

# **Get Out and Get Active Grant – 2026**

## **Grant Concept Note (Letter of Intent) Guidance**

### **Purpose of the Grant Concept Note**

The Grant Concept Note is the **required first step** in the ADI's two-phase application process. It is intentionally designed as a **high-bar screening mechanism**, not a mini full proposal or preliminary narrative.

The Concept Note allows the ADI to assess:

- Alignment with the ADI's mission and 2026 funding posture
- Fit within the eligible project scope
- Clarity of the target population
- Readiness to execute a well-defined program idea

Only the strongest, best-aligned Concept Notes will be invited to submit a Full Proposal for this grant.

Projects where **research, data generation, or hypothesis testing** is the primary objective will **not** advance past the Concept Note stage.

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### **How the Concept Note Is Used**

Concept Notes are reviewed to determine **whether an applicant should be invited forward to submit a full proposal**, not to do an exhaustive review or provide comparative feedback.

Reviewers look for:

- Clear mission fit
- Intentional use of physical activity as a mental health support
- Target population clarity with credible need and relevance
- A concrete, realistic program concept
- Evidence that the applicant is prepared to execute the project

Concept Notes that are vague, aspirational, overly conceptual, or that defer key decisions to the full proposal stage will not advance.

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# Who Should Submit a Concept Note

This grant is best suited for organizations that:

- Already view physical activity as a meaningful mental health support
- Can clearly articulate *why* physical activity is central to their approach
- Have a specific program idea, not just a general area of interest
- Are prepared to implement a project within the grant period (the next calendar year)

Applicants unsure whether their project aligns are strongly encouraged to self-screen using the **Explicit Exclusions** section of the RFP before submitting a Concept Note. This self-screening step is intentional and expected.

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## Required Concept Note Elements

Concept Notes are submitted via a **structured online form**. Narrative length is intentionally limited. Applicants should respond clearly and directly.

These submissions are evaluated in three primary areas: (1) Mission & Strategic Alignment, (2) Target Population Clarity, and (3) Concept Readiness & Feasibility.

### 1. Organization Information

Provide all of the requested organization information.

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### 2. Eligibility Confirmation

Confirm the eligibility requirements associated with this grant.

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### 3. Project Overview (300 words max)

Provide a concise description of the proposed project, including:

- What you plan to do
- How physical activity is used intentionally to support mental health
- What the outcome(s) will be as a result of this project

This should be read as a clear program concept, not a vision statement. Applicants should briefly signal why support from the ADI would meaningfully influence the timing, scope, or feasibility of this project.

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#### **4. Mental Health Intent & Physical Activity Connection (250 words max)**

Applicants must explicitly describe:

- The mental health challenge(s) being addressed
- How physical activity functions as a **core mechanism** for mental health support

Physical activity must be **integral**, not optional, symbolic, or secondary. Programs that simply add movement to an otherwise unchanged fitness, recreation, or clinical model will not advance.

Projects where the mental health intent is implicit, indirect, or peripheral will not advance.

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#### **5. Primary Target Population (200 words max)**

Identify **one primary population** the project is designed to serve.

Strong Concept Notes:

- Clearly define who the project is for
- Explain why this population is appropriate and in need
- Avoid attempting to serve “everyone”

Secondary audiences may be mentioned for context but are not evaluated.

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#### **6. Project Classification**

Applicants must select **one primary project classification**:

- Startup / Pilot Program
- Expansion or Enhancement of an Existing Program
- Equipment or One-Time Resources

This classification shapes review expectations and budget reasonableness. Only one primary classification is permitted.

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## 7. Readiness & Feasibility Signal (250 words max)

Briefly describe:

- Current stage of the project (pilot-ready, expansion-ready, or otherwise sufficiently developed to execute within the grant period)
- Key activities planned during the grant period
- Organizational capacity to carry out the work

Be sure to include concrete execution signals, such as:

- Identified implementation lead
- Secured or identified site/location (if applicable)
- Defined recruitment pathway
- Realistic timeline within the grant period
- Preliminary budget feasibility

This section is not a full implementation plan. Reviewers are looking for evidence that the idea is **realistic and executable** within the grant period, not speculative or exploratory.

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## 8. Preliminary Funding Snapshot (150 words max)

Provide and briefly describe the following financial information:

- Total project cost
- Grant amount requested from the ADI
- Clear but succinctly outline of the anticipated expenditures to be funded by the grant funds

Applicants should ensure that the requested funds align with the funding restrictions outlined in the RFP, including the prohibition on staff salaries, general operating support, and indirect costs.

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## What Reviewers Look For

Concept Notes are evaluated using a short screening rubric focused on:

- **Mission & Strategic Alignment** – Clear fit with the ADI’s purpose and 2026 priorities
- **Target Population Clarity** – One clearly defined, appropriate population
- **Concept Readiness** – A concrete idea that merits full proposal development
- **Potential Impact** – Impact potential and sustainability beyond the grant period

Fatal flaws at the Concept Note stage include:

- No explicit mental health + physical activity linkage
- Projects that fall into an explicitly excluded category
- Unclear or inappropriate target population

Concept Notes that contain a fatal flaw will not advance and are not reconsidered at later stages.

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## What the Concept Note Is *Not*

The Concept Note is **not**:

- A full narrative proposal
- A place for extensive literature review or theory
- A budget justification
- A request for general operating support

Applicants should focus on clarity and alignment, not volume or narrative polish.

Applicants should understand that grant funds **cannot be used** for staff salaries, general operating costs, or ongoing program expenses.

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## Strong vs. Weak Concept Notes (Quick Contrast)

### Strong Concept Notes typically:

- Describe a **specific, well-defined program** that is ready to be implemented or expanded
- Make the **mental health objective explicit**, with physical activity clearly positioned as a core driver of impact
- Identify **one primary target population** and explain why that population is appropriate and in need
- Demonstrate that the project would **meaningfully benefit from the ADI's support** (catalytic value)
- Show evidence of organizational readiness without over-explaining

### Weak Concept Notes often:

- Describe broad ideas, aspirations, or areas of interest rather than a concrete program
- Treat physical activity as optional, symbolic, or interchangeable with other activities
- Attempt to serve “everyone” or describe multiple populations without prioritization
- Rely on future planning, partnerships, or research to define the project later
- Resemble a research abstract, fitness program description, or general operating request

This contrast is intended to help applicants self-assess alignment and readiness before submitting.

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## Review Timing & Notifications

- Concept Notes are reviewed during and following the submission deadline
  - A limited number of applicants (maximum 20) will be invited to submit a Full Proposal
  - Applicants invited forward will be notified by email
  - Applicants not invited will be notified shortly after the invitations are sent for full proposals (early summer 2026)
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## Final Guidance

Strong Concept Notes answer three questions clearly:

1. **Why this project?**
2. **Why this population?**
3. **Why is physical activity essential to the mental health impact?**

If those answers are clear, concrete, and well-aligned, the Concept Note is doing its job—and is likely competitive at this stage.