



DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
OFFICE OF THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF

# EDUCATION

**THIS DOCUMENT IS INTENDED FOR REVIEW ONLY. APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED USING THE EGMS SYSTEM AT [grants.osse.dc.gov](http://grants.osse.dc.gov) WHERE IT WILL BE AVAILABLE ON JULY 21, 2017.**

**Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE)  
Division of Health and Wellness**

**Request for Applications (RFA)**

**DC Environmental Literacy Advancement Grant  
(ELAG)**

Announcement Date: July 7, 2017

RFA Release Date: July 21, 2017

Pre-Application Question Period Ends: Aug. 28, 2017

Application Submission Deadline: Sept. 15, 2017

**LATE OR INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS  
WILL NOT BE REVIEWED.**

More information is available on the Environmental Literacy Program Webpage here:  
<http://osse.dc.gov/service/environmental-literacy-program-elp>

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## Section I: General Information

### Introduction

The Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), Division of Health and Wellness is soliciting applications for the District of Columbia Environmental Literacy Advancement Grant (ELAG). The purpose of this grant is to increase the capacity of nonprofit and community-based organizations (CBOs) to provide environmental education programs to District schools represented in the 2017-19 Environmental Literacy Leadership Cadre.

### Background

The Healthy Schools Act (HSA) of 2010 (D.C. Law 18-209), as amended (codified at D.C. Official Code § 38-821.01 *et. seq.*) aims to create a healthy school environment where students can achieve academically and learn healthy nutrition and activity habits for life. The HSA acknowledges that creating and sustaining an environmentally friendly school environment and integrating environmental education into schools' curricula are essential to the health and wellness of students, as well as the health of the local environment and community (D.C. Official Code § 38-821.02(g)).

To complement existing efforts related to school gardens, farm-to-school programs, and local wellness policies, an [environmental literacy program](#) has been established within OSSE to assist schools in implementation of the DC Environmental Literacy Plan. Research indicates that environmental education improves learning in other subjects. For example, using strategies such as problem-based learning, taking field trips, using the schoolyard for lessons, and encouraging reflection, effectively enhance student learning (Schroeder, Scott, Tolson, Huang, and Lee, 2007). Additionally, the Next Generation Science Standards focus on real-world contexts for learning, with major content focus on science related to the environment – energy, nature, climate, sustainability, and the earth.<sup>1</sup>

In 2013, the DC Department of Energy and Environment received a Sustainable DC Innovation Grant to work with nonprofit organizations and District teachers to begin implementation of the DC Environmental Literacy Plan. At the end of the two-year project, one of the recommendations from the final report is to build capacity of environmental education providers and offer a coordinated approach in delivering education programs and services to support schools in their implementation of the [Environmental Literacy Framework](#).

To this end, the HSA required OSSE to establish a one-year pilot program during the 2015-16 school year and provide funds to support environmental literacy in DC schools. In February 2016, OSSE established the Environmental Literacy Leadership Cadre, a group of teachers and educators that represent 16 public elementary schools in the District. At the same time, OSSE awarded Environmental Literacy Advancement grants to provide environmental education programs in the areas of air quality/climate change, water, land, resource conservation, and/or health for elementary schools represented in

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<sup>1</sup> National Wildlife Federation blog post: <http://blog.nwf.org/2014/03/six-key-reasons-the-new-next-generation-science-standards-are-great-news-for-environmental-education/>

cadre. Initial feedback from cadre members show that these grants provide much needed assistance in implementing newly established school-based environmental literacy programs.

OSSE is in the process of establishing its second cohort of teachers representing up to 16 public elementary schools to participate in the Environmental Literacy Leadership Cadre, to begin in Sept. 2017. Therefore, in accordance with the Environmental Literacy Program Amendment Act of 2016, OSSE is soliciting applications for Environmental Literacy Advancement Grants that will provide quality environmental education programs to a minimum of one entire grade level. Grantees are encouraged to collaborate and/or partner with other organizations to determine which grade level will best fit their expertise and decrease the chance of duplicative efforts.

