



Teacher Innovation Grant Guidelines and Application

**Deadline: October 1, 2017, 5:00 PM PST
(for projects beginning as soon as late October, 2017)**

ABOUT CEF

The Claremont Educational Foundation is a non-profit organization founded in 1991 to promote quality public education in the Claremont Unified School District.

Through a variety of fundraising efforts and relationships in the community, CEF has been able to help provide art and music instruction in the elementary schools and fund technology in the middle and high schools.

It is through the generosity of our donors that CEF is able to maintain the educational experience we have come to expect in Claremont.

CEF's Board of Directors is composed of business and community leaders, parents and district staff who together carry out our mission "To protect and enrich quality public education in Claremont." CEF is a member of the California Consortium of Education Foundations.

CEF INNOVATION GRANTS

CEF believes in supporting CUSD's top-notch educational staff and nurturing a space where innovative ideas can develop and flourish. In this spirit, CEF is excited to fund small grants for creative projects that engage students in high-impact learning opportunities. Teachers and principals in CUSD are eligible to apply.

The focus of these grants is enhancing access to creative, project-based learning for CUSD students. Projects may align with CEF's traditional areas of focus (art, music and technology) or explore other subject areas (humanities, sciences, etc). Teachers may apply individually; groups of teachers may submit a proposal together for a collaborative school-site or grade-level project; or principals may submit a proposal for a school-wide project. Partnerships with community groups on projects that hold promise for enhancing learning in CUSD are welcome.

In awarding the grants, the CEF Board will consider the following criteria:

- The amount requested from CEF for a single project should not exceed \$2,000.
- Proposals are focused on project-based learning, not equipment and materials. While the grant may be used to cover associated materials, we are looking for evidence of a well-conceived project that clearly articulates what students will do and what they should get out of the experience.

- The project has the potential to impact a broad spectrum of students over a number of years. Projects that affect a single class on a one-time basis would not be appropriate.
- Projects should be based on sound educational research/practice and show promise for enhancing student learning.
- Proposals should articulate key questions about teaching and learning that the project hopes to answer upon its conclusion.
- Proposals from teachers should have the clear support of the school principal; proposals from principals should have the clear support of teaching staff.

Grants are competitive; only meritorious proposals that meet CEF's criteria will be funded.

To Apply

The call for applications and corresponding deadlines will be announced by CEF as funds permit, typically in the fall. Once a call has been announced, please send applications (about 2-3 pages in length) as an email attachment to Dianna Graves, CEF grants chair at diannagravesCEF@gmail.com, with a copy to info@supportcef.com.

Proposals should include the following:

1. School site
2. Project title
3. Name and title(s) of project lead(s) and key collaborators
4. Project description. As part of your description, please address the following:
 - What will students be doing as part of this project? What will they learn? What do you, as an educator, hope to learn?
 - Approximate number and grade-level of students who will be impacted by the project.
 - Rationale for the proposed approach. Include any relevant educational research or examples from practice that inform your proposal.
 - Resources needed for implementation.
 - Project timeline.
5. Budget*, including all materials, equipment, professional development costs, software, etc.
 - Please research costs carefully and make informed estimates.
 - Include both the full cost of your project as well as the specific amount requested from CEF. List any other sources of funding you are pursuing or have already obtained (i.e., Best BET, PFA, etc).
6. Support of principal and lead teachers on the project. Please indicate in your cover email or proposal that appropriate individuals have been consulted and involved in the development of your project.

*If your project will involve a significant technology component, please confer with your technology coordinator and address any relevant technology logistics in your proposal.

It is expected that funds will be used within the academic year of the award or returned to the Claremont Educational Foundation by June 30.

Reporting

There should be no fear of failure in these projects; rather, CEF wishes to support a platform for educators to develop and test ideas for engaging students in creative learning activities. In this spirit, grant recipients will be asked to provide to CEF a brief summary of the project, lessons learned upon its conclusion, and thoughts about continuing or scaling up in the future. Grantees should be candid and forthcoming about what worked and what may need further refinement. It is hoped that each project will contribute to an ethos of experimentation and vibrant learning, both for educators and students.

Repeat Applicants

CEF seeks to support teachers in sustaining and enhancing successful grant projects. Applicants are welcome to submit substantively similar proposals in sequential grant cycles; however, when determining awards among proposals of equal merit, priority will go to new applicants. Repeat grant proposals must include a copy of the most recent project report, and are considered stronger when they expand upon or add something new to the previous proposal or incorporate lessons from the previous project. Applicants should not submit substantively similar proposals more than twice; however, CEF and the community partner organization may work collaboratively to identify long-term sustainability solutions.

FAQs

1. *What do you mean by 'innovation' and 'creativity'?*

We know these terms get tossed around in many different ways in education. CEF does not have a rigid definition of what counts as creative or innovative, but we are hoping to see something exciting in the project's approach. We are open to the many forms and manifestations of innovation in each school's own local context, but in all cases we are interested in defined projects that give students a chance to engage creatively with ideas, with each other, and with the world around them. The hope is to support the professional instincts of our teaching staff, flesh out good ideas that might not otherwise come forward, and ensure that the learning environment in CUSD remains vibrant for both students and teachers.

2. *Can I use a CEF mini grant to fund a field trip or assembly?*

While the Board would be reluctant to categorically rule anything out, field trips and assemblies do not rise to the top of the list of what we are hoping to fund. These grants are intended to give schools a chance to do something substantively different, not simply cover the costs of routine field trips and assemblies. However, if you think you can make a case for an innovative project that involves a field-trip/assembly component, we encourage you to be in touch with us to discuss your proposal.

3. *May I use the funds for professional development?*

Yes, provided that the money does not supplant something the district is already obliged to provide. Professional development costs, if included, should comprise a small portion of the overall budget and be directly linked to impact on student learning.

4. *If I don't use all the money awarded this year, can I carry it over to next year?*

No. Unused funds must be returned to CEF by June 30.

5. *Can I make any changes to my budget after I receive my award?*

Deviations from the submitted budget should be discussed with CEF.

6. *When is my final report due to CEF?*

Reports are due by June 30 and should include a brief summary of your project, your assessment of what worked and what didn't, and your reflections about continuing the project. We rely on your reflections of the experience to ensure the success of our granting programs and to help us advocate effectively on behalf of schools. Our ability to continue this kind of program depends on a successful partnership, and we appreciate your attention to this end-of-year task.

7. *Whom can I contact for more information?*

CEF is always eager for your feedback and inquiries. Please do not hesitate to contact us with your comments and questions!

Dianna Graves, Grants Committee Chair
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CEF, General Inquiries
info@supportcef.com