

2023

**DEP Environmental
Education Grants
Program Manual**



Funding environmental education projects across Pennsylvania



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2023 DEP Environmental Education Grants Program

The 2023 Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Environmental Education Grants Program welcomes applications for the development of innovative formal and non-formal education projects that: 1) Address grant program priorities; 2) Provide opportunities to expand the public's understanding of Pennsylvania's environmental issues; and 3) Develop skills required to make informed decisions and take responsible action on behalf of the environment.

Since 1993, DEP has awarded 2,134 environmental education grants totaling more than \$12.3 million. Over the program's tenure, awardees have included schools, non-profit organizations, colleges and universities, county conservation districts, businesses, and other eligible entities.

Proposals that fail to support the **Environmental Education Guiding Principles** (see page 5), but simply disseminate information, will not be funded. Applicants are strongly encouraged to use and adapt existing, high-quality instructional materials and teaching curriculums, such as Bay BackPack, Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience materials, Project WET, Project WILD, Project Learning Tree and DCNR's Watershed Education, (see page 18) before creating new materials.

2023 Environmental Education Grant Program Timeline

August 2022	The 2023 DEP Environmental Education Program round opens. The 2023 Environmental Education Grants Program Manual and other pertinent information will be posted to DEP's website. DEP EE database notifications will be sent via email.
December 9, 2022	Applications must be submitted by 4:59 p.m. on this date. Late submissions will not be considered.
Spring 2023	Awarded projects will be announced. Unanticipated circumstances may result in announcement delays.
July 1, 2023	Awarded projects may begin on or after this date.
January 15, 2024	Draft project assessment plans/tools due for review and feedback.
January 15, 2024	Mid-term progress reports due.
June 30, 2024	Completion date for all projects.
July 15, 2024	Final reports, including assessment results, and final requests for reimbursement due.

DEP EE Grant Program Priorities

The DEP's Environmental Education (EE) Grants Program provides funding to support environmental education projects that address one or more of the following priorities:

Climate Change

Education projects that promote practical solutions for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and the negative impacts of climate change including floods, changes to groundwater, pests, disease, agricultural disruptions, and potential threats to human health. Projects are not limited to the following examples:

- Education projects to reduce emissions, such as vehicle idling.
- Community projects promoting integrated water resource management, water conservation, and stormwater best management practices (BMPs).
- Educational tours featuring renewable energy and energy conservation projects, sustainable transportation, alternative fuels, waste reduction, and agricultural best management practices (BMPs).
- Educational demonstration projects that increase the community's understanding of climate change impacts and promote adoption of green infrastructure practices such as renewable energy and energy conservation practices, permeable pavements, green rooftops, rain gardens, rain barrels or cisterns, tree box filters, urban tree plantings, and other related practices.
- Education projects supporting Green School initiatives.
- Selective climate adaptation projects, implemented as a part of a larger educational effort, such as urban tree and riparian buffer plantings, water quality monitoring, habitat improvement, and other meaningful experiences.
- Projects that explore everyday choices such as energy conservation, transportation, food wastes, consumer habits, and others that could address climate change.

Water

Education programs promoting effective ways to reduce non-point source and source water pollution to improve water quality. Projects are not limited to the following examples:

- Programs, workshops, and educational tours that connect local water quality issues with concepts involving watersheds, agricultural nutrient management, abandoned mine drainage/reclamation, water conservation, private water wells, groundwater, road treatment, water quality monitoring, stormwater management, cold water habitats and fisheries, stream restoration, or other relevant subjects.
- Watershed education programs culminating in stewardship and/or community action projects, such as tree plantings, stream maintenance and cleanups, and establishing rain gardens.
- Youth projects that help build connections between nature and the urban environment and encourage hands-on stewardship projects.
- Education projects that help residents identify sources of household and community hazardous wastes, understand how to properly use and dispose of products; and encourage practical use of "green" alternative products.

Environmental Justice

Education programs designed to engage audiences (youth and/or adults) living and/or working within Environmental Justice (EJ) areas. Projects that engage Environmental Justice audiences will:

- Encourage and support participants' efforts to develop meaningful solutions that address one or more DEP EE Grant priorities as they relate to local environmental issues and public health concerns.
- Provide awareness about environmentally themed careers and/or workforce opportunities, as appropriate to the audience.

DEP identifies EJ areas as any census tract or census block group where 20% or more individuals live in poverty, and/or 30% or more of the population identifies as minority. Use the DEP [Environmental Justice Area Viewer](#) to verify an audience is located within an Environmental Justice area.