### **Intended Population**

The intended population for the DC Environmental Literacy Advancement Grant is:

- Environmental education CBOs with experience working with K-12 public schools in the District of Columbia.

### **Pre-Application Question Period**

To ensure an equal opportunity for all applicants, OSSE requests that applicants submit questions regarding the RFA electronically to Grace Manubay, [Grace.Manubay@dc.gov](mailto:Grace.Manubay@dc.gov), by Aug. 28, 2017, at 4:30 p.m. Answers to submitted questions will be made available by Sept. 6, 2017, at 4:30 p.m. Questions submitted after this deadline date will not receive responses. Responses to questions will be published on the FAQ page here: <http://osse.dc.gov/service/environmental-literacy-program-elp>.

Applicants are **highly encouraged to** attend a pre-application conference at OSSE on Aug. 9, 2017, at 2 p.m in Conference Room 5014. This will provide the opportunity to meet other interested organizations and identify potential partners.

### **Application Checklist**

Applications must meet the following requirements to be eligible for review:

- All required components of the application are completed.
- All components of the application have been thoroughly reviewed and signed by the appropriate stakeholders.
- The completed application must be submitted, including all narrative responses and uploaded documents, by or before the deadline.

### **Due Date**

Applications must be submitted electronically using the EGMS System no later than **Sept. 15, 2017, at 3 p.m.**

## **OSSE Contact Information**

Grace Manubay  
Environmental Literacy Coordinator  
Healthy Schools and Wellness Programs  
Division of Health and Wellness  
Office of the State Superintendent of Education  
Government of the District of Columbia  
810 First St. NE, 4th Floor  
Washington, DC 20002  
Phone: (202) 654-6116  
Email: [Grace.Manubay@dc.gov](mailto:Grace.Manubay@dc.gov)

## **Section II: Award Information**

### **Award Period**

The grant period begins on Oct. 2, 2017 and ends on Sept. 30, 2019.

### **Available Funding**

The total amount of anticipated funding available for this award period is \$800,000. For the 2018 fiscal year, the total amount of anticipated funding is \$400,000.

### **Funding Restrictions**

Funds must be used to support activities described in the program requirements of this RFA and/or included in the applicant's submission as part of their program plan.

The funds MAY be used for:

- Personnel
- Program fees
- Materials and supplies
- Student transportation
- Food for the following purposes only:
  - Snacks for students during grant-related activities.
  - Food for demonstration/educational purposes (ex. cooking demo, taste test of healthier food choices).
  - Snacks for parents, teachers, or community members at grant-related trainings or community events (ex. Environmental STEM night, training for teachers on teaching in a school garden).
  - Meals for students during grant-related activities (ex. lunches during a farm field trip).
  - Any other food purchase requires prior authorization from OSSE.

The funds MAY NOT be used for:

- Travel expenses (ex: hotels, airline tickets, and per diem).

All snacks/foods purchased with Healthy Schools Act funds must meet the requirements of the USDA Smart Snacks in School guidelines. For more information, go to <http://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-smart-snacks>. If a meal is to be provided to students, it must consist of healthy foods (fresh fruits and vegetables, whole-grain rich products, lean sources of protein, non-fried foods, and no desserts such as candy, cakes, pies or buns). Grantees should strive to purchase local and seasonal produce when available. Prior approval from OSSE must be obtained before purchasing meals for students.

### **Audits**

At any time or times before final payment and for three years thereafter, the District government may audit the applicant's expenditure statements and source documentation. The applicant cannot at any time prior to the application process nor during the award period be in violation of any previous grant obligations to the District of Columbia government.

## **Section III: Eligibility Information**

### **Eligibility**

OSSE will accept applications from nonprofit and CBOs with 501(c)(3) status.

