**Section 546.170 Review Criteria and Negotiation Procedures**

Grant proposals shall be reviewed on a competitive basis. Based on the competitive review, applicants shall be selected to enter into negotiations with the Department for a grant. The purpose of negotiations shall be to arrive at mutually acceptable grant provisions, including general, budgetary, and scope-of-work provisions. The final decision to make a grant award will be made by the Director of the Department. The Department shall use the following criteria when reviewing grant proposals and making awards:

a) Need of the Eligible Community: In determining relative need, the Department shall consider the following factors:

1) economic need in each target community, as evidenced by the proportion of local youth eligible for reduced cost, or free lunches under the National School Lunch Program; and

2) the level of access to technology of the populations to be served by the applicant.

b) Quality of the Proposal: The Department shall examine the overall quality of the activities and programs provided by the applicant. In making this judgment the Department shall consider:

1) the range, nature, and volume of activities to be undertaken, or proposed to be undertaken;

2) the measurable performance outcomes proposed by the applicant;

3) the past success of the applicant; and

4) the qualifications of staff assigned to deliver project activities.

c) Community Support: The Department shall consider overall level of community support for the applicant's proposal. In making this judgment the Department shall consider:

1) the amount of local community input received by the applicant in the design and operation of the proposed services; and

2) the level of financial support received by the applicant from private/non-governmental sources.

d) Cost: The Department shall examine the reasonableness of costs relative to the type of expenses being proposed.

e) Geographic Distribution of Awards: Along with the other criteria listed in this Section, the Director of the Department shall consider the geographic distribution of awards throughout the State when making final decisions regarding grant awards.

(Source: Amended at 26 Ill. Reg. 3026, effective February 15, 2002)