The mission of the DEP's Office of Environmental Justice is to help ensure the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people with the development, implementation, and enforcement of policies, regulations, and laws; as well as the identification of environmental issues that affect the commonwealth's most vulnerable communities. For additional information, please visit the DEP [Office of Environmental Justice](#).

DEP EE Grants Program Description

"Environmental education is critical to promoting a healthy environment and citizenry, sustainable communities and to the growth of Pennsylvania's economy." (Environmental Education Act, Section 2, Declaration of Policy (6).

The Department of Environmental Protection's Environmental Education Grants Program provides funding for education projects that foster an understanding of natural world functions and cultivate critical thinking and actions that promote environmental protection and sustainable resource management.

The Environmental Education Grants Program will *not* provide funding for:

- Projects that are not entirely focused on environmental education.
- Basic research such as: data collection, surveys and/or stipends for researchers.
- Beautification projects or landscaping.
- Fundraising or membership drives.
- Political advocacy, campaigning, legislative lobbying or litigation programs. Applications that advocate for a particular policy position or appear biased will not be considered.
- Real estate acquisitions or due diligence research related to such acquisitions.
- Construction activities including building construction, improvement to existing structures, pond or wetland construction.

Eligible Applicants

- Public schools and school districts (PreK-12) (includes Intermediate Units and Charter Schools)
- Incorporated private schools (under limited circumstances, private religious schools may be exempted from the incorporation requirement)
- Incorporated conservation and education organizations and institutions
- Universities and colleges
- County conservation districts
- Incorporated nonprofit organizations
- Businesses (must be registered to do business in Pennsylvania)

Ineligible Applicants

- Entities, including municipalities, that do not appear on the list of Eligible Applicants cannot receive 2023 Environmental Education Program funds. Ineligible applicants are encouraged to partner with an eligible applicant to deliver environmental education programs.

Note: *Applicants that were previously awarded a DEP EE Grant, but failed to meet their contractual obligations, may be deemed ineligible to receive 2023 Environmental Education Grant Program funds.*

Project Time Period

Awarded projects may begin on July 1, 2023 and must end by June 30, 2024. No time extensions will be provided. Expenses incurred outside of the Project Time period are ineligible for grant funds.

Project Location(s)

All projects must occur in Pennsylvania and engage Pennsylvania audiences.

Project Audiences

Projects may deliver both formal and non-formal education programs targeting *any* audience, including, but not limited to, youth, teachers, municipal officials, farmers, developers, site designers, businesses, and homeowners or other community residents. **People living and/or working within Environmental Justice areas are considered priority audiences.**

Multiple Applications

Multiple applications may be submitted from the same organization. Each project application will be viewed as an independent proposal and evaluated accordingly.

Application Requirements (see pages 10-13)

All applications shall submit: 1) A project proposal; 2) an EE Grants Program Scope of Work form; 3) an EE Grant Program Detailed Budget sheet; and 4) Letter(s) of Commitment.

Applications that fail to provide all required documents will be considered incomplete and ineligible for 2023 EE Grant Program funding.

Application Deadline

Applications must be submitted electronically through the Single Application for Assistance at <https://www.esa.dced.state.pa.us/Login.aspx> by 4:59 PM on **December 9, 2022**. Applications submitted by ineligible organizations, past the deadline, or through mail, or fax, will not be considered.

Award Announcement

Awarded projects will be announced in Spring 2023, barring unforeseen circumstances which may result in delays.

Environmental Education Guiding Principles

The goal of environmental education is an environmentally literate citizenry, prepared to make informed decisions and take positive actions to help ensure the state's natural resources are available for the use and enjoyment of future generations.

Environmental Education:

- Is a lifelong learning process involving human interrelationships with the natural world. Key to this process is an awareness and understanding of ecology and human-driven processes, such as agriculture, mining, energy production, economics, legislative procedures, and more.
- Includes a vast array of conceptual learning, critical thinking, values clarification, issues investigation, effective leadership, group interaction, environmental research methods, and general problem solving.
- Provides opportunities for participants to engage in meaningful, hands-on experiences.
- Promotes positive environmental actions that may be private, involving subtle changes in an individual's lifestyle, or collective efforts at the community, state, or national levels.
- Programs are most effective when they are learner driven, presented in a sequential framework, and address the learner's needs and concerns. For instance, young children may excel at programs that emphasize awareness and incorporate simple skill-building activities. Older youth, having mastered fundamental concepts, may be able to participate in meaningful group environmental actions.
- Non-formal programs may provide a path for citizens to make informed decisions that balance the needs of their communities with environmental protection.
- Formal programs should emphasize science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education, a nationally recognized cornerstone of PreK-12 education. STEM has also become a primary focus of many higher education institutions.