### **Cost-Sharing**

Applicants must contribute cost-sharing funds equal to or greater than 20 percent of the grant amount. A detailed line-item breakdown of cost-sharing contributions should be identified in the budget. Volunteer time may be used to satisfy this requirement. Applicants applying for less than \$5,000 are not required to contribute cost-sharing funds.

### **Indirect Costs**

Indirect costs may be requested up to a limit of 8 percent of the funding request. To submit a request, please email [Grace.Manubay@dc.gov](mailto:Grace.Manubay@dc.gov).

### **Grant Award Notice and Payments**

In order to be awarded an environmental literacy advancement grant, sub-grantees must establish eligibility by submitting an application to OSSE in accordance with the relevant program statute(s) and this RFA. Once OSSE has fully approved the application and issued an official Grant Award Notification, sub-grantees may then receive payment for allowable expenditures for which obligation was made during the grant period. OSSE has implemented a reimbursement process for all grantees. Grant award payments are reimbursable on a monthly basis. Program costs must be paid by the sub-grantee to the payee prior to requesting reimbursement; it is not sufficient for costs merely to be incurred. Compliance with programmatic and fiscal implementation and reporting will be considered in paying reimbursement requests. To receive reimbursement for grant program expenditures, OSSE grantees must complete and submit the applicable reimbursement workbook/s electronically.

## **Section IV: Submission and Application Information**

### **Application Period**

The RFA was released on July 21, 2017. The deadline for application submission is **Sept. 15, 2017, at 3 p.m.**

### **Submission Requirements**

The application must be submitted electronically using the [EGMS System](#). The required contents are as follows:

- Organization Eligibility
- Contact Information
- Narrative
- Detailed Planning Expenditures (project budget)
- Assurances
- Supporting Documentation
  - 501(c)(3) Determination Letter
  - Letters of Commitment from any partner organizations

## **Section V: Program Requirements**

### **General Program Requirements**

The purpose of the ELAG is to increase the capacity of nonprofit and CBOs to provide environmental education programs to public elementary schools in the District represented in the 2017-19 Environmental Literacy Leadership Cadre. The list of schools can be found on the web: <http://osse.dc.gov/service/environmental-literacy-leadership-cadre>.

Grantees will be required to complete the following required activities under the ELAG:

- Grantees will “adopt-a-grade” to provide an environmental education experience to all classes in one grade level across all of the elementary schools represented in the 2017-19 Environmental Literacy Leadership Cadre. This will include:
  - Collaborating and contracting (if applicable) with other partners to ensure complete service delivery for the designated topic area.
  - Aligning programs with the Next Generation Science Standards using the recommended guiding questions and/or sustainability initiative outlined in the Environmental Literacy Framework. Programs do not need to be the same across partners but must be similar in content.
- Grantees will support the Environmental Literacy Leadership Cadre in the implementation of the school’s environmental literacy program. This will include:

- Providing feedback as the cadre members begin developing individual school environmental literacy programs.
  - Collaborating with teachers to schedule lessons and field experiences.
  - Scheduling and providing field experiences and services opportunities (as appropriate) during the 2017-19 school years.
  - Providing hands-on, standards-based environmental education lessons to students.
- Grantees will provide programs to a minimum of 10 classes from schools represented in the Environmental Literacy Leadership Cadre alumni schools. A list of the schools can be found here: <https://osse.dc.gov/node/1220026>. OSSE reserves the right to match grantees with the alumni school with which the grantee will provide programming.
  - If a school represented in the Environmental Literacy Leadership Cadre opts not to engage in the grantee's program, OSSE reserves the right to select a comparable school at which the grantee can provide programming.
  - Grantees will provide OSSE with recommendations regarding efficacy of coordination and adoption of grade-level environmental education experiences.
  - Grantees must keep and submit to the Environmental Literacy Coordinator detailed documentation of how funds are spent throughout the grant period, including:
    - Reimbursement requests for a minimum of 50 percent and a maximum of 60 percent of the total funds must be submitted by Sept. 30, 2018.
  - Grantees will be required to fill out a continuation grant application in EGMS midway through the grant period.
    - A continuation grant is required for all multi-year grants with OSSE and ensures that grantees can utilize grant funds during all years of the grant period.
  - Grantees must report on their progress through:
    - One site visit during the grant period conducted by OSSE program staff per fiscal year.
    - Regular communications with OSSE's Environmental Literacy Coordinator throughout the grant period via email and phone, as requested.
    - Submission of Mid-Project and End-Project Reports which can be found here: <http://osse.dc.gov/page/environmental-literacy-grants>.
  - Reports and paperwork must be submitted on time to remain in compliance with grant requirements.



