



GOVERNOR'S STEM ADVISORY COUNCIL

dedicated to building a strong STEM education foundation for all Iowans

Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council STEM Innovation Fund

APPLICATION — TIMELINES, DUE DATES and AWARD DATES

Applications Open: October 1 (Annually)

Application Due Date: November 1 (Annually)

Awards Announced: December 1 (Annually)

Program Start Date: January 1 (Annually)

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Iowa STEM Innovation Fund Overview

A goal of the Iowa Governor’s STEM Advisory Council is to support research based STEM education proven to promote, inspire and engage youth in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) activities and to introduce children and their parents to careers through STEM.

In support of that goal, the STEM Advisory Council offers a new STEM Innovation Fund, a financial resource pool available to organizations with ideas for innovative STEM programs that show promise for supporting the goal. The intention of this fund is not to support past or current STEM scale-up programs with additional resources, but rather serve as an incubator for STEM activities outside of current or past Iowa STEM Council programming.

The STEM Council invites applications for ideas that will have an impact upon Iowans locally, regionally, and potentially on a statewide level. The Council will not fund marketing or promotional campaigns for commercial products or services, nor will it fund policy advocacy activities.

Estimated Funding

Awards will range from \$500 (minimum) up to a maximum of \$10,000 per award. Applications for the STEM Innovative Fund will be accepted and selected according to the timeline previously mentioned. Matching funds are not required, yet strongly encouraged. All programs funded must be completed by December 31 of award year with a final report due by January 31 of award year. A template will be provided.

Eligible Applicants

Organizations eligible to apply for the STEM Innovation Fund are Iowa’s educational institutions and Iowa-registered nonprofit organizations. The Governor’s STEM Advisory Council does not make awards to individuals, for-profit entities, or state, county, or local government entities—though those groups may be partners in the work conducted by the award recipient. Though for-profit businesses do not meet the eligibility to apply, they are encouraged to be a part of a partnership program which would be submitted by an eligible entity on behalf of all of the partners.

Eligible Projects

The following are examples of ideas for Innovation Funds:

- a. School competitions
- b. Summer camps
- c. Educator/volunteer professional development
- d. A “student STEM corp”
- e. Pre-service educator support – conferences, etc.
- f. Higher ed. + K-12 minglings
- g. Parent engagement
- h. Work-based exposures, working with business

- i. Mentoring system
- j. STEM events
- k. Networking opportunities
- l. Curriculum development or STEM activity design and pilot.

[Avoid requests involving classroom equipment, student transportation, or other standard expenditures. Think of innovative projects at local level that could be scaled across Iowa.]

Allowable Expenses

STEM Innovation Funds may be used to cover expenses that are typical of those associated with a sponsored project, including personnel, supplies, and travel. Allowable and unallowable expenses are listed as **Appendix C**. In general, the Innovation Fund award may not be used to procure fixed assets (e.g. equipment). Fixed assets consist of all capitalized assets which are expected to be useful for more than one year and cost \$5,000 or more. The STEM Innovation Fund award may not be used for capital expenses, for operating expenses, or for sustaining existing programs. The Iowa STEM Council is interested in funding new, innovative STEM ideas. Indirect costs are not allowed under this award program.

Application Requirements

Proposals may not exceed 5 pages (including the cover page and budget form). Proposals must be submitted by e-mail, in pdf format, to info@iowastem.gov. Proposals should not contain any confidential or proprietary information. Each proposal must contain the following elements:

1. A completed and signed cover page (Appendix A)
2. A project narrative with the following sections:
 - a. **Abstract** – A summary of the proposed project including an overview plus target population, expected benefits, committed partners, evaluation tactics.
 - b. **Scope of Work** - A summary of the proposed work, including:
 - i. A description of the overall project and work to be performed with Iowa STEM Innovation Fund, including a timeline for specific tasks, milestones and invoicing.
 - ii. A discussion of your intended audience.
 - iii. Explanation of the benefits to formal/informal preK-12 and/or post-secondary STEM education.
 - iv. Explanation of what is innovative about your project.
 - v. Sustainability potential.
 - vi. Expected outcomes and evaluation plan.