Non-Formal and Formal Environmental Education Projects

Non-formal Environmental Education Projects

- Environmental education programs implemented outside of formal, PreK-12 school settings.
- Non-formal projects can be designed to reach any target audience including, but not limited to, youth, and may occur through a variety of venues such as afterschool activities, summer camps, 4-H programs, FFA, faith-based forums, and community workshops and special events.

Formal Environmental Education Projects

- Environmental education programs implementing class curriculum (PreK-12 and/or higher education).
- Projects must relate to the [State Academic Standards](#) in Environment and Ecology, and/or Science and Technology. Applicants are encouraged to integrate STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) concepts.
- Projects will:
 - Occur within the local context (i.e. schoolyard, neighborhood, town, or community);
 - Be learner-driven, whereby students define a local issue and potential solution(s);
 - Reflect student participation in one or more outdoor field experiences;
 - Encourage student led Stewardship and/or Civic Action projects;
 - Introduce students to potential career opportunities involving environmental sciences and related fields;
 - Provide opportunities for teacher collaboration and professional development, including Act 48 hours, whenever possible;
 - Promote diverse partnerships such as local municipalities, non-profit organizations, colleges and universities, businesses, etc.; and
 - Encourage the use of technology by utilizing and integrating social media, mobile applications, web tools and/or other appropriate tools.

Sustainable Schools: Coordinate programs to develop green, sustainable PreK-12 schools. Applying organizations will focus on reducing environmental impact, school health or outdoor classrooms, including energy efficiency and conservation, water quality and conservation, sustainable school transportation, waste and recycling, climate change, air quality, radon/improving indoor air quality or integrated pest management.

- Schools may form and enhance an energy team with teachers, students, building facility managers and administrators with the goal to reduce the school building's energy use through PA Pathways to Green Schools. Schools may develop and implement school-centered energy conservation plans, including student-led energy audits. Schools may partner with colleges or universities, non-profit environmental education centers, STEM organizations, math and science collaborative or other organizations.
- **Curriculum Integration Projects:** Articulate the Academic Standards for Environment and Ecology into the formal PreK-12 curriculum for the entire school district, private school, charter school or cyber school. Schools may coordinate workshops to be attended by representatives from all schools and grade levels within the school district or private school. The goal of the project is permanent curriculum change. Any tentative workshop dates must be included in the application.
- **Curriculum Revision Projects:** Applying schools will use their district's fully aligned matrix to revise or write new lesson plans to integrate the Environment and Ecology Standards into the school's curriculum. Assessment of the integration is required. The district's fully aligned matrix must be submitted with the application.

2023 DEP EE Grant Program Award Categories

Three types of awards are available for projects addressing the 2023 Environmental Education Grants Program priorities described on pages 2-3.

Mini Grants, of up to \$5,000, may be awarded for local (school, county, municipality or other defined area) environmental education projects. **General Grants Level I** may be awarded in amounts ranging from \$5,001-\$30,000 for implementation of large-scale environmental education projects, such as School District-wide projects, engagement of multiple communities, collaboration involving multiple counties or statewide projects. **General Grants Level II** in amounts ranging from \$30,001-\$85,000 are available for non-formal projects engaging youth and teachers at three (3) levels: *local, state and national*.

Regardless of the type of award, the grantee will be designated as the legal entity, solely responsible for implementing the Grant Agreement. The grantee will manage the project, maintain records and submit all required documentation including mid-term progress and final reports, associated deliverables and requests for reimbursement.

GENERAL GRANTS (Projects awards ranging from \$5,001-\$30,000 or \$30,001-\$85,000) General Grant Progress Reports and Payments

Funds are provided to General grants on a **reimbursement basis**. General Grants are *not* eligible to receive advance payments. Requests for expense reimbursement must be accompanied by an acceptable Midterm or Final Report.

General Grant Midterm Progress Report

The Midterm Progress Report and Expense Reimbursement Request are due January 15, 2024.

General Grant Final Progress Report

The Final Progress Report and Expense Reimbursement Request must be submitted within 14 calendar days of project completion. The reporting deadline for projects concluding on June 30, 2024 is July 15, 2024.

