care to choose the number that best reflects your network organization right now. Where possible, respond using the 0 to 4 scale. If you feel a simple "yes" or "no" is the best response, use "4" for "yes" and "0" for "no."

0 — No, or Not Yet Started: The network organization has not considered this, or we do not have enough information to respond.

1 — Ready to Start / Developing: The network organization has identified this as something we want to do, but we have not yet done it.

2 — Launched: The network organization has just recently launched this, but it is too early to know if we are doing this effectively.

3 — Implementing: The network organization has been doing this work with some evidence of success, but some challenges remain.

4 — Yes, or Leading / Continuously Improving: The network organization is achieving its desired outcomes in this area and is continually adapting as needed.

In completing this self-assessment, please focus on the character strengths you identified in your earlier response.

17. These statements are about **prioritization**. They ask you to consider how deeply character building is embedded in the core outcomes *at the network organization level and/or across some or all camp programs within the network organization* and how it influences leadership priorities and planning.

Prioritization	0	1	2	3	4
The three character strengths we will primarily focus on are explicitly named in the mission, vision, or values at the network organization level and/or across some or all camp programs within the network organization.					
Network organization leadership and/or leadership at some or all camp programs within the network organization have defined outcomes for character-based programming.					
Network organization leadership and/or leadership at some or all camp programs within the network organization prioritize character-based outcomes when making decisions.					

18. These statements are about **programming**. They ask you to reflect on the extent to which most of the organizations in the network include programs designed specifically to build character and whether character development outcomes drive adjustments in programming.

Programming	0	1	2	3	4
Most or all camp programs within the network organization have one or more key programs that are intentionally designed to develop the three character strengths chosen in the previous section.					
Most or all camp programs within the network organization integrate character development to promote the three character strengths chosen in the previous section across multiple programs or projects.					
Most or all camp programs within the network organization change programming as needed to better meet organizational outcomes related to character development.					

19. These statements are about **training for camper-facing staff** (frontline staff) such as counselors, counselors-in-training, and activity leaders at the camp programs within your network organization. They ask you to reflect on the extent to which training explicitly addresses character development and equips staff with the knowledge and skills they need to support character development.

Training	0	1	2	3	4
Most or all camp programs within the network organization intentionally focus on the three character strengths chosen in the previous section as a part of their staff training.					
Frontline staff at most or all camp programs within the network organization understand their role in promoting the character strengths chosen in the previous section.					
Most of the camp programs within the network organization have dedicated resources for training frontline staff to support character development.					

20. These statements are about the **capacity for character development work** *at the network organization level and/or among most or all camp programs within the network organization*. At either level, capacity can include dedicated personnel, organizational infrastructure, a strategic plan, and connectivity with and among camp programs in the network organization.

Staff Capacity	0	1	2	3	4
"Champions" exist at the network organization level and/or among most or all camp programs within the network organization who strongly support character work. These champions could be, but are not limited to, organizational staff, camp leaders within the network organization, board members, and donors.					
Staff time at the network organization level and/or among most or all camp programs in the network organization is intentionally dedicated to supporting character development work.					
In general, the network organization and/or most or all camp programs within the network organization have dedicated resources to support character development.					

21. These statements are about **evaluation**. They ask you to reflect on the extent to which the network organization and/or some or all camp programs within the network organization have specific processes in place to measure progress toward character development outcomes (e.g., surveys, staff observational measures, parent interviews, focus groups, etc.).

Evaluation	0	1	2	3	4
The network organization and/or some or all camp programs within the network organization assess(es) **camp programs'** progress toward character development outcomes.					
The network organization and/or some or all camp programs within the network organization measure(s) **camper outcomes** related to the three character strengths chosen in the previous section.					

22. These statements are about **community engagement**. They ask you to assess the extent to which the network organization and/or some or all camp programs within the network organization involve(s) its broader community (campers, families, and partners) in shaping and supporting character development efforts.

Community Engagement	0	1	2	3	4
Campers have opportunities to provide input about the programs/activities related to character development at some or all camp programs within the network organization.					
The families of participants have opportunities to provide input about the programs/activities related to character development at some or all camp programs within the network organization.					
The network organization and/or camp programs within the network organization partner with one or more outside organizations to support the design and/or implementation of the character development work.					

23. These statements are about **communication**. They ask you to consider the extent to which the network organization and/or some or all camp programs within the network organization share(s) information about character at camp with invested parties.

Communication	0	1	2	3	4
The network organization and/or camp programs within the network organization communicate with families about the importance of character development in our camp programs.					
The network organization and/or camp programs within the network organization communicate(s) with campers about the importance of character development in our camp programs.					
The network organization and/or camp programs within the network organization communicate(s) with staff about the importance of character development in our camp programs.					
The network organization and/or camp programs within the network organization communicate(s) with funders, donors, and/or supporters about the importance of character development in our camp programs.					

Network Planning Grant Purpose and Outcomes

In this section, you will be asked to reflect on your organizational capacity, the self-assessment you completed, and other factors, and then provide information on the type of planning efforts the network organization intends to undertake. Potential uses of grant funds include (but are not limited to) staff time for planning, project development, professional development, strategic planning consulting fees, travel for planning-related activities, etc.

