INNOVATION FUND
TINY GRANT GUIDELINES

About the Innovation Fund

The Innovation Fund, operated by the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA), provides competitive grants to local education agencies (LEAs), charter schools, and traditional public schools to plan, implement or scale innovative education projects aligned with the Innovation Fund's priority areas. Since 2011, the Innovation Fund has invested over $32 million of state and federal funding through 84 grants ranging in focus from teacher and leader induction and development to STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) applied learning, blended learning, and birth to age eight language and literacy development.

This year, GOSA is offering a new grant opportunity – **Innovation Fund Tiny Grants** – for districts and schools seeking a small amount of funding to implement an innovative project that will deeply engage students. An innovative project solves an existing problem in an inventive way, and has the potential to have a large and lasting impact on the academic environment.

About Innovation Fund Tiny Grants

The Tiny Grant Program provides an opportunity for LEAs, charter schools or traditional public schools to receive a tiny grant between $1,000 and $7,000 over one year to fund a project that directly impacts students. Tiny Grants must *directly* engage students in innovative projects and have the potential to positively impact student achievement.

Award Timeline

GOSA will accept tiny grant applications on a rolling-basis and review applications three times throughout the year. Please see the table below for application review dates.

ALL APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY	WILL BE REVIEWED AND ANNOUNCED BY
September 1, 2018	Late September
January 15, 2019	Mid-February
May 1, 2019	Late May

Submission Instructions

To participate in the Tiny Grant Program, please follow the steps below:

1. Carefully review this document, including the eligibility requirements, proposal components, and priority area definitions.
2. Electronically submit the online [Tiny Grant Application Form.](#) Please note, *all applicants* will need to upload the [Tiny Grant Process Table](#) and the [Tiny Grant Budget Template](#) along with their application form.

GOSA will score the proposals using the [Tiny Grant Proposal Rubric.](#) GOSA strongly recommends that you thoroughly review the rubric prior to completing the application to ensure you have a solid understanding of the application expectations.

If you have any questions during the application process, please contact:

> **Elise Chappell**
> **Professional Learning Grants Specialist**
> **Governor's Office of Student Achievement**
> **205 Jesse Hill Jr. Drive, SE**
> **952 Twin Towers East**
> **Atlanta, Georgia 30334**
> **Phone: 470-606-1699**

Eligibility Requirements

You are eligible to participate in the Tiny Grant Program if:

- You are a school administrator, principal, or instructional coach at a charter school or traditional public school in the state of Georgia;
- You are a K-12 teacher at a Georgia charter school or traditional public school who has been teaching for at least three years*; or
- You are another type of leadership-level administrator in a Georgia LEA.

Please note that all teacher and instructional coach applicants must submit a signed [Principal Certification Form](#) as part of their application.

What can I use Tiny Grant Funds For?

Tiny Grants provide eligible organizations between $1,000 and $7,000 over one year to implement projects that directly engage students and have the potential to positively impact student achievement. Please note that the project should take a new and inventive approach to solve an existing need at your school. In addition, projects must align with one of three Innovation Fund priority areas (please the definitions on pages 5 and 6 for more information):

- Applied learning with a focus on STE(A)M (science, technology, engineering, arts, and math) education;
- Blended and personalized learning; and

- Birth to age eight language and literacy development.

Please note that this table does not include every allowable and unallowable expense, but should give you an idea of typical allowable and unallowable expenses.

Allowable Budget Items	Unallowable Budget Items
Travel for student and chaperone travel (transportation, entrance fees) to and from field trips relevant to the grant.	**Personnel** including stipends, contract work, salaries, and wages.
Equipment for activities directly related to the grant, such as lab equipment or computing devices.	**Personnel benefits**
Supplies for activities directly related to the grant, such as binders, notebooks, pens or pencils, post-it notes, chart paper, tablets or other supplies for students involved in grant activities.	**Building construction**
Other items directly related to the grant may include software programs or	**Other** items include any expense that does not directly support students directly involved in grant activities (i.e., conference registration and travel for teachers, teacher trainings, in-person support services for software programs).

Some examples of innovative projects that align with one of the priority areas include, but are not limited to:

- Creating a hands-on robotics lab to engage special education students in STEAM instruction;
- Accelerating advanced students through a blended learning program that allows them to conduct research under the supervision of college professors;
- Creating an afterschool language and literacy lab for ELL students and their parents.

Tiny Grants will not fund projects that do not directly involve students. Some examples of non-fundable projects and items include, but are not limited to:

- Professional development for teachers in applied STEAM education;

- Constructing a building to house a computer lab;
- Purchasing iPads for teachers to track student progress; or
- Providing salaries or stipends for personnel involved in the grant.

Tiny Grants will allow grantees the opportunity to pilot small-scale, ground-breaking ideas with the potential to positively impact student achievement. The idea is simple – a small investment, less risk, and the opportunity to implement truly innovative ideas.