General Grant Budget Match

Match (Cash and/or In-kind) **equivalent to at least 20%** of the requested amount of Grant funds is **required of General Grants. Match contributions, whether provided by the applying organization or a project Partner, must be documented on the Detailed Budget sheet (see Application Requirements, page 12) and substantiated by a Letter of Commitment (see Application Requirements, page 13).**

Note: Ineligible Grant expenses (see page 10) and other state agency money, services or materials may not be designated as Match. Although People costs exceeding 50% of the total grant funds requested are considered ineligible grant expenses, People costs in any amount may be used as Match.

General Grant Partners

Partners are *required* of General grant awards. Partnerships can be made among school districts, private schools, universities, county conservation districts and other organizations to draw on the strengths of each entity. **A Partner's project contribution (Cash and/or In-kind) is considered Match. Project Match**

must be documented on the Detailed Budget sheet (see Application Requirements, page 12) and substantiated by a Letter of Commitment (see Application Requirements, page 13).

General Grant Project Presentation

General Grant project proposals must reflect a plan for presenting the project and sharing lessons learned at a regional, statewide conference or other far-reaching event.

General Grant Project Sustainability

Project proposals must reflect a plan for sustaining the project after grant funds expire.

MINI GRANTS (Project awards up to \$5,000)

Mini Grant Reports and Payments

Funds are provided to Mini grants on a **reimbursement basis**. Requests for expense reimbursement must be accompanied by an acceptable Midterm or Final Report.

Mini Grant Advance Payments

After the Grant Agreement is fully executed, Mini grants may request a full **Advance** payment. Requests for **Advance** payment must be submitted in writing and include a justification stating the need for the Advance payment.

Advance payments must be maintained in a separate, interest-bearing account. Financial institution documentation verifying the Advance account ending balance and account closure must be submitted, along with any remaining account funds, within 14 calendar days of project completion, but no later than July 15, 2024.

Mini Grant Midterm Progress Report

The Midterm Progress Report is due January 15, 2024.

Mini Grant Final Progress Report

The Final Progress Report and Expense Reimbursement Request must be submitted within 14 calendar days of project completion. The reporting deadline for projects concluding on June 30, 2024 is July 15, 2024.

Mini Grant Budget Match

Match (Cash and/or In-kind) in **any amount is required of Mini-Grants**. Match equivalent to at least 20% of the requested grant amount is encouraged. **Match contributions, whether provided by the applying organization or a project Partner, must be documented on the Detailed Budget sheet (see Application Requirements, page 12) and substantiated by a Letter of Commitment (see Application Requirements, page 13).**

Note: Ineligible expenses (see page 10) and other state agency money, services or materials may not be designated as Match. Although People costs exceeding 50% of the total grant funds requested are considered ineligible grant expenses, People costs in any amount may be used as Match.

Mini Grant Partners

Partners are *encouraged*, but not required of Mini grant awards. Partnerships can be made among school districts, private schools, universities, county conservation districts and other organizations to draw on

the strengths of each entity. **A Partner's project contribution (Cash and/or In-kind) is considered Match. Project Match must be documented on the Detailed Budget sheet (see Application Requirements, page 12) and substantiated by a Letter of Commitment (see Application Requirements, page 13).**

Mini Grant Project Presentation

Mini-grant project proposals must reflect a plan for presenting the project and sharing lessons learned with a local constituency.

Mini Grant Project Sustainability

Project proposals must reflect a plan for sustaining the project after grant funds expire.

2023 DEP EE Grant Program Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

Eligible Grant Expenses

People Costs (up to 50% of grant funding)

- Wages and benefits directly related to project implementation, including project director, staff and clerical support.
- Private consultants, including wages/benefits and/or contractual fees for service.
- Stipends for teachers and administrators for work done outside the normal workday.
- Substitute teacher pay, at the current daily rate.

Travel Costs

- Personal mileage at the current GSA rate. For more information, visit <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/100715>.
- Transportation costs at a flat fee rate.
- Lodging

Resource Costs

- Educational resources such as books, library/research resources, software, test kits, and field guides.
- Supplies such as native plants and trees, mulch, shovels, hoes, garden trowels, gloves, building materials, signage, nets.
- Equipment and Technology
 - Equipment such as binoculars, weather stations, energy audit equipment, etc.
 - Laboratory equipment such as microscopes
 - Program-specific technology (handheld GPS units Laptops, iPads/tablets, webcams, video cameras, etc.). No more than **30%** of the total grant funds requested may be used to purchase program-specific technology.

Note: All proposals must: 1) Specify how the equipment/technology will be used to deliver a meaningful environmental education project; 2) Designate where the item(s) will be located/stored; and 3) Identify how the items be used for environmental education after the grant's project period ends.

