



Environmental Education Grant Program

Introduction

The Environmental Education Grant Program was established under Section 6 of the National Environmental Education Act of 1990. The goal of the program is to support environmental education (EE) projects that enhance the public's awareness, knowledge, and skills to make informed and responsible decisions that affect environmental quality. To be considered EE, a project must be based on sound science and promote environmental stewardship. The project must enhance critical-thinking, problem-solving, and effective decision-making skills, as well as teach individuals to weigh various sides of an environmental issue to make informed and responsible decisions. Environmental education does not advocate a particular viewpoint or course of action.



Project Funding

Since fiscal year (FY) 1992, Congress has annually appropriated almost \$3 million to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to award EE grants. The competition for EE grants is considerable, and about 200 grants are funded annually from among more than 1,000 applications received. Grants are awarded by either EPA Headquarters or regional offices as determined by the cost of the grant.

EPA's current educational priorities are for projects that:



- (1) build state capacity to deliver environmental education programs
- (2) use EE to advance state education reform goals
- (3) improve teaching skills
- (4) educate the public through community-based organizations
- (5) educate teachers, health professionals, community leaders, and the public about human health threats from pollution, especially as it affects children
- (6) promote environmental careers

Grants of \$50,000 or less are awarded by EPA's 10 regional offices and these grants make up the vast majority of grants issued. As mandated by Congress, a significant number of grants must be awarded by the regional offices for small grassroots projects. Grants for more than \$50,000 are awarded by EPA Headquarters in Washington, D.C.; 12 are usually issued each year. Grants issued by Headquarters usually range between \$85,000 and \$100,000.

Matching Funds

Grantees must provide non-Federal matching funds of at least 25% of the total cost of the grant project. The match may be provided by the grant applicant or by a partner organization. The match may be cash or in-kind contributions, such as salaries paid to the project managers and equipment purchased for the project.

Eligible Organizations

Colleges and universities, local and tribal education agencies, state education or environmental agencies, not-for-profit organizations, and non-commercial educational broadcasting entities are eligible to apply for funds under the program. Grantees are located in all 50 United States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and other U.S. Territories.

Solicitation Notice

Each year EPA issues a Solicitation Notice that describes the application procedures and grant priorities for that year and contains all the necessary application forms. The Solicitation Notice is published in the *Federal Register* and is also available online at the web site below. Grant writing tips, and other EE grant information, including descriptions of grants issued by state, also are provided on this web site.

Evaluation Process

Grant applications are evaluated in a two-step process that involves participation by EE experts outside of EPA at the first level of review. In general, the first ranking is done by non-federal reviewers from schools,


universities, state education agencies, and not-for-profit organizations. The second level of review is conducted by EPA, and the factors listed below may be considered prior to the awards being approved by EPA's Regional Administrators or by Headquarters.

Grant Writing Tips

Below are several helpful tips to remember during the grant writing process. For more specific tips on grant writing, please refer to EPA's "Tips for Developing Successful Grant Applications," which is available online at www.epa.gov/enviroed/granttips.html.

- Carefully follow the instructions in the Solicitation Notice
- Write clearly and concisely
- Price the project competitively
- Identify measurable results

Usual grant schedule*



Solicitation Notice	August or September
Applications due	Mid-November
Evaluation process	December - April
Grants awarded	May - June
Projects implemented	July at the earliest

* The schedule for the current year is specified in the Solicitation Notice each year.

Factors considered in making final selections include:



- cost-effectiveness
- effectiveness of collaboration and partnerships
- environmental or educational importance of the project
- effectiveness of delivery methods
- methods for evaluating and improving project
- measurable results
- geographic distribution of projects

Additional information about the EE grant program is available online at:

www.epa.gov/enviroed

Or contact Diane Berger or Sheri Jojokian at:

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