



Mini Grant Program Guidelines 2012

Program Policies
Instructions for Completing the Online Application Form
Application Review Process

“Environmental education is the learning process whereby people acquire an awareness and scientific understanding of the natural and built environment; attitudes that value the environment; and skills for identifying and addressing environmental issues. When effective, it leads to participation in environmental decision making and actions that result in a sustainable environment, healthier people and livable communities.”



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OHIO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FUND

The OEEF was created by statute in 1990 to enhance Ohio citizens' awareness and understanding of environmental issues. It is administered by the director of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) and provides approximately \$1 million annually in grants to support environmental education efforts within the state of Ohio.

The OEEF derives its monies from one-half of the civil penalties collected from violations of the Ohio's air and water pollution control regulations. Through the General Grant Program, the OEEF supports projects of up to \$50,000, targeting pre-kindergarten through university students and teachers, the general public, and the regulated community. These grant application guidelines are also available at http://www.epa.ohio.gov/oeeef/grantee_resources.aspx or contact the OEEF at (614) 644-2873 with questions.

The Mini Grant Program provides up to \$5,000 to meet the needs of applicants who:

- will implement environmental education programs on a smaller scale than the General Grant Program, or
- need match monies to supplement funding from other sources to implement a project, or
- need a small amount of funding for activities not covered by other funding sources.

OEEF EDUCATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR 2012

OEEF supports innovative projects that increase public awareness and knowledge about environmental issues, and provide the skills to make informed decisions and take responsible actions. Environmental Education (EE) is based on objective and scientifically sound information, and does not advocate a particular viewpoint or course of action. It teaches individuals how to weigh various sides of an issue through critical thinking, and it enhances their problem-solving and decision-making skills. Proposals that simply disseminate information will not be funded. OEEF strongly encourages applicants to use and adapt existing EE materials rather than designing new materials, because experts indicate that a significant amount of quality educational materials have already been developed and are under-utilized. OEEF will consider funding curriculum development or new materials only where the applicant demonstrates that existing materials cannot be adapted well to a particular local environmental concern or audience. Further, OEEF recommends that applicants consider the *Guidelines for Excellence* series developed by the North American Association for Environmental Education with U.S. EPA funding. These materials are available at www.naaee.org. Ohio's *Best Practices for Environmental Education: Guidelines for Success* are also available on the Environmental Education Council of Ohio Web page at www.eeco-online.org/publications/pdfs/beeps.pdf

All proposals must explain how they will help to further one of the following educational priorities:

- (1) **Compliance Assistance:** helping regulated entities, and particularly small business, understand and comply with Ohio's environmental laws and regulations
- (2) **Community issues:** designing and implementing model projects to educate the public

about technical aspects of environmental issues or environmental health issues in their communities through community-based organizations or through print, film, broadcast, or other media. Issues of current priority to Ohio EPA include storm water management; source water protection; brownfields cleanup and redevelopment; improving air quality in counties not meeting federal Clean Air standards; and education efforts related to endorsed watershed plans. Copies of all state endorsed watershed action plans may be found at the following Ohio DNR ftp site: [ftp://ftp.dnr.state.oh.us/Soil & Water Conservation/WatershedActionPlans/Endorsed Plans/](ftp://ftp.dnr.state.oh.us/Soil%20&%20Water%20Conservation/WatershedActionPlans/EndorsedPlans/).

- (3) **Environmental Public Health:** education about human health threats from environmental pollution, and how to minimize human exposure to preserve good health. Issues of current priority to Ohio EPA include reduction of ozone precursors, airborne particulates, and toxic chemicals such as mercury in the environment. The OEEF prefers not to fund projects that focus primarily on human health without a strong environmental component. Anti-smoking and tobacco education programs are not appropriate for this grant program.
- (4) **Standards-Based Education:** utilizing environmental education to improve student academic achievement, specifically through projects that are aligned with the Ohio Department of Education's Academic Content Standards, published at <http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=1696&ContentID=72&Content=72519> and projects to educate teachers and non-formal educators about ways to effectively present environmental subjects. Note that new revisions to Ohio's Academic Content Standards for Science were adopted in June, 2010, by the Ohio Department of Education.
- (5) **Career Development:** educating students in formal or non-formal settings about what environmental professionals do, to encourage them to enter careers in environmental science and engineering, or related fields.
- (6) **Environmental Sustainability:** education about energy efficiency and conservation, alternative fuels and energy sources, green building principles, sustainable and community-supported agriculture. OEEF is not able to fund actual energy saving infrastructure, though, for example, interpretive exhibits or signage with real-time display of a building's energy use would be eligible for funding.

Proposals may address more than one educational priority. However, OEEF cautions against losing focus. OEEF prefers to fund projects with a clearly defined purpose, rather than projects that attempt to address multiple priorities at the expense of a quality outcome.

DEADLINES/REVIEW DATES

There are two grant application deadlines each year, on or near January 15 and July 15. (When these fall on a holiday or weekend, the deadline moves to the next business day.) Awarded projects cannot begin until approximately three months from the deadline date due to the time required for review and fiscal administration of the grants. Applicants must incorporate the schedule below in planning project activities.