Other Costs

- Project-specific phone charges, photocopying, printing, binding, graphic layout, postage/shipping
- Facility rental

- Boat, kayak, canoe and paddleboard **rental** (*Purchases* are **not** an eligible expense.)
- Advertising/marketing
- Website

Ineligible Grant Expenses

- People costs *greater than* 50% of the total amount of grant funds requested.
- Administrative fees and/or Indirect costs, including general operations or overhead charges, such as rent, utilities, monthly phone or general website hosting charges
- Food or beverages
- Airfare
- Equipment for general office use (computers, printers, etc.)
- Out of state travel
- Award items (certificates, plaques)
- Boat, kayak, canoe and paddle board **purchases** (*Rentals* are considered an eligible expense.)
- Photography cameras and drones.
- Personal items (example: water bottles) Clothing (t-shirts, hats, etc.)
- Lawn mowers and other power equipment
- Furniture for general office use
- Grants, scholarships or fellowships to be given by the grant recipient to a third party.
- Grant funds may not be used to pay for graduate or other continuing education credits
- Pass-through of cash or incentive prizes to project participants, e.g. grant funds may not be used to provide services (such as septic system cleanouts) to project participants at a discounted cost.
- Reimbursement for expenses prior to the July 1 effective start date.
- Promotional items, such as stress balls, laser pointers, magnets, pins, etc.

2023 DEP EE Grant Program Application Requirements

2023 DEP EE Grant Applications must include the following documents: 1) Project Proposal; 2) Scope of Work; 3) Detailed Budget Sheet; and 4) Letter(s) of Commitment. Applications that fail to provide all required documents will be considered incomplete and ineligible for 2023 EE Grant Program funding.

Project proposals shall reflect:

1. Name of the Applying Organization and the Title of the project.
2. The credentials of the applying organization specific to implementing the project.
3. The credentials of the Key People, including the Project Leader, staff, and partners involved with the project. Include subcontractors (see Additional EE Grant Program Pertinent Information, page 14), if known.
4. The project’s goals, including a description of how the project will address one or more the DEP EE Grant Program Priorities: Water, Climate Change and/or Environmental Justice.

Note: If engaging Environmental Justice audience(s), be sure to complete question 3 on the application Addendum, by specifying the city/town and zip code for each EJ area location.

5. The project audience(s) and an explanation of how you plan to reach the audience(s). Consider both *Primary* and *Secondary* audiences.

Primary audience(s) are people who will be reached *directly* by the project. **Secondary audience(s)** are people who will be reached *indirectly* by the project.

Example 1:

A project is designed to engage teachers in professional development about effective strategies for engaging students. **Teachers** are the *primary* audience. Teachers, in turn, apply new strategies while working with students. **Students** are the *secondary* audience.

Example 2:

A project is designed to engage youth in hands-on, community stewardship action projects. **Students** are the *primary* audience. Youth will be encouraged to share their knowledge with family members and friends. **Family members and friends** are the project's *secondary* audience.

6. The type of project (Formal PreK-12/higher education curriculum and/or Non-Formal education)

Note: If the project will deliver a Formal environmental education program, provide details (see page 6) including PA Academic standards, local context, learner driven, field experiences, stewardship and/or civic action, potential career opportunities, teacher collaboration and professional development, diverse partnerships and use of technology.

7. The audience behavior change(s) *and* project assessment:

- Identify the audience's behavior change(s) you hope to achieve by the conclusion of the project. Audience behavior changes include **increased awareness** and/or **knowledge** about an environmental issue, a **willingness** to take action(s) to improve the environment; and/or **taking an action** (either individually or collectively) to help address an environmental issue.
- Describe the assessment tool/strategy that will be used to measure the audience's behavior change(s).

8. A plan to present the project at a conference, meeting or other appropriate event. General Grants present at regional or statewide events. Mini Grants may participate at local venues.

9. Use of technology social media, web-based applications, and/or other appropriate technological tools and resources.

10. A plan to sustain the project after grant funds end.

Additionally, General Grant Level II proposals shall describe a non-formal education program that:

- Widely* engages teachers and youth at the county, state and national levels. (**Teachers and students from at least 60 Pennsylvania counties will directly participate in the project*); and
- Demonstrates at least 30% of program participants live, work, or attend school within an Environmental Justice area.

Scope of Work

Download Scope of Work (Word document). Links are posted on the DEP EE Grants Program webpage at <https://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/EnvironmentalEducation/Grants/Pages/default.aspx> and within the application. Complete the Scope of Work including:

- **Benchmarks**
Chronologically list the project's major work components (benchmarks), by target date of completion.
- **Target Date of Completion**
Target dates must fall within the Project Period: July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024.
- **Activity Letters**
Provide one activity letter, in alphabetical order, per benchmark.