## Section VI: Review Process and Application Scoring

### Review Process

Applications will be screened initially by OSSE staff to determine whether all application and eligibility requirements have been met. Only applications that meet all eligibility and application requirements will be evaluated, scored, and rated by the review panel. OSSE will use external peer reviewers to review and score the applications received for this RFA. An external peer reviewer is an expert in the field or the matter. Scoring and recommendations of the review panel are advisory only. The final decision to award an ELAG rests solely with OSSE. After reviewing the recommendations of the review panel and any other information considered relevant, OSSE shall decide which applicants to fund, as well as the funding amount.

### Application Criteria and Scoring

All applications that meet the application criteria will be reviewed and scored by an external review panel using the following criteria:

Criteria	Points
<p><b><i>Project Vision and Implementation Plan</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Applicant describes its current state of environmental education program delivery to elementary schools in the District.</li> <li>2. Applicant describes the vision of the proposed environmental literacy project, to include preferred grade level with which to work.</li> <li>3. Applicant provides a clear implementation plan, including a timeline, for the project.</li> <li>4. Applicant anticipates challenges and has a plan in place to overcome these challenges.</li> <li>5. Applicant has clearly described the role of partnering organizations and provides evidence that partners will effectively collaborate to carry out the activities of the grant.</li> </ol>	25
<p><b><i>Curriculum Integration Plan</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Applicant indicates which environmental education curriculum will be used and how this curriculum supports grade-level learning aligned with the Environmental Literacy Framework.</li> <li>2. The applicant clearly explains how it will provide support to schools implementing a school-based environmental literacy program through classroom visits, field experiences, and/or service opportunities.</li> </ol>	20
<p><b><i>Student and Community Involvement Plan</i></b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The applicant provides specific examples of how students will be impacted by the grant activities.</li> <li>2. The applicant provides specific examples of how the school community, especially classroom teachers, will be involved in</li> </ol>	20

the proposed project.	
<p><b><i>Cost-Effectiveness of Budget</i></b>  <i>In addition to the criteria below, the level of cost-effectiveness will be determined by the Budget and Budget Justification Narrative.</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Applicant is clear about how proposed costs were determined and steps were taken to ensure the project is cost-effective.</li> <li>2. All proposed costs are described in the Budget and Budget Justification Narrative. Applicant provides a clear explanation of the source and value determination of in-kind contributions.</li> <li>3. All proposed costs are essential to the success of the project and are clearly related to the vision and implementation plan of the project.</li> </ol>	15

**Description of Scoring**

The criteria above will be scored using the following indicators:

- Missing: The category is not addressed.
- Does Not Meet Expectations: The applicant is missing a very large portion of the category, fails to provide information, provides inaccurate information, or provides information that is not discernible.
- Working Toward Expectations: The applicant provides unclear and non-specific information, partially addresses the category, but provides limited information about approach and strategies. The answers lack focus and detail.
- Meets Expectations: The applicant provides general but sufficient detail, adequately addresses the category; however, some areas are not fully explained and/or questions remain. The application has some minor inconsistencies and weaknesses.
- Exceeds: The applicant provides specific and comprehensive information, and provides complete, detailed, and clearly articulated responses to address the category. The description is well-conceived and the ideas are fully developed and original.

