

**Please note:** The Scoring Criteria and application questions have changed significantly. If you are reapplying this year, please pay special attention to these changes.

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Teachers are most effective, and improve in their practice, when they are problem solvers and innovators, who take risks, learn, reflect, and collaborate. Teachers who pursue Fund for Teachers' transformational learning experiences catalyze these problem-solving experiences for themselves and students, ultimately changing schools and communities. Fellowship proposals that prioritize teachers seeking solutions to their own, genuine problems of practice will be best aligned to our grant goals. In addition, proposals that have the potential to center students as changemakers for problems in their communities are highly encouraged to apply.

Goals of a Fund for Teachers fellowship are for educators to:

- serve as problem solvers and innovators who create solutions to real problems of practice;
- reflect on their experience as a learner and transfer the most powerful aspects of their experience to student learning;
- integrate their experiences as Fund for Teachers Fellows into their teaching to create more globally minded students who are empowered to take action;
- and grow as leaders and change makers.

## ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- A full-time preK-12th grade teacher who spends at least 50% of your time directly providing instruction to students;
- Applicants must have plans to return to a classroom or teaching environment the year following their fellowship and demonstrate the ability to incorporate what they learn into their teaching; and
- Have at least three years' experience as a preK-12th grade teacher at the end of the school year.
  - Student and substitute teaching do not count towards the three-year requirement.
  - If the applicant has three years' experience by the time of their fellowship, Fund for Teachers considers them eligible.
- Previous recipients must wait for five years before reapplying.

Teaching staff that do not provide instruction to students for at least 50% of their full-time position are not eligible. One-on-one instructional time does not count toward the 50%-time requirement described above. Administrators, such as principals, may not apply, nor may they act as the partner applicant. Please contact Fund for Teachers if you have specific questions about your eligibility.

Open to US teachers who live and work in the continental United States and Hawaii.

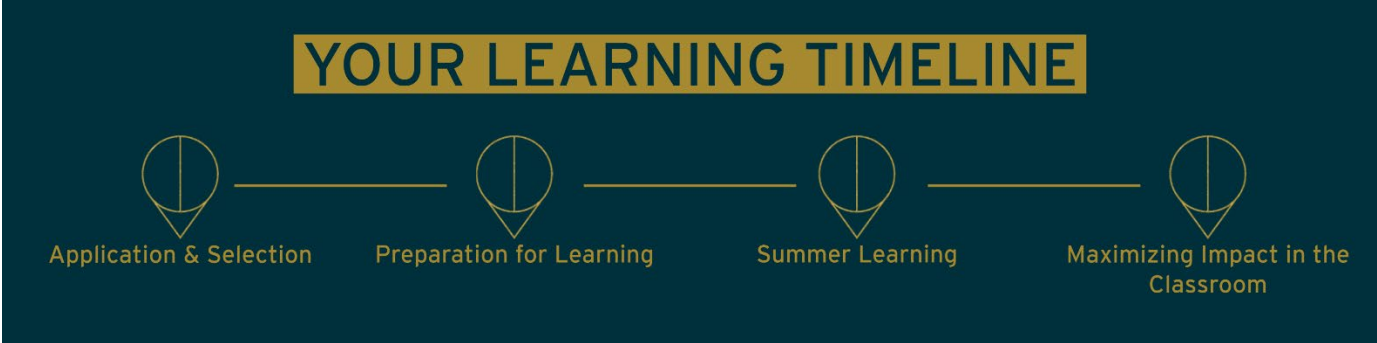
Individuals may apply for up to \$5,000 and teams may apply for up to \$10,000 (while team members may be from different schools, districts or states, all members must meet the eligibility criteria). Upon award, Fellows will receive 90 percent of their grant, the remaining 10 percent to be disbursed upon completion of post-fellowship requirements.

We know your time is valuable, so we discourage using it to submit proposals that do not fall within funding guidelines. In this spirit, we aim to be transparent about what our grant making does not support.

We do not make grants to support student travel, the completion of post baccalaureate degrees, university/college credit hours, courses for graduate credit, licensing, or licensure, onsite (or campus) professional development at your school or by the district, compensation for substitutes, stipends and requests that only include classroom supplies, such as books, technology, or other materials. Grants cannot be used to pay for any portion of National Board Certification. All project eligibility is at the discretion of Fund for Teachers.