The following Benchmarks are **required** and must be listed individually on the Scope of Work:

- ***Draft Assessment tool to be submitted for review and feedback***
Enter Target Date of Completion as Month/Day/Year.
Note: The assessment tool must be submitted for review and feedback at least *4-6 weeks prior* to engaging the project audience(s) **and no later than** January 15, 2024. Projects that engage audiences in the Fall of 2023 or early in 2024 should select a target date that allows for ample review time prior to January 15, 2024.
- ***Midterm Progress report***
Enter Target Date of Completion: January 15, 2024.
- ***Present the Project at a meeting, conference or other appropriate event to share project goals, "Lessons Learned," accomplishments, etc.:***
Enter Target Date of Completion as Month/Year
- ***Final Report including assessment results and supporting materials***
Enter Target Date of Completion as Month/Day/year.
Note: The Final Report must be submitted 14 calendar days after the project has concluded. July 15, 2024 is the Target Date of Completion for projects concluding on June 30, 2024.

Detailed Budget Sheet

Download and complete the Detailed Budget Sheet (Excel). Links are posted on the DEP EE Grants Program webpage <https://www.dep.pa.gov/Citizens/EnvironmentalEducation/Grants/Pages/default.aspx> and within the application.

Follow the directions on the Instructions tab:

- **Costs**
Complete each tab reflecting costs for People, Travel, Resources, Other, and Match. **(A Letter of Commitment is required for all Match contributions (Cash and/or In-kind)).**
- **Activity Letters**
For each expense, enter the Activity Letter(s) that coincide with the appropriate benchmark Activity Letter(s).

Letters of Commitment

Signed Letters of Commitment are required from the applying organization and/or Partner(s) substantiating project Match. Letters of Commitment shall:

- Reference the name of organization applying for an EE Grant and the proposed Project Title;
- Specify the *type* of Match (Cash and/or In-Kind) and *monetary value* of the commitment; and
- Describe the task to be performed and/or item(s) to be provided. For example:
 - Cash Commitments: “Partner name will provide \$500 to pay for Facility rental fees;” or “Applying organization will provide staff wages (\$1000) to implement the project.”
 - In-kind Commitments: “Partner name will waive facility rental fee (\$250);” or “Partner will provide programming assistance (\$400: 20 hours @ \$20/hour) to support delivery of 2 community watershed programs in Fall 2023 and Spring 2024.”

2023 Environmental Education Grants Program At-a-Glance		
2023 DEP Environmental Education Grants	General	Mini
Project period July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024	X	X
Priorities: Climate Change, Water, Environmental Justice	X	X
Grant funding up to \$5,000		X
Grant funding Level I (\$5,001-\$30,000) and Level II (\$30,001-\$85,000)	X	
APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS		
Project Proposal (see pages 10-11)	X	X
Scope of Work (see page 12)	X	X
Detailed Budget (see page 12)	X	X
Letters of Commitment (see page 13)	X	X
PROJECT BUDGET MATCH (Cash or In-Kind)		
20% Project Match REQUIRED . (see page 7)	X	
Match REQUIRED in any amount. 20% Match <i>encouraged</i> (see page 8)		X
PROJECT PARTNERS		
Project Partners <i>required</i> (see page 7)	X	
Project Partners <i>encouraged</i> (see page 8)		X
AWARDEE REPORTING DOCUMENTS		
Draft assessment tool to be submitted prior to engaging audience(s)	X	X
Midterm Progress report reflecting benchmark accomplishments due January 15, 2024	X	X
FINAL Progress report reflecting benchmark accomplishments, assessment results and supporting materials due July 15, 2024	X	X
AWARDEE PAYMENTS		
One full Advance payment maybe requested (see page 8)		X
Midterm request for reimbursement due January 15, 2024	X	X
FINAL request for reimbursement due July 15, 2024	X	X

Additional Pertinent EE Grant Program Information

Subcontracts

Different than a consultant or project partner, who are people directly involved with the development and/or delivery of the project, a subcontractor is a company or individual, hired by the grantee to perform specific task(s) as part of the overall project. The name of the subcontractor and the subcontractor's FEIN must be provided to DEP for vetting prior to the subcontractor beginning work. DEP retains the right to approve the subcontractor.