- vii. A description of commitments from business, community and other non-profit partners in terms of collaboration and resources.
- c. **Qualifications** – A summary of the expertise and capabilities being provided by the team to fulfill the project.
- 3. **Budget** – A completed budget form (Appendix B), as well as a brief narrative justifying the items in each budget category.
- 4. **Letters of Commitment** – A set of commitment letters from the main collaborating partners. These letters detail the time, talent, or treasures each partner commits, as oppose to merely letters of support. The commitment letters do not count toward the five (5) page limit.

Project Reporting

Written quarterly updates to the Regional STEM Advisory Boards on the progress of funded activities are due March 31st, June 30th and September 30th of each year . The awardee shall provide a final report by January 31 of the year following the funded year. Templates for quarterly and final report will be provided.

Application Review Process and Evaluation Rubric

The Council’s intention is for each of the Iowa STEM Regional Advisory Boards to select no less than one award recipient per region, per calendar year, based on evaluation and scoring of the applications. The Council and Regional Advisory Boards reserve the right not to fund any proposals in any given region where standards of excellence are not met.

Applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

Weight	Criteria	Description
20%	Innovation	The project’s goals are consistent with the mission of the Iowa Governor’s STEM Advisory Council to increase awareness, achievement and interest in science, technology, engineering and mathematics for all Iowa students. The project is innovative and beyond the scope of current Iowa STEM Council programming and activities. The project is a replicable model which can be shared and implemented by others in the state.

20%	Scope of Work	The application provides a clearly defined, feasible and implementable work plan and schedule with milestones and interrelated tasks that clearly lead to the successful completion of the project. The application provides a clear set of deliverables. Sustainability potential is clear.
20%	Outcomes and evaluation plan	The application provides recognizable and valuable outcomes likely to result from the project as described. Measures and metrics that make up the evaluation plan portend effective determination of effect of the project.
20%	Qualifications & Collaboration	The team provides an appropriate level of expertise to ensure success of the project. The team has sought collaboration with other Iowa-registered nonprofits, community and business partners.
20%	Budget and Cost-Share	The project budget is reasonable and thoughtful in scope and expectations. Applicant has sought collaboration with private-sector partners, as appropriate.

Submitting the Application

Applicants must submit their proposals (including the signed cover sheet and all appendices) by email as a single PDF file. Proposals that exceed the stated page limit will be returned without review.

Proposals must be emailed to: info@iowastem.gov.

Questions about the STEM Innovation Fund

Specific questions about this invitation should be addressed by email to info@iowastem.gov or by calling 319-273-2959

Appendix B – Proposed Budget

Project Start Date: _____

Project End Date: _____

	Requested from STEM Council
Personnel Costs (including fringe benefits)	
1.	\$
2.	\$
3.	\$
Total Personnel Costs	\$
Supplies (show costs and justify in narrative)	
1.	\$
2.	\$
3.	\$
Total Supply Costs	\$
Travel (itemize and show justification)	
1.	\$
2.	\$
3.	\$
Total Travel Costs	
Other Direct Costs (provide descriptions and itemize)	\$
1.	\$
2.	\$
Total Other Direct Costs	\$
Total Estimated Cost	\$

Please Provide Narrative for Proposed Budget

Personnel Costs: List all personnel to be paid by the project. List their level of effort (total hours) and how many months.

Supplies: Show the itemized costs and briefly describe in the budget narrative the nature of the supplies to be purchased.

Travel: List all planned trips and provide cost estimates for each. For each trip include destinations, number of travelers, duration, fees, transportation, and meals.

Other Costs: This category includes any additional costs not previously included in other categories above. Please provide narrative for these costs.

Note: The Iowa Governor’s STEM Advisory Council does not pay indirect (also known as facilities and administration) costs on this award program.

Appendix C – Allowable Expenses

ALLOWABLES:

Costs under this STEM Innovation Fund award must be reasonable, allowable and consistent with existing institutional/university guidelines and policies pertaining to allowable expenditures.

Please note:

- Awardees may choose to pay workshop participation stipends directly to teachers or to reimburse their school districts for substitute teachers but one may not offer both for the same teachers during the same time frame.
- Travel outside the United States contiguous borders (including Canada and Mexico) will not be allowed without prior approval from the Governor’s STEM Advisory Council.
- Any expenditure that is not supported by receipt(s) or invoice(s) and proof(s) of payment is unallowable.
- Any expenditure that is not directly related to the project and the Governor’s STEM Advisory Council mission is unallowable.
- Any funds not expended by the end of the program year will be forfeited.

