



THE RAMSDEN PROJECT★

A Community of
Fund for Teachers Fellows

FFT 2021 Innovation Circle Grant Application Guidelines

Deadline: Friday, April 1, 2021 5:00PM CST

Please read these important 2021 programming notes:

- The 2021 Grant Application is available for **grants in the continental United States**.
Teachers in Alaska and Hawaii may pursue opportunities within their states.
- Your path of learning, be it experiential or online, is your choice.

Program Overview

Teachers are most effective, and improve in their practice, when they are problem solvers and innovators, who take risks, learn, reflect, and collaborate. As a Fellow, you understand how Fund for Teachers' transformational learning experiences catalyze these problem-solving experiences for yourself and your students, ultimately changing schools and communities.

To seed innovation in topics that are key priorities in education, Fund for Teachers is offering an inaugural Innovation Circle Grant. These grants are grounded in your unique problem of practice, testing solutions, and creating impact in your classroom. Different from our flagship Fellowship grant, Innovation Circle grants are designed around a predetermined set of topics. Fellows will still design a learning experience but will also participate in a 'circle' of Fellows to stimulate and support innovation. Circles will meet for approximately 20 hours over the course of the year to design innovative solutions to their problems of practice.

2021 Innovation Circle Grant Topics Include: Equity, Social Emotional Learning, 'Arts and Design as a Lever for Equity' and Accessibility (currently only available to teachers in Alabama). Applicants **may choose one circle per grant cycle**.

Eligibility

Applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- A Fund for Teachers Fellow, in good standing with the organization.
- A full-time preK-12th grade teacher who spends at least 50% of your time directly providing instruction to students; and
- Applicants must have plans to return to a classroom or teaching environment the year following their fellowship and demonstrate the ability to incorporate what they learn into their teaching.

Receipt of an Innovation Circle Grant does not affect the five-year waiting period between Fund for Teachers Fellowship grants. Innovation Circle Grants have no waiting between awards but cannot be earned in fellowship years.

Teaching staff that do not provide instruction to students for at least 50% of their full-time position are not eligible. One-on-one instructional time does not count toward the 50%-time requirement described above. Administrators, such as

principals, may not apply, nor may they act as the partner applicant. Please contact Fund for Teachers if you have specific questions about your eligibility.

Open to US teachers who live and work in the continental United States and Hawaii.

Innovation Circle Grant awards are \$1,000 per recipient for learning and implementation. See the budget narrative directions for more details budget instructions. Upon award, Fellows will receive 90 percent of their grant, the remaining 10 percent to be disbursed upon completion of post-fellowship requirements.

We know your time is valuable, so we discourage using it to submit proposals that do not fall within funding guidelines. In this spirit, we aim to be transparent about what our grant making does not support: Fund for Teachers does not make grants to support student travel, the completion of post baccalaureate degrees, university/college credit hours, courses for graduate credit, licensing, or licensure, onsite (or campus) professional development at your school or by the district, compensation for substitutes, stipends and requests that only include classroom supplies, such as books, technology, or other materials. All project eligibility is at the discretion of Fund for Teachers.

Eligible teachers may submit one application per grant cycle. Fund for Teachers is interested in your ideas, only. Any indication of borrowed text will disqualify your application.

Fellowships should begin after the last day of school in the spring and be completed by the first day of school in the fall, with all fellowship related expenditures made by December 16, 2021.

Application

The entire application is completed online and will require digital signatures. As part of the application process an email will be sent from info@fundforteachers.org to your principal to verify your employment.

All applicants must apply online between March 1, 2021 and April 1, 2021 with final submission made by **5 pm CST on April 1, 2021.**

As a past grant recipient, you have an existing online account. If you used an email address that is no longer working, please call 1-800-681-2667 or email info@fundforteachers.org and we can update your account.

Part One: Coversheet

- Create a 1-2 sentence project description (350-character limit).
- Sign your coversheet. Once signed, an email will be sent to your principal asking for a digital signature to verify your employment. Edits to signed coversheets are not permitted, except for revisions to the project description.
- Use the formal name of your district and school. Ex: Houston Independent School District instead of HISD and John F. Kennedy Elementary School instead of JFK Elem. School.

Part Two: Proposal

Consists of four sections and should articulate creative, thoughtful activities or projects that demonstrate potential for innovative solutions to your problem of practice.

- Create and save your proposal using a word processor, avoiding any formatting.
- **Limit your proposal to 9,000 characters, including spaces**, (approx. two, single spaced, typed pages) cumulative for all four sections.
- Avoid identifying references.
- Avoid using hyperlinks and web addresses.
- Refer to the Scoring Criteria when addressing each of the four proposal sections.

Sections:

A response to each application question is required. However, applicants should not feel limited by these questions and should provide selection committee readers with any information they feel is helpful in articulating their goals. Additionally, we strongly encourage you to review the [Scoring Criteria](#) to understand what criteria selection committee members are looking for in a highly scored proposal.

Section I: Fellowship Purpose

What is your genuine professional goal/problem of practice? Why is it important to address that goal/problem of practice?

