



Guidelines for PreK-12 School Grants 2009-2010

The Environmental Learning in Minnesota (ELM) Grant Program is designed to support opportunities for Minnesota citizens, particularly students, to engage in “**real world environmental learning experiences**,” in an effort to achieve a sustained level of environmental literacy for all Minnesotans.

The grant program is a collaboration between the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency’s Environmental Education Advisory Board (EEAB) and the Minnesota Association for Environmental Education (MAEE), a non-profit professional association whose mission is to “support and advance environmental education in Minnesota.”

This public-private sector endeavor aims to assist Minnesotans in achieving the environmental education goals and plan as outlined in §115A.073 (Minnesota Solid Waste Management Act) and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency’s strategic plan goal R3 (*Minnesotans act on their environmental knowledge to support healthy ecosystems*).

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I. Background: Environmental Education in Minnesota

Environmental education aims to cultivate a citizenry that has a broad understanding of both human and natural systems, and their interactions. To develop an environmentally literate citizenry, individuals must be knowledgeable and have experiences with these systems in order to make informed decisions about actions to take on environmental issues, and to maintain a sustainable lifestyle.

In addition to the extensive environmental education network of individuals and organizations, the state of Minnesota has developed a number of **guiding documents** for environmental education that are an integral part of its strength. Thus, environmental education in Minnesota has:

- **Defined goals, direction and purpose:** A. [Minn. Statute § 115A.073](#) and B. [GreenPrint3](#)
- **A framework on which it can be constructed:** C. [Environmental Literacy Scope and Sequence](#)
- **Periodic assessments:** D. [Minnesota Report Cards on Environmental Literacy](#)
- **Countless committed people** developing and delivering programs across the state.

Applicants are encouraged to consult these documents as guides to their environmental education efforts.

II. Environmental Learning in Minnesota (ELM) Grant Program – ELM School Grants

A. PURPOSE

ELM Grant Program

The intent of the ELM Grant Program is to provide support for and stimulate environmental education in Minnesota. The program's primary goal is *to provide Minnesota citizens with opportunities for quality "real world" environmental learning experiences.*

A real world environmental learning experience, at its most basic level, helps learners develop a deeper personal understanding of the relationships between and among human and natural environments through active, hands-on, authentic interactions with natural, built and social environments.

In the first year of the ELM Grant Program, there were two categories of grants that were funded: smaller School Grants and larger GreenPrint Grants. Grants funded during the 2008-09 grant round can be viewed at www.naace.org/mace. In the 2009-2010, only the School Grant category will be offered due to a limited amount of funding.

ELM School Grants Category

The purpose of the ELM School Grants is to give students access to a variety of EE experiences in and out of the classroom. For the 2009-2010, ELM School Grants will provide **up to \$1,500** that can be used to:

- Provide resources that give students and teachers access to a variety of learning sites on the school campus and beyond, including transportation, entry fees, education materials, equipment and teacher preparation time.
- Provide easy access to current and accurate materials, resources and resource people within the school or community.

B. FUNDING GUIDELINES FOR 2009-2010

ELM Grant Program **PREFERS PROJECTS THAT:**

- 1) Increase preK-12 student awareness and knowledge about natural and human systems and their interactions, and that provide the skills to make informed decisions and take responsible actions.
- 2) Use the *Minnesota Environmental Literacy Scope and Sequence*. This resource is available at the Minnesota Sharing Environmental Education Knowledge (SEEK) website: http://www.seek.state.mn.us/eemn_c.cfm
- 3) Make use of/adapt existing EE materials rather than designing new materials, as researchers indicate that a significant amount of quality educational materials have already been developed and are underused.
- 4) Have an assessment tied to clear measurable environmental education learner outcomes.
- 5) Have a clearly defined purpose, rather than projects that attempt to address multiple priorities at the expense of a quality outcome.
- 6) Are scientifically and educationally valid.