Letter-of-Intent Deadline	Completed Application Deadline	Agency Review Period	Ohio EPA Director Decision	Earliest Start Date
January 10, 2012	January 17, 2012	Jan. 16 – Mar 20	March 28	May 4, 2012
July 9, 2012	July 16, 2012	July 16 – Sep 18	September 26	Nov. 9, 2012

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Any organization based in Ohio (e.g., public or private, tax-exempt or proprietary associations, formal or non-formal educational) that holds a federal tax ID number is eligible. In addition, the organization must comply with the Federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 USC Section 701, et. seq.); state regulations covering non-discrimination in hiring and affirmative action (ORC 125.111); and the Grantee's Authorizing Agent or spouse, as applicable under ORC 3517.13(I) or ORC 3517.13(J), has not made, within the two previous years, one or more contributions totaling in excess of \$1,000 to the Governor or his campaign committees. Grant recipients may also be asked to sign a "Declaration Regarding Material Assistance/Non-assistance to a Terrorist Organization" in accordance with Ohio law.

MINI GRANT AMOUNTS AND PROJECT DURATION

Mini Grants are for projects requesting a minimum of \$500 and a maximum of \$5,000. Funded projects must be completed within 12 months from the start date.

MULTIPLE OR REPEAT PROPOSALS

An applicant may not submit more than one application during a grant cycle. **No organization will be awarded more than one grant during a twelve-month period.** For example, if you are awarded a mini grant during the January, 2012, grant cycle, you would not be eligible to apply again for an OEEF mini grant until the January, 2013 grant cycle. Grant recipients should complete all obligations of their current grant, including submittal of final reports, before applying for another grant. Due to limited resources, OEEF does not generally sustain projects beyond the initial grant period. OEEF prefers to provide seed money to initiate new innovative projects, or to advance existing projects that are expanding in some significant way, such as reaching new audiences or new locations. Applicants who received an OEEF grant in the past may submit a new proposal for a new project, or to significantly expand a previously funded project. Each new proposal will be reviewed based upon the criteria set forth in these guidelines, and in relation to the quality of other proposals received during the same grant cycle.

ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

OEEF DOES NOT FUND:

- basic research such as data collection, surveys, and stipends for researchers
- OEEF prefers not to fund routine recertification classes for professionals, for example to maintain licensure as wastewater treatment plant operators. However, OEEF is very interested in funding training opportunities to help citizens and regulated entities understand and comply with environmental regulations or take actions to voluntarily protect the environment. OEEF is also interested in funding training opportunities to enable teachers to help students meet the benchmarks and grade level indicators of Ohio's Academic Content Standards.
- beautification projects or landscaping
- fund raising or membership drives
- food or beverages
- grants, scholarships, fellowships to be given by the OEEF grant recipient to a third party, other than teacher stipends/substitutes to enable participation in funded programs.
- indirect costs, general operations, or overhead charges: e.g., rent, utilities, monthly phone charges. Individual phone calls related to the project are eligible. All costs must be related directly to project activities.
- political advocacy, campaigning, legislative lobbying, or litigation programs
- real estate acquisitions or due diligence research related to such acquisitions
- construction activities including building construction, improvements to existing structures, wetlands construction
- reimbursement for the expense of any time, supplies or equipment purchased prior to the approved start date of the grant project
- staff salaries beyond direct project-related costs
- applications from entities who have defaulted on the performance of grant commitments on prior OEEF-funded projects
- OEEF discourages the use of grant funds for travel outside the state of Ohio. OEEF will consider funding the cost of bringing expertise to Ohio from another state.
- OEEF strongly discourages proposals with more than 50% of the grant funds allocated to salary and benefits. Personnel costs that are included in the contractual portion of the budget will be regarded by OEEF staff and Advisory Council members as salary, and included in calculating 50% of the grant funds. Applicants who feel they must request more than 50% of the grant funds for salary and benefits should provide extraordinary justification, and should understand that their proposal may be disqualified. Daily stipends and substitutes for teachers will not be calculated against the 50%.
- OEEF will consider awarding mini grants solely for equipment or curriculum purchases, if it can be demonstrated that they will be used within a broader educational initiative.

OEEF PREFERS PROJECTS THAT:

- meet OEEF Educational Priorities for 2012, listed above.
- address OEEF's goals of instilling awareness, knowledge and skills, and fostering informed decision making
- incorporate *OEEF's Preferred Characteristics* for projects targeting the appropriate audience, posted as a separate guidance document in the online Grant Management System and on the OEEF Web page.
- are scientifically and educationally valid

- improve the grantee organization's ability to achieve its mission
- identify and document the audience need
- make use of excellent existing environmental education curriculum and materials already available, such as Project WET, Project WILD, and Project Learning Tree, rather than creating new ones unnecessarily
- demonstrate collaborative efforts with other organizations, to avoid duplication of effort
- have an evaluation plan tied to clear and measurable environmental education outcomes
- can stand up to critical peer review
- show definitive strategies for use, dissemination or replication of project outcomes and products
- have the ability to meet OEEF's accounting requirements
- are innovative

