
Funding Resources for Your School's Technology Project

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Overview of Educational Technology Funding

Education funding has always been focused primarily on improving student achievement through targeted interventions in specific schools and grade spans. The criteria that determines the types of projects to be funded, however, have evolved over time to include such qualifiers as school size, geographic location, student safety risks, international achievement gaps, and building by building disparities.

The types of funding for education are as varied as the school populations themselves, and many prominent programs fund a great deal of technology. While some programs are obvious technology funders, such as *Enhancing Education through Technology Program*, others have titles like *Smaller Learning Communities* and *Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools* – titles that do not indicate the extent to which a program supports technology. Bear in mind that most grants exist to solve an identified problem or deal with a particular issue; hence, they rely on the applicant to decide if and how much technology is appropriate to address that issue.

With few exceptions, grants do not fund technology alone. They fund the application of technology to the need, problem, or gap that they have been authorized to address.

Sources of Funding

Education funding comes from three primary sources:

- **Federal agencies**, often but not exclusively the US Department of Education
- **State agencies**, either administering state-initiated funds or passing through federal funds
- **Foundations**, providing smaller grants for identified local needs

Grants may also be administered in three basic formats:

- **Competitive**, requiring an application and subject to review and selection
- **Formula**, providing a guaranteed award based on data provided to the funder, provided the applicant submits the required paperwork on time and is compliant with the requirements of the funder
- **Earmark**, leveraging political influence of your congressional representative in the federal budgeting process

Technology-Friendly Programs

The programs that follow are solid examples of technology-friendly education grants. Anticipated deadlines are based on past years. All program information is subject to change. The programs are separated into three categories:

- **Direct from a Federal Agency** – Every school in the country that wants to apply for these programs applies at the same time, responding to the same requirements. All awards for each program originate from a single federal entity.
- **Pass-through Involving Your State Education Department** – Although these programs originate at the federal level, each state is responsible for passing funding through to local schools. States control timing of the grants, define allowable uses, and can even apply matching requirements.
- **Foundation Funders** – These private foundations are just a sampling of the thousands of foundations across the country that support education. The important things to look for are the foundation’s functional interests and geographic focus.

As you review the information provided, keep in mind the potential application of the program to your school’s curriculum, staff development, communications, and technology needs. In most cases, two or more of these elements will need to be present in order to make a fundable proposal. You may also consider involving other agencies (schools or other types of organizations) in your project to strengthen the management and broaden the impact you can reasonably expect.

Additional grant programs, as well as the latest information on the programs presented here, may also be found from the following reliable resources:

- Federal Electronic Grants Clearinghouse (www.grants.gov)
- Grants Office (www.grantsoffice.com)
- Federal and state program staff (www.usa.gov)
- Foundation Center Online (www.fdncenter.org)

Most importantly, whether you start with the grants listed here or conduct your own research and identify your own list of funding prospects, get started! The sooner you start applying for grants and building a pipeline of applications for your school, the sooner you will start to see the funding begin to flow for your projects.

DIRECT GRANTS FROM A FEDERAL AGENCY

COPS Secure Our Schools (SOS) Grant Program (\$14.8 million)

Deadline: July, 2008 (anticipated)

Summary: COPS Secure Our Schools Grant Program provides funding to law enforcement agencies to assist with the development of school safety resources and provide improved security at schools and on school grounds.

Community Policing Development School and Campus Safety (COPS-CPD-08) Grant Program (\$15 million)

Deadline: July, 2008 (anticipated)

Summary: CPD School and Campus Safety Grant Program funds nationally-relevant proposals that develop and/or advance innovative community policing strategies and approaches making schools, colleges, and/or educational institutions safe havens for learning.

Distance Learning and Telemedicine Grants and Loans (DLT) (\$153 million)

Deadline: June, 2008 (anticipated); Applications for loans and loan and grant combinations will be accepted year round.