How long will the Tiny Grant last?

Tiny Grant recipients have up to two years from the grant award date to use their funds. The purpose for this timeline is to give grantees adequate time to implement their programs regardless of the cycle they were awarded. However, grantees do not have to use the whole two years to complete their scope of work. The project is considered complete when grantees complete their scope of work.

If I receive a Tiny Grant, what are the reporting expectations?

Tiny Grant recipients will be responsible for turning in financial and evaluation reports. Specifically:

- In order to access the grant funds, Tiny Grant recipients will submit quarterly financial reports and supporting documentation for quarterly expenditures. *Please note that all Tiny Grants are reimbursement-based. If a teacher or instructional coach receives a Tiny Grant, the teacher's school or district must serve as the fiscal agent for all grant funds.* Quarterly reports also have a tab where grantees will provide a progress update.

  Tiny grantees will submit one final evaluation reports sharing the project's progress, outcomes, lessons learned, and best practices. Grantees will submit the Final Tiny Grant Report along with the final quarterly report.

The Tiny Grant Proposal Form consists of the following sections and questions.

Section	Questions
Executive Summary *(30 points)*	In 850 words or less, provide an executive summary of the project you would like to implement. In your summary please include: a) A general description of the project you would like to implement, including the project's mission; b) The type (grade level(s), subject area(s), etc.) and number of students the project will serve; c) A description of any partners/partner organizations and how they will support the project, if applicable; d) At least 2 SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, time-bound) goals; and e) A description of how will you evaluate the project's effectiveness.
Innovation *(15 points)*	In 500 words or less, please describe how your project will solve an existing need in a new or inventive way. In your answer, please be sure to clearly address: a) The existing need your project will solve (please include any qualitative and quantitative data you have to support the need for the project); and b) How your project will solve this need in a new and inventive way.
Capacity to Plan *(15 points)*	Describe the grant team that will implement the Tiny Grant project, including: a) Each person's role in the grant project; and b) Each person's ability, using specific examples, to implement and monitor the project and associated expenses.
Proposed Plan *(25 points)*	1. What planning or action steps have you taken so far to ensure that, if awarded, you can implement the project immediately? 2. Please describe the action steps you will take during the grant period and how these steps will ensure your project is successfully implemented. 3. Please complete the **Tiny Grant Process Table.** (*Please note that all activities listed in the table should reflect the narrative in question two.*)
Budget *(15 points)*	1. Please complete the **Tiny Grant Budget Template** indicating how you will use your grant funds. 2. Please describe how the purchase of the equipment, supplies, and other items listed in your budget will lead to positive student outcomes.

Proposals in the Applied Learning with a Focus on STEAM priority area will:

- Provide students with a rigorous curriculum that seamlessly and authentically integrates science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics;
- Provide opportunities for students to apply classroom content to authentic, real-world (personal, home, career, community, society) experiences. These opportunities should be a part of a rigorous academic curriculum, not just "fun" projects; and
- Build students' 21st Century Skills, including but not limited to: critical thinking, problem solving, grit, collaboration and communication.

STEAM Education is defined as an integrated curriculum (as opposed to science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics taught in isolation) that is driven by problem solving, discovery, exploratory project/problem-based learning, and student-centered development of ideas and solutions. *(Definition from the Georgia Department of Education)*

Proposals in the Blended and Personalized Learning priority area will:

- Provide students with agency over the place, path, and pace of their learning;
- Where appropriate, use online learning to allow for student agency over the pace, path, and pace of their learning;
- Allow students to progress based on mastery of content, rather than a pre-determined timeline;
- Appropriately differentiate instruction for all types and levels of learners; and
- Utilize rigorous learning experiences that appropriately challenge students.

Proposals in the Birth to Age Eight Language and Literacy priority area will:

- Provide children, birth to age eight, with access to language-rich child and adult interactions both inside and outside of school; and
- Provide children with rigorous, evidence-based instruction aimed to ensure that, by 3rd grade, students are active consumers and critical thinkers of written texts.

Levels of Innovation

Level of Innovation	Mindset	Outcome	Example
Level 4: Creator of New Future	Visionary, fully engaged, and entrepreneurial – "Where must we be in ten years?"	Breakthrough approaches to teaching and learning, never-before-seen approaches to school models.	A school district creates a mobile school to serve transient or homeless students.
Level 3: Continuous Improver	Dissatisfied with the status quo – "Good enough is not good enough"	Incremental changes to teaching, learning, and school models are proposed and implemented.	A school district starts a new after school program for homeless students, designed to help them improve their life skills and stay in school.
Level 2: Problem Preventer	Mindful and prepared of potential challenges – "Not on my watch."	Challenges are managed and mitigated.	A district starts an incentive program designed to improve homeless students' attendance.
Level 1: Problem Solver	Practical, competent – "I can do this."	Challenges are resolved.	A district makes sure it provides efficient transportation for all homeless students.