Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council
Guidelines for

STEM BEST®
Businesses Engaging Students and Teachers

Review process

1) A **pre-screen process** for required application components must be completed before applications will be considered eligible for a full review process.
2) Applications not considered appropriate for full review will have a findings statement with documentation of ineligibility attached. This review information will become part of the application record.
3) All applications submitted will be reviewed by a Selection Committee consisting of STEM Council members and/or regional STEM Advisory Board members.
4) The committee may opt to conduct site visits as part of their proposal evaluation process.

Scoring Rubric

For reviewer guidelines, the following standards should be considered as you research each section of the rubric and compare to the data presented in the application. High quality STEM BEST proposals will include evidence to support the narrative. For examples of supporting evidence, see [What makes a quality STEM BEST Proposal? (link)]

Sections on a 15 point scale:
  0 points – Unfundable in this area
  1 – 5 Undeveloped
  6 – 10 Developing
  11 – 15 Accomplished

Section on a 10 point scale:
  0 points – Unfundable in this area
  1 – 3 Undeveloped
  4 – 7 Developing
  8 – 10 Accomplished

Sections on a 5 point scale:
  0 points – Unfundable in this area
  1 – 2 Undeveloped
  2 – 3 Developing
  4 – 5 Accomplished

Application Rubric

Executive Summary: The applicant will provide in the application a brief summary of the overall project.

Previously Awarded Schools: There is a question pertaining to schools awarded a STEM BEST grant in the past. A past STEM BEST must explain how this application will expand upon your past award. Provide narrative that addresses the following with evidence:

- How the expansion or new partner improves upon the current work of the existing STEM BEST® model;
- What traits of the current STEM BEST® model benefit the new partner(s);
- Evidence of planning process and targeted students to be served.

Section 1 (0 to 5 points)	**Student Impact**
	1. Applicant will include information about school district(s) demographics, student enrollment and targets for the STEM BEST® program.
Section 2 (0 to 15 points)	**STEM Curriculum (Link)**
5 points	2.1 Application demonstrates intentional goal(s) to create and implement an integrated employment-driven STEM curriculum, aligned to state academic standards. Application focuses on personalized learning to students in any of grades K-12 (does not rely on commercial textbooks or other purchasable curriculum for majority of efforts).
5 points	2.2 Describe the STEM BEST® alignment to current district(s) goals and improvement efforts.
5 points	2.3 Curriculum application should include strategies to increase participation of underrepresented groups in STEM (females, ethnic/racial minorities, students with disabilities) and acknowledges the integration of disciplines beyond STEM.
Section 3	**Community Partnerships (Link)**

(0 to 15 points)	
5 points	3.1 Project provides evidence of strong partnerships and collaboration with: • Employer-partners (Public and Private Sector Business and Industry) • Economic and Workforce Development • Higher Education Partner(s), including community college, private college, university • Other Relevant Contributor(s), including Intermediaries, Extension, etc. • Other District Partners – not listed previously
10 points	3.2 Each partner will clearly identify the commitment and required role(s) in the STEM BEST® program. Partner commitment narratives are detailed and consistent with the application narrative. A commitment document from each partner is required.
Section 4 (0 to 15 points)	**Professional Development (Link)**
5 points	4.1 PD model suggested utilizes multiple expertise to bring about system change which is new knowledge combined with repeated practice to bring about maximum system change and or development. • Documentation of training plan, which includes commitment to engage educator and employer professionals.
5 points	4.2 Age-specific student issues are addressed–safety, teacher certification, transportation, etc.
5 points	4.3 Include plans for non-education partners such as community programs and other support organizations. What will be their role(s) in the roll out and use of Professional development?
Section 5 (0 to 10 points)	**Financial Model**
10 points	5. The application includes a detailed budget describing how grant funds will be utilized and indicates the applicant's commitment to providing the necessary match support. (Matching funds must be aligned within the grant period.)
Section 6 (0 to 10 points)	**Sustainability Plan**

5 points	6.1 Detail the continuation of the program beyond the grant period. This should include: Leadership/personnel, financial considerations and space to operate program.
5 points	6.2 What are the benchmarks and how will attainment improve future school programming? Who will be the processor of data collected for the required reporting period?
Section 7 (0 to 10 points)	**Model/Disseminate**
5 points	7.1 Note strategies for promoting the model to other partners in Iowa, to serve as an advocate, and to disseminate related information.
5 points	7.2 Note strategies to promote the model within the community in which the program is located. (May involve multiple communities. How was a footprint created and what are the goals to share with the public?)
Section 8 (0 to 15 points)	**Evaluation**
15 points	8. The applicant provides identifiable and understandable methodology for collection and reporting of qualitative data (e.g., through site visits, classroom observations, administrator and faculty interviews, student and parent focus groups, etc.) and quantitative data (e.g., grades, test scores, numeric surveys, etc.) for internal and external program improvement considerations.

Evaluator Training

The volunteer evaluators for the STEM BEST® review process will be selected in advance of the application closing date in order that they may participate in an orientation process that not only defines the purposes and goals of the applications but also steps in the review process which are designed to bring about a consistent and equitable review for all applicant groups.

The orientation intends to increase understanding of the over-all goals of the BEST® program and also bring scoring processes into a similar process across all teams.

There will be instructions during the orientation to address concerns of:

- Application disqualification
- Interrater reliability
- Scoring irregularities
- In-depth clarification of previous awardees requirements

To assist the evaluators with their review process, it is the intention that a pre-evaluation certification will be completed by STEM staff. This should make the greatest use of reviewers time in moving forward only with qualified applications. In the event, however, that an application has an issue discovered which may question the appropriateness or eligibility of moving forward, the reviewers should immediately contact the STEM Operations Center for further guidance.

FAQ   amend website info?

The High School in our school district was awarded a STEM BEST grant in the past, would the elementary school be eligible to apply? Yes, please explain how your proposal would be different then the High Schools.