



Excellence in Education Grant: Application Guide

We are thrilled you are considering applying for an Excellence in Education grant and are eager to support you as you strive to engage students and reach them in new and exciting ways. Over 65% of all AEF grant applications have been accepted in the past -- we want yours to be one of them in the future!

Overview

This grant provides educators with an opportunity to bring meaningful ideas to life, enhance existing classroom experiences, and explore new approaches that benefit students and teachers.

AEF welcomes proposals that introduce innovative teaching practices, pilot new ideas, strengthen existing curriculum, increase student engagement, expand learning opportunities, or enhance the educational experience in other meaningful ways. We encourage applicants to think creatively, identify opportunities to strengthen teaching and learning, and propose projects that make a positive contribution to their educational community.

Who can apply

Arlington Public School educators and staff are eligible to apply. Non-school based applicants, such as parents and other community members must apply in partnership with an APS educator, who will be the main point of contact for the grant. **Please consult with your AEF [school representative](#) before submitting a grant application.**

Deadline for Applications 2026/27 school year:

Fall Grant Review: Application Due November 1, 2026: be prepared to answer any questions regarding your grant application during the month of November.

Spring Grant Review: Application due April 2, 2027: be prepared to answer any questions regarding your grant application during the month of April.

Grant Amounts: Up to \$4,000

Your School Rep is Here to Help!

The Arlington Education Foundation [school representatives](#) are available to offer advice and to answer questions about the grant application process. Your rep will be your spokesperson at the grant application review meeting where winning grants are selected. Please use your rep as a resource, as they can help set you up for success and advocate for you!

Key Guidelines

- The project must be completed within 18 months from the date of grant approval.
- A final report on the project and documentation of all expenses are required.
- Grant recipients should be prepared to help AEF publicize their grants, for instance by attending AEF events or submitting press materials and publishable photos.
- Any proposals for technology must be approved by the Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations of the Arlington Public Schools.
- AEF does not purchase goods, services, or registrations on your behalf. To procure these, it is your choice to either purchase using a credit card and request reimbursement, or to contact APS and obtain a purchase order using accepted vendors (please note, that Amazon is not an approved vendor at APS).

Grant applications may include professional development and teacher training, but **AEF grants will typically not fund:**

- Teacher Stipends
- Standard classroom supplies/equipment
- Replacement furniture
- Equipment with no instructional purpose
- Expenses already covered by district budgets
- AEF grants rarely fund field trips (unless the trip meets additional criteria), it is suggested to speak with your school rep or the Grants team regarding an idea/field trip you have.

How We Evaluate Applications

Proposals will be assessed based on the clarity of the project's goals and educational needs, anticipated student impact, alignment with AEF's mission, meaningful innovation or classroom enhancement, feasibility, evaluation plan, potential for broader use, sustainability, and justification of requested funds.

Board members will use a standardized scoring scale and to support a fair, transparent, and thoughtful review process. **Both innovative projects and meaningful classroom enhancements are valued.**

How to apply

Application questions are on the next page and when you are ready you can download the application at www.aefma.org.

Excellence in Education Grant Application Questions 2026/2027

**this is not the application* - please find the full application at aefma.org

Project & Need

1. Describe your project, including its key goals and anticipated outcomes or benefits for students and teachers.
2. What specific need, challenge, or opportunity does this project address? Why is it important for your students or classroom at this time?

Student Impact

3. How will this project improve or enhance students' learning experiences? What specific skills, knowledge, engagement, access, or other outcomes do you expect to impact?
4. Approximately how many students and teachers will be involved? Who will benefit?

Alignment & Innovation

5. How does the project supplement, enhance, or extend existing educational programs within the school or district?
6. What makes this project a meaningful addition or enhancement to students' learning? If it introduces a new approach, strategy, or idea, what makes it innovative?

Evaluation

7. How will you evaluate the success of this project? What evidence or indicators will you use to determine whether it achieved its intended outcomes?

Reach & Sustainability

8. Could the project, approach, or resources be used or adapted by other teachers, classrooms, or schools? If yes, please describe how.
9. If applicable, how will the project be sustained after the grant period? Please describe any anticipated ongoing costs, staffing needs, or plans for continued use.

Funding & Timeline

10. Please describe any existing school, district, PTO, or other resources that could support this project. Have you asked your school & district for funding? If those resources are not available or sufficient, please explain why AEF funding is needed.
11. Provide an estimated timeline for the project, including start date, key milestones, completion date, and expected date of final evaluation sent back to AEF.