Summary: The Distance Learning and Telemedicine loan/grant program provides financial assistance to needy recipients to enhance learning and health care opportunities for rural residents through the use of telecommunications, computer networks, and related advanced technologies. USDA is making available \$62.9 million in distance learning and telemedicine loans, \$75 million in loan and grant combinations, and \$15 million in grants.

Information Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers (ITEST) (\$20 million)

Deadline: January 4, 2008 (preliminary proposal); May 8, 2008 (full proposal)

Summary: ITEST is designed to increase the opportunities for middle and high school students and teachers to learn about, experience, and use information technologies within the context of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), including Information Technology (IT) courses.

Safe Schools/ Healthy Students Program (SS/HS) (\$38 million)

Deadline: June, 2008 (anticipated)

Summary: The SS/HS Initiative is a discretionary grant program that provides communities with federal funding to implement a coordinated and SS/HS comprehensive plan of activities, curricula, programs, and services that focus on creating safe school environments, promoting healthy childhood development, and preventing youth violence and alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) use, henceforth referred to as the SS/HS comprehensive plan.

Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) (\$94 million)

Deadline: June, 2008 (anticipated)

Summary: The Smaller Learning Communities (SLC) program awards discretionary grants to local educational agencies (LEA) to support the implementation of SLC and activities to improve student academic achievement in large high schools of 1,000 students or more (the goal is no more than 600 students in a learning community).

PASS-THROUGH GRANTS INVOLVING YOUR STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) (\$981 million)

Deadline: *varies by state*

Summary: The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLC) Program provides funding for after-school or before- and after-school programs that serve disadvantaged K-12 students. Programs must include academic assistance and educational enrichment components and must address family literacy needs of adult family members.

Enhancing Education through Technology (\$272 million)

Deadline: *varies by state*

Summary: The primary goal of this program is to improve student achievement through the use of technology in elementary and secondary schools. Additional goals include helping all students become technologically literate by the end of the eighth grade and, through the integration of technology with both teacher training and curriculum development, establishing research-based instructional methods that can be widely implemented.

FOUNDATION FUNDERS

The Kresge Foundation Capital Challenge Grant

Deadline: Proposals are accepted year-round.

Summary: The Kresge Foundation is a \$3 billion national foundation that builds stronger nonprofit organizations through capital campaigns-catalyzing their growth, helping them connect with their stakeholders, and challenging them with grants that leverage greater support. A Kresge grant is awarded on a challenge basis. It is an “all or nothing” challenge and is usually one-third to one-fifth of the amount an organization has to raise to complete its campaign goal.

State Farm Companies Foundation K-12 Public Schools Grants

Deadline: Proposals are accepted year-round.

Summary: The Foundation is primarily committed to education, helping to raise the level of student achievement in our elementary and secondary schools, as well as supporting key higher education initiatives. State Farm Companies Foundation education priorities: 1) safety and discipline; 2) parent involvement; 3) standards; 4) assessments; 5) learning readiness; 6) accountability; 7) technology; 8) professional development; and 9) school autonomy.

About Grants Office

Located in Rochester, NY, Grants Office, LLC is a growing, privately held company. Established in 2000, Grants Office has been instrumental in helping clients understand and negotiate the grants process. Our team has been successful in securing over \$250 million in grant funding for clients. Grants Office, LLC is a full-service provider of strategic grants development services for municipalities, nonprofit organizations, and industry partners. Grants Office’s services enable organizations to develop strategic direction and successfully implement a grant-seeking program in a cost-effective, goal-oriented manner.

Specific services we provide include grant program research, grant writing, project development, training, and support. Grants Office manages every aspect of the agency’s grants development process. Grants development teams consist of members from different functional areas, including grant writing, grant research, project management, account management, and strategic planning. Grants Office’s approach is based on collaboration and open communication between team members and clients. Our focus is on producing a strategic, robust grants development functions that reduces cost, lowers risk, shrinks typical investment of time and resources, and secures funding.