## **Section VII: Award Administration**

### **Decision and Notifications of Awards**

OSSE reviews all applications for grant funds in accordance with DC competitive funding regulations. OSSE anticipates notifying all applicants of the final award decision by Sept. 30, 2017. Each awarded applicant will receive a Grant Award Notice (GAN) that will include the award amount, award agreement, terms and conditions of the award, and any supplemental information required.

### **Monitoring**

The grant recipient's effectiveness is determined based upon the following information:

- Site Visit documentation including Site Visit Form.
- Responses to questions in the Mid-Project and End-Project Reports.
- Ability to keep detailed records of funds spent.
- Responsiveness to requests and inquiries from OSSE.

### **Corrective Action and Termination of Funding**

In the event that programmatic, financial, or documentation conditions of the grant are not being met in an appropriate and timely fashion, progressive actions will be taken at the discretion of OSSE, up to and including the termination of funding. A project that is terminated will be subject to the same requirements regarding audit, recordkeeping, and submission of reports as a project that runs for the duration of the project period.

### **Nondiscrimination in the Delivery of Services**

Grant recipients shall comply with the District of Columbia Human Rights Act of 1977, as amended, which prohibits discrimination based upon the actual or perceived: race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, genetic information, source of income, disability, status as a victim of an intra-family offense, or place of residence or business of any individual.

### **Confidentiality**

Except as otherwise provided by local or federal law, no recipient of a ELAG shall use or reveal any research, statistical, or personally identifiable information for any purpose other than that for which such information was obtained in accordance with the ELAG program. Such information, and any copy of such information shall be immune from legal process and shall not, without the consent of the person furnishing such information, be admitted as evidence or used for any purpose in any action, suit, or judicial, legislative, or administrative proceeding.

### **Terms and Conditions**

- OSSE reserves the right to accept or deny any or all applications if the agency determines it is in the best interest of the agency to do so. OSSE shall notify the applicant if it rejects that applicant's proposal. OSSE may suspend or terminate an

- outstanding RFA pursuant to its own grant-making rule(s) or any applicable regulation or requirement.
- OSSE reserves the right to issue addenda and/or amendments subsequent to the issuance of the RFA, or to rescind the RFA.
  - OSSE shall not be liable for any costs incurred in the preparation of applications in response to the RFA. Applicant agrees that all costs incurred in developing the application are the applicant's sole responsibility.
  - OSSE may conduct pre-award on-site visits to verify information submitted in the application and determine if the applicant's facilities are appropriate for the services intended.
  - OSSE may enter into negotiations with an applicant and adopt a firm funding amount or other revision of the applicant's proposal that may result from negotiations.
  - OSSE shall provide the citations to the statute and implementing regulations that authorize the grant or sub grant; all applicable federal and District regulations; payment provisions identifying how the grantee will be paid for performing under the award; reporting requirements, including programmatic, financial and any special reports required by OSSE; and compliance conditions that must be met by the grantee.
  - If there are any conflicts between the terms and conditions of the RFA and any applicable federal or local law or regulation, or any ambiguity related thereto, then the provisions of the applicable law or regulation shall control and it shall be the responsibility of the applicant to ensure compliance.

### **Program Specific Assurances**

Applicants will be required to attest to the following program specific assurances:

1. As required by the grant-making agency, we are able to secure a cost-sharing amount equal or greater than 20 percent of the total amount of the funds awarded, as detailed in the grant budget. Volunteer time may be used to satisfy this requirement;
2. We will ensure that the facilities under our school or organization's ownership, lease or supervision, which shall be utilized in the accomplishment of the project are compliant with all District statutes, codes, and regulations;
3. If required by the Healthy Schools Act of 2010 (HSA) (D.C. Law 18-209), our school or organization is in compliance of all of the requirements of this act;
4. We know and understand that awarded funds shall be used to support environmental education and activities that may include covering the costs of personnel, transportation of students, materials, and training. The funds may not be used to support travel. The funds may not be transferred outside of, or within the organization or school, for any unrelated purpose; and
5. We will establish safeguards to prohibit employees from using their positions for a purpose that is or gives the appearance of being motivated by a desire for private gain for themselves or others, particularly with whom they have family, business, or other ties.