Grant Nullification and Reconciliation

Grant agreements are legally binding contractual agreements. Grantees must notify the Department (Department of Environmental Protection), in writing and on letterhead, should they wish to nullify the agreement due to unforeseen circumstances. In such cases, the Department retains the absolute and sole right to determine the final reconciliation of grant funds. As a guide:

- If no disbursements were provided to the Grantee, and the Grantee is not requesting an expense reimbursement, then the agreement will be nullified.
- If the Grantee completed some of its required benchmarks, a partial reimbursement of grant funds may be considered. An Expense Reimbursement Request must be submitted, accompanied by a Final report, reflecting the project's accomplishments and deliverables. The report must also provide a full explanation of uncompleted benchmarks and the specific reason(s) for abandoning the project.
- If the Grantee received a 100% Advance payment, the Grantee may be required, at the Department's sole discretion, to fully or proportionally reimburse the Department for uncompleted benchmarks. An Expense Reimbursement Request must be submitted, accompanied by a Final report, reflecting the project's accomplishments and deliverables. The report must also provide a full explanation of uncompleted benchmarks and the specific reason(s) for discontinuing the project.

Additionally:

- In the event of an audit, should it be revealed that benchmark deliverables were not met in accordance with the scope of work, at the sole discretion of the Department, the Grantee may be obligated to return grant funds, in part or in full, to the Department's Environmental Education Fund.
- In the event the Grantee fails to adequately document its required match, the Grantee may be required to return grant funds or its request for reimbursement may be disapproved.
- A grantee's failure to comply with the obligations contained in the Grant Agreement, may deem the Grantee ineligible to receive future Environmental Education Grant Program funds.

Grant Acknowledgement

Grantees will provide DEP Environmental Education Grant Program acknowledgement on press releases, program advertisements and announcements, brochures, signage, products, webpages and other pertinent grant information as follows:

“Financial and other support for the TITLE OF PROJECT has been provided by the Department of Environmental Protection’s 2023 Environmental Education Grants Program.”

Project Proprietorship

Any educational materials, curricula, training manuals, technology tool or other products developed with the use of Environmental Education Grant Program funds, must be made available in the public domain. DEP will retain electronic copies of all materials produced with grant funds. Copyrighting is discouraged, but if proved necessary, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will hold the copyright.

Proposal Disclosure

Grant applications and supporting documents may be subject to public disclosure through the Pennsylvania Right to Know Act. Any information included in the grant proposal that the applicant views as proprietary, must be clearly marked and submitted as an individual attachment at the time of application.

Grant Application Review and Feedback

Grant rater names, score sheets, comments, and other identifiable information are considered confidential and will not be released to applicants. Applicants wishing feedback and general guidance may contact the EE&IC after the final grant awards are announced.

2023 EE Grant Award Announcement and Agreement

Please retain this manual and a copy of the application for future reference.

The project period for the 2023 DEP Environmental Education Grants Program is July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024. Work performed prior to July 1, 2023 is not eligible for grant funds.

Awarded projects will be announced in Spring 2023, barring unforeseen circumstances which may result in delays. Following the announcement, DEP's Grants Center will email instructions and required documents (Scope of Work and Detailed Budget Sheet to be updated) to the Project Director noted on the Grant Application. Upon satisfactory submission of all required documents, the DEP Grant Agreement (contract) will be forwarded to the project's authorized Grant signatory and Grant witness for electronic signature.

After the grantee's electronic signatures are returned, it takes approximately six weeks for the agreement to become fully executed. Therefore, it is possible that awarded organizations will not have an executed agreement in place until late summer of 2023. Additionally, Mini Grant Advance payments will be considered only after the grant agreement is fully executed.

Please note: While work may begin on July 1, 2023 without a fully executed agreement in place, the grantee does so at its own risk. Please check your organization's policy for performing work without an executed agreement.

General questions about the 2023 Environmental Education Grants Program may be directed to:

Department of Environmental Protection
EE Grants Program
Email: RA-epEEgrants@pa.gov

The Department of Environmental Protection values working with partners who share our view that diversity and equity are integral to success in restoring and protecting the environment for all Pennsylvanians. As we work to demonstrably improve the inclusivity of our programs and processes, we also encourage our partners to pursue increased inclusivity in their operations. In this way, Pennsylvania's natural resources are best protected as "the common property of all the people," as identified in our state constitution.

2023 DEP Environmental Education Grants Program Appendix

Act 48 Requirements for Teachers (Act 48)

Act 48 requires teachers to obtain 180 professional development hours in a given five-year period. Organizations interested in teacher professional development may become an approved Act 48 provider, which will greatly enhance program recruitment. For information on Act 48 Providers, visit PDE's website at www.education.pa.gov; type "Act 48" in the search box.