- Describe the gaps that exist in your own practice, curriculum, or school culture.
- Illuminate how the gaps are impacting student learning.
- Articulate your learning goal(s).

Section II: Teacher Growth and Learning

Innovation Circles are a different way to learn and implement change in your classroom. What strengths/assets will you bring to the Circle you intend to join?

- Describe your strengths and assets in terms of Collaboration and Innovation.
- Briefly explain why this Circle topic is a good fit.

Section III: Innovation Learning Plan

What is your plan to address your problem of practice?

- Outline the details of your summer learning experience.
- Connect the proposed activities to your learning goals and the needs of your students.
- If you have ideas about how you might implement new learning in the classroom, describe those here.

Section IV: Budget Narrative

Provide a brief narrative showing evidence of thoughtful planning and research supporting your specific itinerary.

- Outline any expenses expected during the learning phase of the Innovation Circle.
- Stipulate a time frame and approximate costs as closely as possible.
- In narrative form, describe any expenses outlined that are not described in the Learning Plan portion of your application.
- Fund for Teachers recognizes that you may not know exactly what resources you will need to implement your fellowship learning at the time of your proposal. Please estimate a general amount; following your fellowship, you will submit a request for approval on how to spend your implementation funds. (The total grant award cannot exceed \$1,000.)

- Familiarize yourself with Fund for Teacher non-allowable expenses when designing and ultimately planning how to use your fellowship funds.

Part Three: Itemized Budget Sheet

Unlike your Budget Narrative, the Itemized Budget is a listing of your fellowship expenses by category. In addition to fellowship related expenses, you will also be asked for the length of your fellowship and the related destinations.

Please be aware of the following:

- Use whole numbers, rounding up to the nearest dollar when necessary.
- Certain products and services may not be purchased using grant funds. [A full list of non-allowable expenses may be found here.](#)
- The following are the categories to be itemized:
 - TRANSPORTATION: any fare to and from destination. Estimate rental car cost based on current gasoline prices. For personal vehicles, calculate the mileage at a rate of \$.56/mile. Grant funding can only cover mileage or gasoline, not both.
 - LODGING: Seek moderately priced motels/hotels or, if applicable, home stays.
 - FOOD: Food costs should reflect actual destination rates and cannot exceed \$50 per day/per person.
 - PARTICIPATION COSTS: Tour, registration, and course/program fees including online workshops and conferences.
 - MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES: Includes, but not limited to, books, reference materials, artifacts, or realia.
 - EQUIPMENT: Includes, but not limited to, cameras, recorders, laboratory equipment and computer hardware necessary for circle and classroom implementation. Please consider borrowing these pieces of equipment from your school, if available. Any equipment purchased with the grant funds must be accessible to entire school upon return.
 - OTHER: Specific costs not outlined in the preceding categories.

Selection Process

Fund for Teachers utilizes a committee of community members, past grant recipients, educators, and donors to select our grant recipients. Each committee utilizes the same process, scoring criteria form, and scoring standards. Before a committee receives grant proposals to review, each application is screened for eligibility and completeness. Applications failing to meet Fund for Teachers eligibility criteria or those not considered complete, will not be sent to the selection committee. Grants are awarded based on merit and available funding; consequently, the number of grants awarded varies each year.

Your proposal may be reviewed by a committee in a geographic region other than your own. When describing where you teach it is permissible to acknowledge your city and state.

Applicant coversheet and identifying information is removed prior to the selection process. Please refrain from using your name, your school or district names within your proposal to ensure a blind selection process.

Often, foundations want to know more about who we serve. The survey questions on your coversheet are for that purpose only and are in no way used in our selection process.

Applicants will be notified by email of the selection committee results on April 29, 2021 by email.

Reporting Requirements

Awardees are expected to be active and engaged members of the Fund for Teachers Ramsden Fellow community over the course of the fellowship year and the years following. This includes participating in a required orientation workshop, as well as periodic virtual meetups and participating as an active member of our digital community. Fellows are also expected to serve as ambassadors of Fund for Teachers in all professional settings.

In addition, throughout the course of the program year, Fellows are required to submit several post-fellowship deliverables to Fund for Teachers. Deliverables include: An expense report and your choice of the following to be submitted by December 16, 2021: Fund for Teachers Passport, Create and lead a PD for your peers, participate in an 'unconference' for other Fellows, write/publish an article or demo classroom video. Additionally, surveys will be distributed before, during and after the circles experience. Fellows who fail to complete post-fellowship reporting or use funds in manner not consistent with their grant proposal will be deemed, "Not in Good Standing." Fund for Teachers, at its discretion, may refuse future applications from individuals listed as "Not in Good Standing."

Fund for Teachers reserves the right to review the terms and conditions of this grant program, and to make changes at any time, including termination.

Application Quick Links

[Non-Allowable Expenses](#)

[Scoring Criteria](#)

[Sample Proposal](#)

[Innovation Circle Topics, 2021](#)

[Calendar of Events](#)