UNALLOWABLE COSTS:

Use the following listing of unallowable costs as a guideline. This does not mention every category or every item(s) that is unallowable for purchase with STEM Innovation Funds. Direct questions about specific items to info@iowastem.gov.

- Any expenditure that is not supported by receipt(s) or invoice(s) and proof(s) of payment is unallowable.
- Any expenditure that is not directly related to the project and the Governor’s STEM Advisory Council mission is unallowable.

- Any activity or payment related to lobbying or fundraising (to finance related or complementary project activities) is unallowable.

Travel

- No travel outside the United States contiguous borders (including Canada and Mexico) will be allowed without prior approval.
- Recreational trips during a conference (from training center to mall or restaurant)
- Cancellation fees or ticket change fees

Lodging

- Telephone, laundry, movie costs, or bar charges incurred at a hotel

Training

- Entertainment
- Sporting Events
- Passport charges or visa fees
- Bar charges/alcoholic beverages
- Laundry charges
- Cancellation Fees

Meals & Incidentals

- Compensation when a conference includes meals in the registrations cost (i.e. Iowa STEM cannot reimburse breakfast costs to an attendee of a conference that provides breakfast)
- Non-working reception
- Non-working breakfasts, lunches, or dinners
- Snack food for the awardee organization
- Tips or gratuity charges
- Alcoholic beverages

Office Supplies/Equipment

- Basic infrastructure purchases (i.e. computers/printers, etc.) and basic office supplies will not be allowable

Mileage

- Gas charges when reimbursement is at a mileage rate

Personnel

- Dual compensation of salaried employees
- Bonuses
- Salary for employees or consultants for time spent lobbying or fundraising

Rent/Utilities

- Late fees
- Rent, facilities, or other facility-related administrative fees (i.e., an agency pays a percentage of a building's total utility fees), unless these are documented by receipts/invoices and proofs of purchase with clear indication of the agency's percentage

Other

- Land acquisition
- Corporation Formation fees
- Non-profit incorporation fees
- Membership fees
- Re-evaluation fees
- New construction
- Routine renovations
- Remodeling
- Mortgages
- Capital campaigns
- Vehicle purchases
- Alcohol purchases
- Artwork (i.e. paintings, murals, frames, sketches, sculptures)

About the Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council

The Iowa Governor's STEM Advisory Council has launched one of the nation's most comprehensive plans to increase student interest and achievement in the STEM fields. Iowa's STEM initiative was created in July 2011 by Executive Order 74, signed by Governor Terry Branstad. The Council is a partnership of business, government, and academic leaders from across the State of Iowa convening to bolster STEM education and innovation and to better position Iowa's young people and the state's economy for the future. The Council is co-chaired by Lieutenant Governor Kim Reynolds and Vermeer Corporation President Mary Vermeer Andringa (through June, 2015), with the support of 15 additional Executive Committee Members and 28 Advisory Council Members. The Executive Director of the Governor's STEM Advisory Council is Dr. Jeff Weld, and the Governor's STEM Advisory Council Operations Center is located at the University of Northern Iowa. This landmark effort is guided by a premise "*STEM for All*" and strengthened by a commitment to bring quality STEM programming to all of Iowa's young people, regardless of geographic location. The Advisory Council established a statewide STEM network of six regional hubs at institutions of higher learning, each staffed by a regional STEM manager. Broad, bi-partisan legislative support has funded the work of the STEM Advisory Council since 2013 (currently at \$5.2 million). The result is a dynamic, state-wide STEM network characterized by strong regional frameworks, powerful partnerships, Scale-Up STEM Programming and meaningful messaging within and across all of Iowa communities.

A consensus definition for STEM is instrumental in guiding programs and proposals under the Governor's STEM Advisory Council:

(STEM is) "...an interdisciplinary approach to learning where rigorous academic concepts are coupled with real-world lessons as students apply science, technology, engineering and mathematics in contexts that make connections between school, community, work and the global enterprise enabling the development of STEM literacy and with it the ability to compete in the new economy."

- Pennsylvania STEM Network, Southwest Region, "Long Range Plan (2009-2018), Plan Summary," (2009), p.3.