Program Information

Fund for Teachers provides educators, possessing a broad vision of what it means to teach and learn, the resources needed to pursue self-designed professional learning experiences. FFT grants are used for an unlimited variety of projects; all designed to create enhanced learning environments for teachers, their students and their school communities. We believe that supporting teachers' active participation in their own professional growth, positively impacts student learning and achievement.

Eligibility Criteria:
- Employed full-time as a PreK-12th grade teacher and spends at least 50% of their work week in direct instruction with students in a classroom or classroom-like setting;
- Intends to continue teaching in the consecutive school year; and
- Has at least three years teaching experience as a PreK-12th grade teacher.

Individuals may apply for up to $5,000 and teams may apply for up to $10,000 (while team members may be from different schools, districts or states, all members must meet the eligibility criteria). Upon award, Fellows will receive 90 percent of their grant, the remaining 10 percent to be reimbursed upon completion of post-fellowship requirements.

Fund for Teachers will not provide monies for student travel, the completion of post baccalaureate degrees, university/college credit hours, teacher certifications, courses for graduate credit, onsite (or campus) professional development at your school or by the district, compensation for substitutes or stipends.

Previous recipients must wait for 5 years before reapplying.

Eligible teachers may submit one application per grant cycle. Fund for Teachers is interested in your ideas, <u>only</u>. Any indication of borrowed text will disqualify your application. Additionally, previously awarded proposals may not be resubmitted for consideration.

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 September 30, 2016.

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, rubric 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.

As a national organization, Fund for Teachers builds committees across the country of people invested in the success of teachers and education to aid in the selection of awards. 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 cover sheet and identifying information is removed prior to the selection process. Please refrain from using your name, your school or district names within your proposal.

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 eligibility.

Applicants will be notified of the selection committee results by April 5, 2016. Awardees will be required to attend a pre-fellowship Orientation.

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

Part One: Cover Sheet

All applicants must apply online between October 1, 2015 and January 28, 2016 with final submission made by
 5 pm CST on Thursday, January 28, 2016.

Before you begin, determine if you are applying as an individual or as a team.

The cover sheet provides demographic and personal information for each applicant.

- Complete form online
- Create a 1-2 sentence project description (350 character limit), detailing <u>What you are doing + Where you are going + Why</u>.
- Sign your cover sheet. Once signed, an email will be sent to your principal asking for a signature to verify the information you have included on your cover sheet and your eligibility. Signed cover sheets are no longer editable, with the exception of 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 if JFK Elem. School.
- Teams:
    - Elect a team lead and create a team name.
    - The team lead initiates the online process and creates the team name.
    - Each team member registers an account and submits a cover sheet.
    - The team lead cannot advance past the cover sheet until all other members have completed and signed his/her cover sheet.

Part Two: Proposal
Consists of seven sections and should articulate creative, thoughtful activities or projects that demonstrate potential for learning.

- Create and save your proposal using a word processor, avoiding any formatting.
- 18,000 characters, including spaces, (approx. four typed pages) cumulative for all seven sections.
- Avoid identifying references.
- Answer all of the questions under each section.
- Consider providing important details about your school environment: demographics, school type, urban, suburban or rural, etc...

- Insert your answers for each section separately into corresponding text boxes.
- Hyperlinks and web addresses are not allowed.
- Refer to the Scoring Rubric when addressing each of the seven proposal sections.
- *TEAMS:*
    - Proposals should reflect collaboration and demonstrate your ability to work successfully as a cohesive unit.
    - Only the team lead is responsible for entering the proposal.

Sections:

• FELLOWSHIP RATIONALE AND PURPOSE: When thinking about your teaching practice, what would you like to learn? What are the key questions or learning goals you want to explore? What challenge or passion inspires your proposed fellowship? What grade(s) and subject area(s) do you teach?

• PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Describe and outline in detail your proposed fellowship. What key activities will you pursue, and why are they important? What is the time frame for achieving the goals outlined in the Rationale and Purpose?

• TEACHER GROWTH AND LEARNING: How will your fellowship help you address your key questions and/or learning goals? How will this fellowship help you grow as a teacher? How will the new proposed learning inform the content you currently teach?

• STUDENT GROWTH AND LEARNING: How will students benefit from your proposed fellowship? What meaningful additions or impact will this experience bring to your classroom?

• BENEFITS TO SCHOOL COMMUNITY: How will your fellowship experience contribute to your school community's efforts to engage students and improve learning? How will you share your fellowship learning with colleagues?

• PLAN FOR FELLOWSHIP IMPLEMENTATION OF LEARNING: Outline a plan for implementing learning from your proposed fellowship within your classroom or school. We realize that not all valuable learning and transfer can be predicted; however, planning for fellowship contributes to a more focused and significant learning experience for teacher and student. Your implementation plan may be (1) an outline of a newly created or enhanced curricular unit/project; or (2) an action plan for new classroom or school-wide structures that you hope to create.

(1) Curricular Unit/Project Outline: Focus on goals, student skills, general content, teaching methods, student outcomes, evidence of student learning and assessment ideas.

(2) Action Plan: Focus on the goals, strategy, and evidence of student learning and outcomes for new classroom or school-wide structures.

• BUDGET NARRATIVE: Provide a brief narrative showing evidence of thoughtful planning and research into your specific itinerary. The narrative should explain the rationale for the project's expenses; stipulate a time frame and approximate costs as closely as possible. Include the resources used to arrive at your final itinerary within the narrative. Costs should be realistic in relation to the proposed scope. Team budgets should include both costs broken down by individual and totals for the whole team.

If including a technology expense, specify: why the item is necessary for the fellowship's success, why you have chosen the specific brand/type, and whether you have prior experience using the technology.

Technology expenses should not be the bulk of your proposed budget, but a necessary tool to successfully complete your fellowship.

Food costs should reflect actual destination rates and cannot exceed $50 per day/per person.

Refer to *Part Three: Itemized Budget Sheet* for more detail regarding allowable expenses.

Part Three: Itemized Budget Sheet
By completing the Itemized Budget Sheet you will break your budget narrative down into a line item listing.

- Enter the length of your fellowship.
- Estimate number of hours it took to prepare your application (this information is for internal use only and is not part of the selection process).
- Add all proposed destinations for fellowship.
- Use whole numbers.
- Team lead is responsible for entering the itemized budget.
- Breakdown of expenses
  - 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 $.57.5/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.

  - 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 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.

  - OTHER: Specific costs of your fellowship not outlined in the preceding categories. Please give clear descriptions of these expenses. Use the Budget Narrative for any further explanation.

  - NON-ALLOWABLE: Certain products and services are not to be purchased using grant funds, such as toiletries, telecommunications, souvenirs, childcare, student travel, bank/credit card fees and graduate credit hours. Additional examples available online.

Additional resources to aid you in the application process can be found within the online guidelines under Quick Links. If you have any questions regarding the online application process, please contact:
onlineapp@fundforteachers.org.