Act 168 Requirements (Act 168)

Act 168 pertains to grantees holding field trips or events where hired staff may be in direct contact with children or minors. Staff must be sure to complete the employment history review process related to Act 168. For information on Act 168, visit PDE's website at www.education.pa.gov; type "ACT 168" in the search box.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

Passed by Congress in 1990, the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#) (ADA) is the nation's first comprehensive civil rights law addressing the needs of people with disabilities, prohibiting discrimination in employment, public services, public accommodations, and telecommunications. Applying organizations are responsible for compliance with the ADA, as applicable to the proposed project.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

The Department of Environmental Protection's mission is to protect Pennsylvania's air, land and water from pollution and to provide for the health and safety of its citizens through a cleaner environment. We will work as partners with individuals, organizations, governments and businesses to prevent pollution and restore our natural resources.

DEP Environmental Education Grants Program (EEGP)

Pennsylvania's Environmental Education Act of 1993 established the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Environmental Education Grants Program. The act mandates setting aside five (5) percent of the pollution fines and penalties, collected annually by the DEP for environmental education, providing the only consistent source of environmental education funding within the state.

DEP Environmental Education and Information Center (EE&IC)

Located on the first floor of the Rachel Carson State Office Building in Harrisburg, the EE&IC works collaboratively to carry out the objectives of DEP's environmental education program. The EE&IC staff administer the DEP's environmental education grant program; collaborates with partners to promote environmental education efforts at public and private schools, higher education facilities, and non-formal environmental education centers; and manages a full-service environmental education center that provides resource and educational materials to educators, the community, and the general public.

Environmental Education (EE)

Environmental education is a lifelong process. The goal of environmental education is an environmentally literate citizenry, prepared to make informed decisions and take positive actions to help ensure the state's natural resources are available for the use and enjoyment of future generations.

Environmental Education Principles

Environmental Education Principles encourage the public to promote a healthy environment; foster an understanding of the natural world functioning; and promote an understanding of the necessity for environmental protection and sound resource management.

Pathways to Green Schools

<https://www.education.pa.gov/Teachers%20-%20Administrators/GreenSchools/Pages/default.aspx>

The Pathways to Green Schools Program is intended to provide recognition to schools across the Commonwealth as they design, build and implement their school, district, or institution's environmental literacy and sustainability plans in their quest to achieve USDE's Green Ribbon School recognition.

Pennsylvania State Academic Standards

<https://www.stateboard.education.pa.gov/Regulations/AcademicStandards/Pages/default.aspx>

The Pennsylvania State Board of Education has adopted academic standards, which are benchmark measures that define what students should know or be able to do at specified grade levels beginning in grade 3. The standards are promulgated as state regulations. As such, they must be used as the basis for curriculum and instruction in Pennsylvania's public schools.

Existing Environmental Education resources to consider before creating new materials:

Bay Backpack is an online resource that supports hands-on environmental learning.

Visit: <https://baybackpack.com>

An Educator's Guide to the Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (MWEE): A guide for creating meaningful outdoor experiences from the Chesapeake Bay Program. Information is applicable to watersheds throughout Pennsylvania. Visit: <https://www.cbf.org/document-library/education/teachers-guide-to-meaningful-watershed-education-experience.pdf>

Project WET (Watershed Education for Teachers) is a curriculum and Activity Guide with 64 interdisciplinary water-related lessons. Its activities are broad-reaching and can be used to deliver both Non-formal and Formal environmental education programs.

Visit: <https://www.projectwet.org/publications-overview>

Project WILD is a curriculum designed to help students learn *how* to think, not *what* to think, about wildlife and the environment. Materials represent the work of many professionals within the fields of education and natural resource management. Visit: <https://www.fishwildlife.org/projectwild>

Project Learning Tree (PLT) is an award-winning, environmental education program for educators working with students from Pre-K through 12th grade. Through hands-on interdisciplinary activities, PLT uses the forest as a "Window on the world" to help young people learn *how* to think, not *what* to think, about complex environmental issues.

Visit: <https://www.dcnr.pa.gov/Education/ProjectLearningTree/Pages/default.aspx>

Watershed Education (WE), developed by the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' (DCNR) Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks, WE is an inquiry-based, interdisciplinary curriculum that is geared for students in grades 6 through 12. Blending hands-on classroom and field investigations,

students participate in data collection and analysis, community networking and partnerships, and stewardship and service-learning activities. Visit: <http://www.watersheded.dcnr.state.pa.us/index.html>