



THE RAMSDEN PROJECT

A Community of Fund for Teachers Fellows

FFT 2022 INNOVATION CIRCLE GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Deadline: Thursday, March 31, 2022, 5:00PM CST

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 now offering Innovation Circle Grants exclusively for past Fellows. 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.

2022 Innovation Circle Grant Topics Include: Building Student Self-Awareness, Learning Partnerships, Student Agency, and Student Civic Engagement. Applicants may choose one circle per grant cycle. A detailed description of each circle can be found [here](#).

HOW IS THIS GRANT DIFFERENT?

| Innovation Grant | Fellowship Grant |
|---|--|
| \$1,500 | \$5-10K |
| FFT Fellows | PK-12 Grade Teachers |
| Individuals Only | Teams and Individuals |
| Self-guided learning, collaboration with other Fellows | Self-guided, independent study and implementation |
| Design what you will do with your learning after the summer (this is your innovation) | Design what you will do with your learning in your application |
| Commit to monthly, 1.5-hour circle meetings to support design and implementation | Independent implementation |

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.

Innovation Circle Grants have a one year waiting period between awards and **cannot** be earned in fellowship years. Receipt of an Innovation Circle Grant does not affect the five-year waiting period between Fund for Teachers Fellowship grants.

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. 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.

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, 2022.

Innovation Circle Grant applicants may apply for up to \$1,000 for your summer learning experience, and up to \$500 for your innovation implementation. For the purposes of this initial grant application, you will only document the costs for the learning experience. A separate request will be made in the fall for the \$500 innovation allowance. Any innovation costs included in your initial proposal will be eliminated.

Fund for Teachers is interested in your ideas, only. Any indication of borrowed text will disqualify your application. Additionally, we know your time is valuable and 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.

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 February 10 and March 31 with final submission made by **5PM CST, on March 31, 2022**.

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 fellowship goals. Additionally, we strongly encourage you to review the Scoring Criteria (found under Quick Links) 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 learning and/or social emotional needs of your students.
- Use student data, examples and/or stories to make the case for your need to learn and innovate.

Section II: Learning Plan

What is your learning plan?

- Outline the details of your summer learning experience. Include details about the workshops, books and/or experiences you in which you plan engage.
- Describe what you hope to learn in each portion of your learning plan.

Section III: Innovation Mindset

After your learning experience, you will join other teachers in live circle meetings and asynchronous collaboration spaces designed to help you envision and implement your innovation. What strengths/assets will you bring to the Circle that will help you and your peers be successful?

- Explain why you think collaboration with other teachers around this topic will help you and/or your students?
- Describe your strengths and assets in terms of Collaboration and Innovation.

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 your fellowship. This should not exceed \$1,000. Costs over \$1,000 will be at the applicant's expense.
- 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.

- Familiarize yourself with Fund for Teacher non-allowable expenses when designing and ultimately planning how to your fellowship funds.
- **Note:** You do not need to include a request for implementation or innovation expenditures at this time. A formal request, not to exceed \$500, will be made in the fall after envisioning what you will do with your learning.

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:
 - PARTICIPATION COSTS: Tour, registration, and course/program fees including online workshops and conferences.
 - EQUIPMENT: Includes, but not limited to, cameras, recorders, laboratory equipment and computer hardware necessary for fellowship 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.
 - 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 \$.585/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.
 - OTHER: Specific costs of your fellowship not outlined in the preceding categories.

SELECTION PROCESS

To avoid creating bias for or against an applicant, the coversheet and any identifying information is removed from your proposal prior to the selection process. Please refrain from using your name, your school or district names within your proposal to ensure a fair selection process. Your proposal may be reviewed in a geographic region other than your own. When describing where you teach it is permissible to acknowledge your city and state.

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 27, 2022, by email.

CIRCLE REQUIREMENTS

1. In our experience, Fellows who actively participate in Circle meetings produce better innovations. Please plant to attend $\frac{3}{4}$ of the Circle meetings.
2. Fellows are required to submit several post-fellowship deliverables to Fund for Teachers. Deliverables may include:
 - An expense report;

- Passport (a public, written reflection of your experience/innovation);
- Fellow Surveys; and
- Documentation of your innovation shared with Fund for Teachers (e.g., series of lessons, student project, curricular unit, or resource you created for students/other teachers, documentation of a professional development you led, blog or professional article you would like to publish).

Fellows who fail to attend the circle meetings, complete post-fellowship reporting and/or use fellowship 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.