Eligible teachers may submit one application per grant cycle. Fund for Teachers is interested in your ideas only. Any indication of borrowed text will disqualify your application. Additionally, previously awarded proposals may not be resubmitted for consideration.

Fellowships should begin after the last day of school in the spring and be completed by the first day of school in the fall, with all fellowship related expenditures made by September 12, 2024.



## APPLICATION

The entire application is completed online and will require digital signatures. As part of the application process an email will be sent from [info@fundforteachers.org](mailto:info@fundforteachers.org) to your principal to verify your eligibility.

### Part One: Coversheet

All applicants must apply online between October 1, 2023, and January 18, 2024, with final submission made by **5 pm CST on January 18, 2024**.

Before you begin, determine if you are applying as an individual or as a team.

- Create your online account, or login with existing credentials.
- Create a 1-2 sentence project description (350-character limit), detailing What you are doing + Where you are going + Why. Please avoid personal pronouns.
- Sign your coversheet. Once signed, an email will be sent to your principal asking for a digital signature to verify your eligibility. Edits to signed coversheets are not permitted, except for revisions to the project description.
- Use the formal name of your district and school. Ex: Houston Independent School District instead of HISD and John F. Kennedy Elementary School instead of JFK Elem. School.
- Teams:
  - Elect a team lead and create a team name.
  - The team lead initiates the online process and is the first to input the team's name.
  - Each team member registers, creating an individual account and submits a coversheet.
  - The team lead cannot advance past the coversheet until all other members have completed and signed his/her coversheet.

### Part Two: Proposal

Consists of five sections and should articulate creative, thoughtful activities or projects that demonstrate potential for learning for the teacher, the student, and the school community.

- Create and save your proposal using a word processor, avoiding any formatting.
- **25,000 characters, including spaces**, (approx. six and half, single spaced, typed pages) cumulative for all five sections.
- Avoid identifying references: Please refrain from using your name, your school or district names within your proposal to ensure an anonymous selection process.
- Avoid using hyperlinks and web addresses.
- Refer to the Scoring Criteria when addressing each of the five proposal sections.
- *TEAMS:*

- Proposals should reflect collaboration and demonstrate your ability to work successfully as a team. Team members should be active participants in the writing process. They should also understand that they are financially responsible for their portion of the grant if awarded.
- Only the team lead is responsible for entering the proposal.

### Sections:

A response to each application question is required. However, applicants should not feel limited by these questions and should provide selection committee readers with any information they feel is helpful in articulating their fellowship goals. Additionally, we strongly encourage you to review the Scoring Criteria ([found here](#) and under Quick Links) to understand what criteria selection committee members are looking for in a highly scored proposal.

- **Fellowship Purpose and Overarching Goals: In this section, you will tell us about yourself, your students, and the overarching goals of your fellowship. Your fellowship goals should have clear connections to what you choose to write about your students and yourself.**
  - What are your strengths and aspirations as a teacher? What are your current areas of growth or gaps in your practice?
  - Describe what you know about your students including, but not limited to: their collective learning needs, culture(s), interests, and academic performance.
  - What is the purpose of your fellowship? Identify any significant problem(s) you hope to solve as a result of your fellowship, as well as any overarching goals.
- **Fellowship Plan: In this section, you will outline the key activities of your fellowship. Be sure to include rationale detailing what you will be doing during this activity, and also, how this activity is connected to your overarching goals, and the needs of yourself and/or your students.**
  - What are the key activities of your summer learning plan?
  - How do your key activities align to your students' needs and/or your needs?
  - How do your key activities help you become successful in achieving your fellowship goals?
- **Teacher Growth and Learning: In this section, you will reflect on the different ways this fellowship will allow you to be challenged, learn, and develop.**
  - In what ways is this fellowship both personally and intellectually challenging for you?
  - As a teacher, what is the importance of learning about your students' cultures? In what way does your fellowship allow for opportunity for you to learn about different cultures/communities? (For an active definition on culture, [click here](#).)
  - How will reflection and critical thinking play a role in your fellowship?
  - How will you ensure you are able to maximize your learning, despite challenges?
- **The Student and Stakeholder Experience: This section is connected to the implementation of your new knowledge and skills gained from your summer fellowship, and the ways students and other stakeholders will potentially be impacted.**
  - As a direct result of your summer learning, what tangible changes will happen in your instructional practice and/or school? How are these changes aligned to the overarching