Some **project examples** may include, but are not limited to:

- Field trip transportation
- In-school programming
- Field trip admission/program fees
- Equipment
- School site development
- Guest speakers or presenters
- Service learning projects

ELM Grant Program **DOES NOT FUND:**

- 1) Basic research such as data collection, surveys, and stipends for researchers
- 2) Non-educational beautification projects and landscaping
- 3) Fundraising or membership drives
- 4) Food or beverages
- 5) Grants, scholarships, fellowships to be given by the ELM Grant Program recipient to a third party, other than teacher stipends/substitutes to enable participation in funded programs

- 6) Indirect costs, general operations or overhead charges: i.e. rent, utilities, monthly phone charges
- 7) Political advocacy, campaigning, legislative lobbying, or litigation programs
- 8) Construction activities including building construction, improvements to existing structures
- 9) Reimbursement for the expense of any time, supplies or equipment purchased prior to the approved start date of the grant project
- 10) Staff salaries beyond direct project-related costs
- 11) Applications from entities who have defaulted on the performance of grant commitments on prior ELM Grant Program funded projects

C. ELM SCHOOL GRANTS APPLICATION POLICIES

1. PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

ALL PROPOSALS must:

- Be submitted on the **ELM School Grant Application Form**.
- Explain how they will provide students with **real world environmental learning experiences**.
- Describe how the project supports or is **aligned with the Minnesota Department of Education’s Academic Content Standards** on the application. The ELM Grant Program recommends that applicants consider using the Minnesota Department of Education’s Academic Standards and align their projects with specific content area academic standards. This resource is available at the Minnesota Department of Education website: http://children.state.mn.us/MDE/Academic_Excellence/Academic_Standards/index.html.
- Define **clear objectives that are linked to the needs of the audience** on the application.
- Have the ability to meet the ELM Grant Program accounting requirements.
- Submit a one-page report summarizing the completed project if the proposal is accepted.

NOTE: By submitting this proposal, you verify you have obtained support from your school, district, or organization administration.

2. DEADLINES/REVIEW DATES

The School Grant application deadline for funding cycle 2009-2010 is **Thursday, October 1, 2009**. Awarded projects cannot begin until approximately November 16, 2009. Grant funds cannot be used for reimbursement of activities conducted before official notification of the grant. Applicants must incorporate the schedule below in planning project activities.

Completed Application Deadline	ELM Committee Review Period	Letter of Notification	Earliest Start Date	Projects Completed By	Final Report Due
October 1, 2009	Oct. 1 – Nov. 16	Nov. 16, 2009	Nov. 16, 2009	June 11, 2010	June 18, 2010

3. ELIGIBILITY

- Minnesota preK-12 educators (public/private) employed by a school, district, or organization
- Home school associations
- Organizations serving preK-12 students

4. SCHOOL GRANT AMOUNTS

<i>Expected number of awards:</i>	9-12
<i>Estimated total School Grants funding:</i>	\$15,000
<i>Award amount:</i>	Up to \$1,500
<i>Matching funds/ In Kind contributions:</i>	None required

5. MULTIPLE PROPOSALS

An applicant **may not** submit more than one application for a School Grant during a grant cycle. School Grant recipients should complete all obligations of their current grant, including the submission of final reports, before applying for another grant.

6. APPLICATION SUBMITTAL

Applications must be submitted via email by Thursday, October 1, 2009. Use the Application Checklist to ensure that your application is complete. Incomplete applications WILL NOT be considered for review. **Projects that do not meet the guideline requirements will not be considered for review.** Please submit your completed application materials via email to:

To: elmfundmace@gmail.com
Subject: ELM School Grant Application

7. SECTIONS OF THE APPLICATION

- 1) Application Executive Summary
- 2) Applicant Contact Information
- 3) Project Type
- 4) Project Description
- 5) Project Audience
- 6) Project Goals, Objectives & Assessment
- 7) Project Activities & Timeline
- 8) Project Budget
- 9) District/School/Organization Administrator
- 10) Application Score Sheet
- 11) Application Review Checklist

8. PROCESS FOR REVIEW OF SCHOOL GRANT APPLICATIONS

Applicants should complete and include the **Application Review Checklist** with their application. The Application Review Checklist helps ensure all aspects of the proposal are completed as required. Applicants are encouraged to consult the **Score Sheet** (which will be used by the ELM Grant Program Committee to review submitted proposals) as they design and create their proposal.

ELM School Grant Application Form
ELM School Grant Application Review Checklist
ELM School Grant Application Score Sheet

Review and evaluation of applications will be conducted by the ELM Program Officer and ELM Grant Program Committee, which consist of members of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's Environmental Education Advisory Task Force (EEATF) and board members/members of the Minnesota Association for Environmental Education (MAEE). Members of the ELM Grant Program Committee will score applications individually. After this initial review, applications will be discussed at a meeting of the ELM Grant Program Committee to develop consensus recommendations of which proposals to fund. All decisions of the ELM Grant Program Committee are final. Funding decisions will be reported to applicants within approximately six weeks of the application deadline.