



FOR SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS EDUCATION  
"Encouraging excellence in science and math education"

## **WHAT IS A LETTER OF INQUIRY?**

The first step in applying for many grants, including a Delaware Foundation for Science and Math Education (DFSME) grant is to complete a Letter of Inquiry/Intent (LOI). The purpose of this letter is to provide the grant-making agency with a thumbnail sketch of the project for which you will be requesting funds. DFSME's LOI is an online form. You must fill out all sections of the form.

## **PROCEDURES**

- Step 1: Read the GUIDELINES, BOUNDARIES and FAQs in this document.
- Step 2: Download the LOI form entitled "Seed Grant Inquiry Form" into a Word file. Fill it out and e-mail it as an attachment to [anne.dfsme@gmail.com](mailto:anne.dfsme@gmail.com) with the subject heading "Seed Grant LOI." Please recognize that this is an important document. Clarity and correct grammar and punctuation matter.
- Step 3: A grant administrator at DFSME will review the LOI to determine if your proposal meets our funding criteria. If it does, a subset of the program committee will review the letter and make a determination regarding your proposed program.
- Step 4: You will be contacted once the LOI has been reviewed. You will receive one of three responses: 1) an invitation to submit a full grant proposal, 2) a request for additional information, or 3) an explanation of why your proposal has not been accepted for the current funding cycle.
- Step 5: If invited, you will continue the more detailed application process. The full application and guidelines will be e-mailed to the contact person listed in the LOI.
- Step 6: You will submit the full (detailed) proposal by email. A grant administrator will review it to make sure all requested information is present. If so, it will be forwarded to the DFSME Program Committee. A decision will be made in approximately 6 weeks and you will be informed of the committee's determination.
- Step 7: If the Program Committee decides to support your proposal, you will be asked to sign a memorandum of understanding which recaps the timeline you have indicated in your proposal, determines benchmarks that will trigger the release of funds, and establishes the reporting process for your program. Signing off on this document is a prerequisite to receiving the funds awarded.



FOR SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS EDUCATION  
"Encouraging excellence in science and math education"

## **GUIDELINES**

- Grants will run between \$500 and \$5,000.
- Our request periods will run 2 times a year. The focus of the seed funding may change from time to time. For example, we may support only Agriculture proposals in one 6-month period, then support Technology in the next 6-month period.
- While we do not set a time limit for the expenditure of funds, we expect you to determine a timeline indicating a start and end date for your program. At the end of the program, any funds not expended will be retained by or returned to DFSME. All expenditures must be accounted for in the summary.
- You will be required to provide a report of the program's success/non-success, including a discussion of whether it needs tweaking, how it can be replicated, etc.
- If your program has not been selected, you may reapply in the next cycle as long as the program still fits the stated funding priorities for the new cycle.

## **BOUNDARIES**

- We will provide materials only if they are directly related to your specific project and are not available to you through a school, district, Department of Education or other source.
- DFSME may choose not to fund a request in full. You should also seek other support. We suggest you seek additional funding from a variety of sources such as local businesses, parent-teacher organizations, the Department of Education, your school district, etc.
- DFSME is focused on STEM education in Delaware. Your project should align with the STEM standards for Delaware.
- Where/when appropriate, there is a preference for programs that involve inquiry/problem based, hands on learning. However, not having this will *not* automatically disqualify you.
- If the program is an in-school or school-based extra-curricular project, you must have buy-in from the administrator/principal and will be required to provide a letter of support.
- If the program is going to be held at a facility/institution you must provide a letter of agreement from that facility stating that you are permitted to use the facility and you must show evidence that you can fulfill/meet all rules and conditions for using the facility.
- We are a non-profit 501(c)3 organization. Our goal is the provide equal opportunity in STEM learning for all Delawareans, particularly students and teachers. If you are a private institution, you must agree to open your program to the appropriate public audience (students, teachers, parents, etc.) in Delaware.



FOR SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS EDUCATION  
"Encouraging excellence in science and math education"

## DFSME SEED GRANT

---

### *FAQs*

---

#### **WHO CAN APPLY**

- Anyone in the State of Delaware may apply for a seed grant as long as it is connected to STEM education/learning within the PreK-20 realm.
- Private schools may request support as long as the proposed program is open to the appropriate public audience.

#### **WHAT WILL WE SUPPORT?**

Each grant period will focus on one or two kinds of programs. Some of the programs we may support include:

- STEM summer camps, after school/out of school programs, in-school programs.
- Curriculum development in the STEM areas.
- Teacher training or professional development for STEM (must be approved by the appropriate district administrators).
- Higher education institutions piloting a course for teachers and professional development.

#### **IF OUR PROPOSAL IS APPROVED, WILL DFSME PROVIDE FULL FUNDING?**

- DFSME may fund the proposal in full or in part. It is always a good idea to have other funding sources lined up or already committed to your program.

#### **CAN I TALK TO SOMEONE ABOUT MY PROPOSAL BEFORE SUBMITTING AN LOI?**

- Yes. You may e-mail us with questions at [anne.dfsme@gmail.com](mailto:anne.dfsme@gmail.com) or call us at 302-397-0034 x 1.