- goals/purpose that you have outlined (e.g. new units, practices, routines, methods, classroom activities, school initiatives, and/or other student-centered experiences)?
- As a direct result of these changes, how will you center what students bring to the classroom in their learning? How will your students' school experiences become more authentic, cognitively challenging, and/or allow for critical thinking?
  - To what extent will you build partnerships with stakeholders outside the classroom? How will you enable students to do the same? (Stakeholders include, but are not limited to colleagues, parents, families, and community members.)
  - To what extent are these changes realistic? How do your current school's conditions allow you to make the changes you have outlined?
- **Budget Narrative: Provide a brief narrative showing evidence of thoughtful planning and research supporting your specific Fellowship Plan.**
    - The narrative should explain your rationale for the project's expenses.
    - Stipulate a time frame and approximate costs as closely as possible.
    - Team budgets should include both costs broken down by individual and totals for the whole team.
    - NOTE: We strongly advise you against under budgeting. The cost of your fellowship is not a consideration in the selection process. Fund for Teachers is unable to increase your budget after you are selected. Applicants should also be aware that you will receive 90% of your grant award in the spring, and the remaining 10% of your award after the completion of your post-fellowship reports in the fall. Please consider this timing when applying.

### Part Three: Itemized Budget Sheet

By completing the Itemized Budget Sheet, you will break your budget narrative down into a line-item listing.

- Enter the length of your fellowship.
- Estimate the number of hours it took to prepare your application (this information is for internal use only and is not part of the selection process).
- Add all proposed destinations for fellowship.
- Use whole numbers.
- Team lead is responsible for entering the itemized budget.
- If including a technology expense, specify why the item is necessary for the fellowship's success; why you have chosen the specific brand/type; and whether you have prior experience using the technology. Technology expenses should not be the bulk of your proposed budget, but a necessary tool to successfully complete your fellowship.
- Food costs should reflect actual destination rates and cannot exceed \$50 per day/per person. **This is not per diem, receipts will be required.**
- Breakdown of expenses
  - TRANSPORTATION: any fare to and from destination. Estimate rental car cost based on current gasoline prices. For personal vehicles, calculate the mileage at a rate of \$.66/mile. Grant funding can only cover mileage or gasoline, not both.

- **LODGING:** Seek moderately priced motels/hotels or, if applicable, home stays.
- **FOOD:** Food costs should reflect actual destination rates and cannot exceed \$50 per day/per person.
- **PARTICIPATION COSTS:** Tour, registration, and course/program fees.
- **MATERIALS AND SUPPLIES:** Includes, but not limited to, books, reference materials, artifacts, or realia.
- **EQUIPMENT:** Includes, but not limited to, cameras, recorders, laboratory equipment and computer hardware necessary for fellowship and classroom implementation. Please consider borrowing these pieces of equipment from your school, if available. Any equipment purchased with the grant funds must be accessible to entire school upon return.
- **OTHER:** Specific costs of your fellowship not outlined in the preceding categories. Please give clear descriptions of these expenses. Use the Budget Narrative for any further explanation.
- **NON-ALLOWABLE:** Certain products and services are not to be purchased using grant funds, such as toiletries, telecommunications, souvenirs, childcare, student travel, bank/credit card fees and graduate credit hours. *Access the full list of [non-allowable expenses here](#) and under Quick Links within the online application.*

Additional resources to aid you in the application process can be found within the online guidelines under Quick Links. If you have any questions regarding the online application process, please contact: [info@fundforteachers.org](mailto:info@fundforteachers.org).

**NOTE:** We strongly advise you against under budgeting. The cost of your fellowship is not a consideration in the selection process. Fund for Teachers is unable to increase your budget after you are selected. Applicants should also be aware that you will receive 90% of your grant award in the spring, and the remaining 10% of your award after the completion of your post-fellowship reports in the fall. Please consider this timing when applying.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

Fund for Teachers utilizes a committee of community members, past grant recipients, educators, and donors to select our grant recipients. Each committee utilizes the same process, scoring criteria form, and scoring standards. Before a committee receives grant proposals to review, each application is screened for eligibility and completeness. Applications failing to meet Fund for Teachers eligibility criteria or those not considered complete will not be sent to the selection committee. Grants are awarded based on merit and available funding; consequently, the number of grants awarded varies each year.

Your proposal may be reviewed by a committee in a geographic region other than your own. When describing where you teach it is permissible to acknowledge your city and state.

