



CREATIVE CLASSROOM GRANT INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

Academic Year 2024-2025

The Creative Classroom Grants program was established to promote educational excellence and creative instruction in our region's public schools. **Imagine. Innovate. Inspire.** This is the focus of the VAE and this should be the focus of your grant application. We are looking to fund new and innovative ideas.

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS IS FEBRUARY 15, 2024 - 11:59 P.M.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY:

All teachers and staff who have direct instructional responsibility for students (including librarians and guidance counselors) in grades Pre K-12 in the public schools in the cities of Staunton and Waynesboro and the County of Augusta are eligible to apply. Teachers' aides, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and administrators are NOT eligible to be grant applicants. Projects must be designed, written and implemented by the designated classroom teacher or other professional instructional individual. **Each individual will only be allowed to submit and potentially be awarded two (2) grants for funding consideration in each year.**

Grants of up to \$1,500 are available for special teaching/enrichment projects designed for:

- Implementation in an individual classroom or with a special student group.
- Implementation in multiple classrooms as a departmental, interdepartmental, or school-wide project.
- Implementation in a Pre K-12 educational setting, for an educational purpose, and for the direct benefit of students.

INELIGIBLE FUNDING REQUESTS:

Grant requests for professional development, parent programs, or other services to adults will not be funded. Grant requests for furniture, equipment, or materials that are normally provided by the school division will not be considered for funding. Budget items for "normal" school supplies (paper, pencils, copy paper, Textbooks, etc.), a laptop, or honoraria for any school employee will not be funded. Grant requests greater than \$1500 will not be considered for funding.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Grant applications must be submitted online through our Smarter Select platform here: <https://app.smarterselect.com/programs/91849>
2. However, before submitting the application online, we recommend that you complete the entire application first in Word (which is available for download in the online application) then cutting and pasting your information into the online application.
3. Answer each section completely, but concisely. Word count limitations are listed, where applicable.
4. Principals must be provided a copy of the grant application as notification of the funding request.
5. Once you SUBMIT your application, you will receive an email from Smarter Select confirming your submission.

WE UTILIZE A BLIND GRANT REVIEW PROCESS:

Initial contact information such as the applicant's name, name of school, and division are removed electronically prior to the grant review process. **Once the applicant begins the "Project Information" section, the applicant should discontinue referring to themselves, their school, and their division.** Please do not reference any teachers, mascots, mottos, school goals, division goals, or any other school-specific identifying reference as it will result in your grant's disqualification.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE:

Projects chosen for funding are to be implemented between August 2024 and April 1, 2025 with the final report and any unused funds (over \$25.00) due to VAE no later than April 1, 2025.

WINNING GRANT NOTIFICATION:

Grant applications selected for funding will be announced by the conclusion of the 2023 – 2024 school year (by late May 2024), with checks distributed to school principals sometime after July 1st.

RESUBMISSIONS AND RENEWALS:

1. You may resubmit a grant application which was not selected in a previous year. Approval or denial in a prior year is no assurance of a similar outcome since the level of competition is affected by both the number and nature of the application pool.
2. You may apply for renewal of a funded grant. Your renewal application should demonstrate clear enhancements or modifications to the original project. As a general rule, projects are limited to one renewal. Your final project report from the previous year's grant must be emailed with the renewal application (an upload link is provided via the online form) or be sent to VAE (contact info. below) prior to the application deadline. You may send a preliminary report if the grant is not yet completed.

PROJECT CHANGES, TRANSFERABILITY, AND OWNERSHIP:

1. If the resources for an approved grant are not available or must be changed for any reason, please request approval of the change in writing to the chair of the Education Excellence Committee, Patricia Devitt at Padevitt@gmail.com.
2. Grants are not transferable to another project or to another instructor in most instances. However, please contact in writing the Education Excellence Committee Chair at padevitt@gmail.com if the school's principal would like to request permission from VAE to designate another teacher to implement a grant. If the grant cannot be implemented by another teacher, all funds are to be returned to VAE.
3. Materials and resources funded by a VAE grant shall become the property of the school in which the grant was implemented.

GRANT REPORTING AND PROJECT FOLLOW UP:

All grant recipients are responsible for submitting a written report about the project with a final budget, including receipts for expenses by April 1, 2024 or upon conclusion of the project if earlier. Any allocated grant funds in excess of \$25 which have not been spent and documented by April 1, 2024 must be returned to VAE with the final report.

RECOGNITION:

Grant recipients are asked to give recognition to VAE in all publications, social media posts, and in any publicity coverage related to the project. Recipients are invited to share the results of their projects with others in educational settings and/or in VAE sponsored events. Photos and thank you notes from students are appreciated throughout the year as they are used to thank our donors who make the CCG program possible. (Please send photos to vae@lumos.net.) Please have students sign their first name only with no dates. Thank you notes/cards can be sent to VAE, P.O. Box 515, Fishersville, VA 22939.

CHECKLIST:

Before submitting a grant application, you must review and agree to the following Checklist:

- ✓ I have read this document, "Instructions"
- ✓ I have confirmed that my grant application complies with all of my school division's policies and protocol.
- ✓ If my grant involves technology, I have checked with my school division's Instructional Technology department and confirmed that my grant can be implemented based on existing instructional technology capabilities.
- ✓ I have notified my principal of my grant application submission and will provide my principal with a copy of my grant application, once submitted.
- ✓ I have confirmed that my grant application contains no school or division-specific identifying information.
- ✓ I have completed the budget section of the grant application and my grant request through this application to VAE does not exceed \$1,500.00.
- ✓ I have filled in all sections of this grant application completely.
- ✓ I will save a copy of my grant application for my own use or reference. (Important note: **Please keep a copy for your records** – you will be given the option to print and save as a PDF as soon as you submit this application.)
- ✓ As the lead applicant, I agree to immediately contact VAE in the situation that a grant is awarded and I (and/or a listed co-applicant) will not continue to serve at the school named in the application prior to or during project implementation. VAE will provide further instructions in this situation.
- ✓ By submitting this application, if I am awarded a grant, I hereby consent to the use of my name, likeness, and grant application by Valley Alliance for Education in furtherance of its mission.
- ✓ I agree that submitted CCG applications become the property of VAE. VAE also reserves the right to pursue additional funding opportunities for awarded CCG grants to include the use of project submissions as corporate grant application materials (all personal information, such as applicant names and addresses, will be withheld).

COMPLETED GRANT APPLICATIONS ARE DUE NO LATER THAN 11:59 P.M. on February 15, 2024

For all questions contact:

Patricia Devitt, Education Excellence Committee Chair

Padevitt@gmail.com or 540-836-9830