

2019 INNOVATION GRANTS PROGRAM

Application Instructions

These instructions assume you have a copy of the application form on hand. The application form is available on the AEF website in PDF format with fillable fields that you can download, complete, save and submit electronically. Visit, <http://alexeducationfoundation.org/our-impact/#teacher-grants> for the link to the grant application form.

The complete grant application consists (in order) of the following parts:

1. Cover sheet (one page)
2. Title page (one page)
3. Project Description
4. Budget table (generally 1 page, use more if needed)
5. Budget justification, if applicable (generally less than 1 page, use more if needed)
6. Appendices (optional)

The cover sheet and title page must use the official grant application form. The project description must also use the official application form but additional pages may be attached as necessary. A budget form and budget justification form is also provided, but you can create your own so long as you include the information described below. **Grant applications must be submitted electronically.** Send to Christine Reilly **by the deadline of Friday, April 5, 2019.** If you have any questions, please contact Christine Reilly at creilly@alexeducationfoundation.org or (320) 815-5052.

1. Cover Sheet

The cover sheet contains the administrative information about the project and will not be seen by the review team. It is the only place in the grant where the project team and project sites should be identified by name.

- Project Title:** Pick a short, but descriptive title for your project. Try to make it 60 characters or less, including spaces.
- Project Leader:** The person who will be responsible for the overall conduct and direction of the project. It need not be the person writing the grant but must be a School District 206 teacher/administrator.
- Team Members:** List the names and titles of all other key members of the project team.
- Sites:** List the school or other site where the project will be conducted. If this is a collaborative project, list the sites of all members of the collaborating team.
- Signatures:** Read the signature section carefully because by signing the application, you are taking responsibility for the project should it be funded. If you are signing as a principal or supervisor, you are assuring that the project team will do the work described in the application. By signing as a supervisor, you are also assuring there will be fiscal oversight of the project.

The application will not be accepted without the signatures of all project team members and their principals or supervisors.

2. Title Page

This is the front page of the application that will be seen by the review team. Make sure that it contains no information that identifies you or your school by name.

Project Title: Repeat the title you put on the cover sheet.

Project Summary: In 100 words or less, provide a succinct summary of your project.

Pretend that the audience for the summary is a District 206 parent. Avoid jargon and use of terms that would not be understood by non-experts. You will have done a good job if someone reading the summary knows exactly what the project is all about.

Impact: List the total number of students that will be impacted by the project and the grades levels (K-12) of those students. Please be reasonable in your estimate. Putting down “every child in the District” will not aid your application unless you can explain why in the narrative section of the proposal. Not every proposal will impact a large number of students so do not be discouraged by these criteria. Many grants are approved that impact a grade or even a classroom. List the number of District 206 schools that will be directly involved in the project.

Budget: List the total project budget in dollars, and then the amount being requested from AEF in this grant application. These two numbers may be different because some of the project may be funded from other sources such as a PAC or an outside foundation. You only need to put down the totals because the details go in the budget section of the application.

Project Dates: List the start and end dates of the project. Projects should take no more than 12 months.

An important technical note on filling in the Word version of the application on your computer: as you fill in the entries, delete blank lines as necessary to keep the cover sheet and title page on one page each.

3. Project Description

The project description should describe your grant in detail using the following categories. Be clear and concise.

Need:

- Describe the student, teacher or program need(s) that your project will meet.
- Why is this need significant and why is your project necessary?

Innovation:

- Innovation and creativity involve bringing a lesson to life; using new skills and learning; introducing new methods, devices or customs, or changing the way of doing things.
- The project will identify ways in which the above characteristics are being met.

Objectives and Work Plan:

- Be brief. A numbered or bulleted list is fine.
- What are the specific objectives of your project?
- The work plan specifics depend on the nature of the project. For example, if your project involves equipment purchase, here is where you describe the equipment.
- Or, if the project involves training, here is where you describe the format and content of the training.
- If the project involves more than one classroom or more than one site, describe how that will work.
- Provide a timeline and list the key dates associated with major project milestones and deliverables.
- Provide sufficient timeline information so that it can be used as a planning chart to track project progress.

Impact and Replication:

- Describe how the project method and results will be shared with other teachers in the district and, if appropriate, to those outside the district.
- Note that projects that have potential impact outside of District 206 are encouraged to request travel funds for team members to present at regional or national teaching conferences.

Evaluation:

- Describe how the project will be evaluated.
- List the criteria involved.
- If applicable, use quantitative (measurable) criteria and define a rating system for each criterion.
 - Example: Survey Criteria: Increase in Participation
 - 1 = LOW (no increase) 5= HIGH (increase of 50% or more)

4. Budget Table

- The budget should list the entire project costs. The bottom of the table has a section to list the amount being requested from AEF and the amount and source of any matching funds.
- Please be as clear as you can. The budget can make or break a project.
- Designate which categories the costs fall under (see descriptions below). Use the following categories to describe the costs included in the budget:

Training: The cost of hiring substitutes so that staff members can work on the project, attend training sessions, or do whatever else is appropriate for the project. List number of days and number of subs required if applicable.

Supplies: The supplies required by the project. These should be over and above what the school would be reasonably expected to provide from normal operating funds.

Equipment: A large purchase for a piece of capital equipment. Include one page about the equipment from a product ad or brochure or web site, and a vendor quote in the application appendix. If the equipment requires installation, don't forget to include any necessary installation costs in the budget.

Travel: Travel may include bussing students or travel for teachers to attend conferences or training sessions. All travel by staff members must be explained in the justification section of the budget.

Consultants: List the costs associated with any trainers or consultants involved in the project. For example, here is where you would put down the costs associated with bringing in a professional trainer or other expert. If your proposal includes other teachers from our district in a collaborative effort, you should note that here.

Other: If none of the above categories work, list a cost in this category.

The budget table should include the total project costs and then the amount being requested from AEF. If these two numbers are different, state the amount of matching funds. In the budget justification, list the organizations (e.g. PAC or other site funds) that have committed to providing matching funds and the amount of their match.

5. Budget Justification

Immediately following the budget table, include a brief Budget Justification section where you can explain any unusual costs associated with the project. When in doubt, explain a cost. All travel costs must be justified.

6. Appendices

Your application may have an optional appendix containing materials that you think may help the reviewers understand what you are proposing. For example, if you are proposing to purchase a piece of equipment or a curriculum development program, you might want to include a page or two about the product from the manufacturer's brochure or web site. Please be respectful of the reviewers' time and limit any appendix to the very few pages that you think are essential to the application. An appendix is optional and will not be present in most applications.

Proposal Writing Tips

1. Prepare your application on a word processor to make it easier for the reviewers to read.
2. Follow the instructions. Again this is to make it easier for the reviewers. The last thing you want to do is annoy a reviewer because he or she can't find where critical information is located.
3. Write as if you were addressing an audience of interested parents. Eliminate jargon and explain any terms you use that are familiar to those in the teaching profession but may not be familiar to parents.
4. Have a descriptive title.
5. Describe very clearly what you will be doing on the project and what the money will be spent on. Note that this is different than telling the reviewers how wonderful the project is.
6. You probably bug your students about spelling errors. Enough said...
7. Relax. Your project is terrific and your proposal will be too. Even if you have never written a proposal before; go for it!