

## ACORN GRANTS FOR TEACHERS

**BEFORE YOU BEGIN YOUR APPLICATION**, we want you to know what we consider when we make our selections:

- The project description is clearly and concisely stated.
- The objectives can be achieved through the proposed activities.
- The students are actively involved in the project and will clearly benefit.
- The project shows imagination and innovation.
- The budget, as stated, supports the activities.

**TO HELP YOU MEET OUR GOALS**, we would like to make the following suggestions:

- The description should be as precise and specific as possible. Be sure your objective is stated clearly.
- The procedures and student activities that you list should support your stated objectives.
- Your budget should meet the needs of your project.
- Please type your application or print in black ink.
- Don't forget – extra pages and attachments cannot be considered.
- Remember – your application is read by people in the community who know nothing about your project. Think about them when you write your description. Be very clear so that they can see what it is you are trying to accomplish.

**ACORN GRANTS ARE INTENDED TO TURN GOOD IDEAS INTO GOOD TEACHING!**

The Duneland Education Foundation is pleased to receive your application.

“From tiny acorns doth mighty oak trees grow”



DUNELAND EDUCATION FOUNDATION

GRANT WRITING

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION



## WHERE TO FIND CREATIVE IDEAS

Have trouble thinking of yourself as creative? Take heart. Most creativity or innovation is stimulated by another idea. Below are listed ten suggestions for stimulating the creativity within.

### TEN SOURCES

1. Check with the building principal to review any information about grants that have already been awarded.
2. Build on or expand a compelling idea someone told you about or that you saw in a museum exhibit or demonstration. Example: Think of a way to involve other students, school staff, parents, grandparents, volunteers, etc.
3. Read through old teacher's manuals, especially sections at the end of chapters titled "Enrichment Activities" or "Expanded Activities." Modify/custom design to fit the needs of your class or target group.
4. Visit a teachers' store or a museum store and browse through activity card packets. Think of ways to enhance or adapt a compelling idea for your class.
5. Page through magazines (*Instructor, Teacher*) and note features which tell about unique classroom projects or teaching tips. Customize good ideas to your situation.
6. Call a methods professor in a given subject area, i.e., science or social studies. Say "I'm looking for a creative idea that will help my students better understand \_\_\_\_\_. Do you have any suggestions?"
7. Conduct a brain-storming session with your students.
8. Conduct a brain-storming session with your principal, a small group of parents, or other "school-support" types.
9. Visit the grant-writing section of a library and ask its manager to help you locate ideas. Example: Look through the *Chronicle of Philanthropy* to see where the big money is going. If a topic seems compelling, think "What could my class gain by exploring a small part of this?"
10. Conduct an ERIC search at a nearby college/university library. Ask the reference librarian to help you narrow your search.

## STEPS IN PROPOSAL PREPARATION

Project Description – Summarize, in one or two sentences, the opportunity that you would like to create for your students. Be specific and succinct. What skills or understandings do you hope to foster in your students and how do you hope to do this? Be positive in your approach and in the language you use in the proposal. For example:

Students will become more self-directed in their learning by considering the games that children in other cultures play and by initiating, via computer networks, a dialogue that will further their understanding. They will cooperatively endeavor to duplicate the games that they learn about and will consider through group discussion and individual investigation the conditions that lead to particular games being common in some cultures and not in others.

Project Objectives – Present a more detailed listing of the specific objectives that you expect your project to address. Think long term. A project may allow students to learn how to use a computer network, but in a more global sense doing that provides a tool that enables self-directed learning and the opportunity to analyze information from multiple sources.

Key Activities – List the particular activities that will facilitate your students reaching the project objectives. Activities might include contacting children around the world and inquiring about the games that they play, researching the cultures involved, constructing the games and sharing the games with other children.

Budget – List the materials that you will need to perform the activities outlined. Be as specific as possible about the materials, their source and their cost. Be realistic. Consumable and reusable materials are appropriate items to budget as are some expert services. Consider the materials that you choose. Does it make sense, for instance, to use disposable cameras to document issues involving the environment?

What materials and services are already available in your school or from other sources? Make note of these materials and services and how they are available. It is encouraging to the proposal readers to know that you are making the best possible use of all available resources.

## MECHANICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Fill in all application blanks. Be neat. Type your form if at all possible. It looks professional, is easier to read and lets you fit in more information.

Clear your project with all the involved individuals. Get your principal's signature. Make certain that you have the cooperation of all the people that you will need to complete the project.

Give your project an imaginative title that conveys your interest and enthusiasm.

Evaluate your completed project. Have you followed directions? Does it make sense? Have a colleague and non-educator read it before submission. Does it make sense to both? Do you have enough resources, including time, to implement the project?

Refine and revise. Successful proposals convey the thought that you have invested in your project.

Good luck!

## LEARNERS OUTCOMES

### Complex Thinker

- Effectively accesses, evaluates and integrates information from a variety of sources.
- Effectively translates issues and situations into manageable tasks that have a clear purpose.
- Use a wide variety of thinking strategies to deal with complex issues.

### Creative Risk-taker

- Is willing to try new strategies and approaches to learning.
- Is open to a variety of perspectives.
- Synthesizes information and puts into new and different formats.
- Pushes limits of knowledge and abilities.

### Effective Communicator

- Expresses ideas clearly.
- Effectively communicates with diverse audiences.
- Effectively communicates through a variety of media.

### Quality Producer

- Creates products appropriate to the intended audience.
- Creates products that reflect craftsmanship.
- Uses a variety of resources and technologies.

### Collaborative Worker

- Demonstrates effective interpersonal skills.
- Works to achieve group goals.
- Demonstrates consideration for individual differences.

### Community Contributor

- Understands and appreciates cultural diversity.
- Understands his or her role in a variety of communities.
- Plans and takes action for the welfare of these different communities.

### Self-directed learner

- Sets priorities and achievable goals.
- Evaluates and manages progress toward goals.
- Perseveres when faced with difficulties.
- Takes responsibility for actions.

## TEN TIPS FOR MAKING YOUR GRANT MORE COMPETITIVE

Strategize your efforts. For example:

1. Make several copies of the application for rough draft purposes. Save the original for the final “write”.
2. Follow the grant directions explicitly.
3. Pay particular attention to every selection.
4. Cut goals down to size.
5. Try to include parent involvement or community involvement as part of the project.
6. Write – lay aside – edit – lay aside – edit – lay aside – edit.
7. Research your topic. Verify the facts you plan to present.
8. Have at least two other persons read your grant and discuss it with them.
9. Promising areas in which to develop projects are:

Mathematics  
Consumerism  
Health  
Geography  
Environment  
Physical Science  
Integration of the arts with basic subjects  
Reading/language enrichment  
Multicultural  
Social Responsibility  
Character Development

10. Develop a creative or catchy title.



## TEN QUESTIONS “WINNERS” NEED THE ANSWERS

Have at least two people, one in education and one outside of education, read your proposal and discuss with you their answers to the following questions:

1. Does the proposal read well? Does it hold your interest?
2. Can you visualize what will happen?
3. Can you tell what need is being addressed?
4. What will the students gain that they would otherwise not gain?
5. What will the school/parents/community gain that they otherwise wouldn't?
6. Can the goal(s) be met in one semester?
7. What do you find creative or innovate about this project?
8. Have you spotted any errors – spelling, punctuation, grammar and math?
9. Does the application look presentable?
10. Does the application suggest a few “spin-off” ideas?