## **Section VIII: Application Narrative**

### **Eligibility Checklist**

Please provide a response to all statements and questions below to determine applicant eligibility. Once your answers have been selected, click the Submit Eligibility button. All responses will be verified by OSSE.

- The applicant/authorized representative submitting this application certifies that the fiscal sponsor has current 501(c)(3) status.

### **Project Narrative**

Criterion 1, Project Narrative: Project Vision and Implementation Plan (25 out of 80 Points)

Please provide a brief narrative for each of the following sections:

1. Please describe the current state of environmental education program delivery to elementary schools in the District. (5,000 maximum characters)
2. Please describe the vision of the proposed environmental literacy project, to include preferred grade level with which to work. (5,000 maximum characters)
3. Please describe your implementation plan for the project including a timeline of major milestones. (5,000 maximum characters)
4. Please describe any challenges that you anticipate and describe how you will overcome these challenges. (5,000 maximum characters)
5. Please describe the role of partnering organizations and provide evidence that partners will effectively collaborate to carry out the activities of the grant. (5,000 maximum characters)

Criterion 2, Project Narrative: Curriculum Integration Plan (20 out of 80 Points)

Please provide a brief narrative for each of the following sections:

1. Please indicate which environmental education curriculum will be used and how this curriculum supports grade-level learning aligned with the Environmental Literacy Framework. (5,000 maximum characters)
2. Please explain how your organization will provide support to schools implementing a school-based environmental literacy program through classroom visits, field experiences, and/or service opportunities. (5,000 maximum characters)

Criterion 3, Project Narrative: Student and Community Involvement Plan (20 out of 80 Points)

Please provide a brief narrative for each of the following sections:

1. Please provide specific examples of how students will be impacted by the grant activities. (5,000 maximum characters)
2. Please provide specific examples of how the school community, especially teachers, will be involved in the grant activities. (5,000 maximum characters)

Criterion 4, Project Narrative: Cost-Effectiveness of Budget (15 out of 80 Points)

Please provide a brief narrative for each of the following sections:

1. Please describe how proposed costs were determined and the measures taken to ensure that the project is cost effective. (5,000 maximum characters)
2. Please provide a Budget and Budget Justification Narrative that describes all proposed costs. Also provide a clear explanation of the source and value determination of in-kind contributions. (5,000 maximum characters)
3. Please demonstrate how all costs are essential to the success of the project and are clearly related to the vision and implementation plan of the project. (5,000 maximum characters)

All supporting documentation should be uploaded using the File Upload (through EGMS). Required documentation can be submitted upon the initial submission of this application. If OSSE requests further documentation, this File Upload process is the location where such files should be attached to your application for review.

Required Documents to Include:

- 501(c)(3) Determination Letter.
- Letters of Commitment from partner organization(s).
- Agreement between the applicant and partner organization signed by the appropriate authorized representatives (if applicable).
- Basic Business License or Charitable Solicitations License (or documentation that an application is being processed).
- Current W-9 Form.
- Current Master Collection Form.

Copies of the required forms may be downloaded from the OSSE Environmental Literacy Grants webpage: <https://osse.dc.gov/page/environmental-literacy-grants>

If you have files to upload for OSSE review, please provide a brief description of the contents of each file.

**Budget Overview**

For each of the following budget categories in this section, the applicant must provide a full list of all planned expenditures. The total of all expenditures in this section must match the total amount requested.

A summary of the budget category planned expenditures can be found below:

- Salaries and Benefits
- Professional Services
- Equipment
- Supplies and Materials
- Fixed Property Costs
- Other Objects
- Cost-Sharing
- Administrative/Indirect Costs (no greater than 8 percent)