Applicant coversheet and identifying information is removed prior to the selection process. Please refrain from using your name, your school or district names within your proposal to ensure an anonymous selection process.

Often, foundations want to know more about who we serve. The survey questions on your coversheet are for that purpose only and are in no way used in our selection process.

Applicants will be notified of the selection committee results on April 4, 2024, by email.

## **REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

Awardees are expected to be active and engaged members of the Fund for Teachers Ramsden Fellow community over the course of the fellowship year and the years following. This includes participating in a required orientation workshop, as well as periodic virtual meetups and participating as an active member of our digital community. Fellows are also expected to serve as ambassadors of Fund for Teachers in all professional settings.

In addition, throughout the course of the program year, Fellows are required to submit several post-fellowship deliverables to Fund for Teachers. Deliverables include: An expense report; summary report of fellowship (“Passport”) immediately following their fellowship and at the end of the school year; and surveys before, during and after the fellowship experience. Fellows who fail to complete post-fellowship reporting or use fellowship funds in manner not consistent with their grant proposal will be deemed “Not in Good Standing.” Fund for Teachers, at its discretion, may refuse future applications from individuals listed as “Not in Good Standing.”

**Fund for Teachers reserves the right to review the terms and conditions of this grant program, and to make changes at any time, including termination.**

**How to score:** While you read each proposal, assign one point for each criterion found in the strong evidence column. Points from the compelling evidence column should only be awarded if the applicant receives **all the points** under the strong evidence category.

An excellent Fund for Teachers grant proposal will include all the criteria listed under “Strong Evidence” and some or all the “Compelling Evidence”. A good proposal will contain some of the Strong Evidence and none of the compelling evidence. A poor proposal will likely contain little-to-no strong or compelling evidence.

| Fellowship Purpose and Overarching Goals |   |                          |  |
|--|---|--------------------------|--|
| Point                                    | Strong Evidence   | Point                    | Compelling Evidence  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                 | Teacher uses data and/or stories to identify significant learning needs of students.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Teacher paints a multi-dimensional picture of students including strengths, culture(s), and/or interests.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                 | Teacher articulates a clear area for development or problem they intend to solve and outlines overarching goals of their fellowship.    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Teacher’s needs, aspirations, and other details shared are relevant to overarching goals and to the needs and interests of their students.   |
| Fellowship Learning Plan                 |   |                          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                 | Teacher outlines a cohesive summer learning plan, articulating multiple learning experiences, each with clear and detailed rationale.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | Summer learning plan is ambitious, including opportunities to learn from experts in and outside of education and immerse themselves in real-world experiences with potential for new discoveries.        |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                 | Summer learning activities include rationale of how activities connect to teacher and student learning needs.                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | Summer learning plan includes a strong balance of activities connected to teacher and student learning needs, interests, and aspirations.  |
| Teacher Growth and Learning              |   |                          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                 | Teacher identifies the personal and intellectual challenges connected to specific parts of their summer learning plan.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Teacher articulates the importance of learning about their students’ culture(s) as a teacher, and ways learning about different cultures will foster their own growth.                                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                 | Teacher identifies tangible ways their fellowship will help them make learning experiences more relevant for students.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Teacher documents tangible strategies to promote reflection, meta-cognition, and other strategies to ensure continuous learning.   |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                 | Teacher articulates the role of critical thinking and reflection throughout fellowship.   |                          |  |
| The Student and Stakeholder Experience   |   |                          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                 | Teacher proposes new/refined student learning experiences that are more connected to students’ needs, interests, and/or aspirations.    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Teacher proposes new/refined student learning experiences that center students and enable them to do authentic work of the discipline and engage in work that is cognitively challenging.                |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                 | Teacher proposes ways they will build partnerships with different stakeholders (e.g. colleagues, parents, families, community leaders). | <input type="checkbox"/> | Teacher proposes innovative ways they will increase student agency and leadership, ensuring their students are building partnerships and collaborating with stakeholders to engage in their communities. |
| Budget Narrative                         |   |                          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                 | Details research-based budget that adheres to the requirements of the categories of the grant guidelines.                               |                          |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>                 | Each budget item is related directly to needs defined in the Fellowship Purpose and Plan.   |                          |  |

**Please Note:** Selection Committee Members complete their review online, where scores are tabulated automatically. They also receive training materials, detailed directions, and the application guidelines.