For a Network Planning Grant proposal, we do not expect you to have a fully developed character program or project in mind. Rather, we want to see a clearly articulated, actionable plan on how the network organization will use Network Planning Grant funds (if awarded) to develop a Character at Camp Network Implementation Grant proposal. Your plan should align with your character self-assessment and demonstrate that the network organization understands the strengths and limitations both at the network organization level and across most or all camp programs within the network organization as they relate to character-focused programs or projects.

24. **Based on the character self-assessment you just completed and any other relevant factors, please describe two to three of the character programs, projects, or practices you currently have in place either at the network organization level or in most or all camp programs within the network.**

    These could include, for example, a challenge course program in which campers reflect on character strengths they used to help their group succeed, or an evaluation strategy that measures character-related outcomes that campers gain during their time at camp. If you do not have any current character programs, projects, or practices, please enter "no current character programs, projects, or practices" in the space below and move on to the next question.

    [Text Entry – 3000 characters]

25. **Reflecting on your answers from the character self-assessment, please describe the primary needs, or areas for growth, that you identified either at the network organization level or in most or all camp programs within the network organization.**

    [Text Entry – 3000 characters]

26. **For each of the needs listed above, describe any specific structures or supports (e.g., staff capacity, strategic direction, current funding, partnerships, systems of continuous improvement) currently available to the network organization that could be used to help meet those needs.** For example, if you identified in the self-assessment a need for stronger communication about character at camp, then you would describe what supports/resources currently available to the network organization you would use to develop solutions for that need.

    [Text Entry – 3000 characters]

27. **Identify and describe two or three supports that are *not currently in place* that you need to build or invest in to meet the needs you identified above.** These can include partnerships with outside organizations, a culture of continuous improvement, a strong staff team, access to evidence-based character curricula, etc.

    [Text Entry – 3000 characters]

28. **How would the network organization use the planning period to identify, develop, and/or implement the supports you described above?** Please list up to five specific activities (e.g., hiring, consulting, convenings, assessment/evaluation) you would use during the planning period to build capacity in these areas.

    [Text Entry – 3000 characters]

29. **How much grant funding are you requesting to support the planning activities described above? You can request up to $75,000.** Please also use the space below to identify and justify up to five activities and/or expenses that will be supported by the grant funds.

    [Text Entry – 3000 characters]

30. **What additional resources — such as staff time, facilities, technology, additional grants, etc. — will the network organization commit to this work over and above what you will fund with Network Planning Grant dollars?**

   [Text entry – 3000 characters]

31. **To the greatest extent possible, please describe your network organization's current thinking regarding the camp programs that might be involved in a Network Implementation Grant, should you receive one.** Are you thinking that your entire network of camp programs will be involved, or a specific segment? If a specific segment, how might you determine what that segment is, how would you connect and engage with them, why would that be the right segment, what would your general process be, etc.?

   (You are not required to name the cohort nor the specific camp programs in your Network Planning Grant application, but we will expect you to name a specific cohort of approximately 6–20 camp programs for the Network Implementation Grant application.)

   [Text Entry – 3000 characters]

32. One goal of the Character at Camp Initiative is to increase the accessibility of character-development opportunities for all campers, staff, families, organizations, and communities, including those who are currently underrepresented within the camp industry. **If the planning activities you are proposing helps to achieve this goal, please detail how and why you believe they will do so.**

   (Please note that answering this question is not required to complete this application or to be considered for a grant. If you do not wish to answer, please skip to the next question.)

   [Text entry – 3000 characters]

Organizational Capacity

This section will help us understand factors that will help you to achieve your desired outcomes in the future program and projects you design. These questions include information about your finances and your organizational structure.

33. **What is your network organization's total camp-related operating budget?**

   [Text Entry]

34. **What are your network organization's sources of revenue? Please list key sources of revenue (e.g., camper enrollment income, individual donors, grants) and approximate percent of total revenue from each source. (Note: the total should equal 100 percent.)**

   [Text Entry – 1000 characters]

35. **Considering the revenue mix you outlined in the previous question, in what area does your network organization need the most support?** This can include strengthening existing revenue sources and/or identifying additional revenue sources.

    [Text Entry – 1000 characters]

36. **Please upload a copy of your organization's board roster.**

    [Upload]

37. **Please upload a copy of your network's organizational chart.** You can use free templates in [Creately](#), Google Slides, or Microsoft PowerPoint if you do not have an organizational chart.

    [Upload]

38. **What is your network organization's approach to professional development for your leadership staff (e.g., nonseasonal staff, such as camp directors and program directors)?**

    [Text Entry – 3000 characters]

39. **If any of the grant lead(s) that you name in this application to oversee your Character at Camp Network Planning Grant (if funded) had to leave their role tomorrow, how would your network organization manage the grant award and complete the grant activities?**

    [Text Entry – 3000 characters]

Application Review Criteria

In the review process, we will evaluate and make decisions based on the following aspects of each individual application:

- Self-Assessment and Need
  - We will be looking for network organizations that articulate a clear and accurate view of themselves and that demonstrate a clear need for a Network Planning Grant based on their capacity and level of expertise.

- Budget and Outcome Alignment
  - We will be looking for network organizations that clearly articulate how they will use grant funds to meet their stated needs and how they will effectively build sufficient capacity to submit a compelling Network Implementation Grant application at the end of the Network Planning Grant period.

- Overall Assessment
  - We will be looking for all aspects of the application to be clear, realistic, and warrant confidence that a Network Planning Grant will be used in an impactful and effective way.