OEEF MINI-GRANT APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

Applicants should consult the following preferred characteristics guidance and score sheets that will be used by OEEF to review proposals:

OEEF's Preferred Characteristics for Projects Targeting Preschool- through University-level Audiences

Notable redesign and restructuring of educational institutions is underway in Ohio and nationally. These trends in educational reform are based on years of research and innovation. The academic content standards developed by the Ohio Department of Education are a result of the state's reform efforts for elementary and secondary education and many schools in Ohio already have made progress in developing better educational programs. Environmental Education can be an outstanding vehicle for implementing many aspects of educational reform efforts for all grade levels. The development of meaningful learning experiences that focus on environmental issues not only supports educational reform efforts but also contributes to an improved environment. OEEF-funded materials and activities for the K-12 audience **must** be aligned with the Ohio Department of Education's academic content standards.

These learning opportunities contribute to the development of learners who:

- take the major responsibility for their own learning
- view knowledge as integrated and holistic
- enjoy and value participatory learning
- have developed a variety of strategies for identifying issues and solving problems
- can work effectively with others, individually and in small or large groups, and value diversity in backgrounds and ability levels
- understand how curriculum topics are related to the real world
- continually develop and use inquiry skills

- make evidence-based decisions
- have the knowledge and desire to become actively involved in various groups and in the community
- are aware of and use their multiple intelligences
- view the whole community, natural and built, as a site for learning
- can assess their own progress
- are lifelong learners

OEEF will support projects that provide meaningful learning experiences for preschool through university-level audiences. Applications should demonstrate how the following learning opportunities have been built into the educational program.

- Opportunities are provided for learners to become actively involved in examining and resolving environmental issues.
- Learners participate in as many aspects of selecting, planning, doing and evaluating the learning experience as possible.
- Learning experiences are designed for learners to work individually or in small groups more often than in large groups.
- Learning experiences engage learners in hands-on activities and thinking processes.
- Learning experiences emphasize the process of inquiry rather than knowing a "right" answer.
- Learning experiences draw upon multiple intelligences of learners.
- Learning experiences use resources and sites outside of the classroom.
- Learning experiences are developed and implemented collaboratively among teachers and outside resource people, if outside resource people are used.
- Educational programs are interdisciplinary and/or thematic.
- Educational programs include authentic and diverse assessment, which focus on expected outcomes of the learner.
- Educational programs and/or activities are replicable in other settings.
- Learning experiences used to educate teachers are consistent with the learning experiences teachers subsequently will use to educate their students.

- Teachers have a major responsibility and commitment in the planning and execution of any pre-service and in-service activity.
- Teachers use quality educational practices that will result in the learners acquiring lifelong skills and abilities in pre-service and in-service activities.
- Pre-service or in-service programs are conducted over an extended period of time and include one or more follow-up sessions.

OEEF's Preferred Characteristics for Adult Learners (General Public Audiences)

OEEF prefers to support projects that are tailored to provide a meaningful learning experience for adults. Where appropriate, applications should demonstrate how the following adult learning principles have been built into the educational program.

Readiness: Adults are motivated by needs, benefits or interest. Get to know the intended learners and what they want and need to know. Link learning to the topics most immediately useful to them. Example: provide specific examples of how other homeowners took actions to protect the environment, with measurable results and cost savings, such as by replacing incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs.

Flexibility: Adults have many different roles and responsibilities, with competing demands upon their time. Schedule events to meet learner needs and availability. Offer flexible time schedules and advance scheduling. Examples: schedule a workshop during the evening or on weekends. Offer regional workshops rather than one statewide event. One grantee set up farmer-to-farmer learning circles that met at kitchen tables during the winter, because this was more convenient and comfortable for the farmers than formal classrooms.

Self Direction: Adults are self-directed and want others to see them that way. Involve learners in as many aspects of selecting, planning, doing and evaluating objectives and learning experiences as possible. Example: ask participants who have already grappled with a particular problem to design case study scenarios for the group to "solve".

Association: When presented with new information, adult learners unconsciously ask, "How does this information relate to what I already know?" Adults learn best when they can bridge the gap between the known and the unknown. Help learners relate their experiences to new concepts and skills. Build upon the learners' knowledge and vocabulary while providing a common denominator. Example: draw linkages between actions they can take to protect the environment, and actions they take to prevent disease or injury.

Application: Adults want learning to be relevant to their life, and immediately applicable. Use a problem-centered rather than a subject-centered approach. Example: One grantee offered a tour to showcase low-tech and high-tech methods that different property owners had used to prevent stream bank erosion.

Active Learning: Adults learn most effectively by doing. Provide hands-on learning opportunities. Examples: Allow the learners to conduct a waste audit in a real home, or practice using water quality monitoring devices.

Segmented Learning: Adults need time to assimilate one group of facts before accepting the next group. Provide educational materials that are divided into parts and presented one step at a time in a logical sequence. Provide educational experiences based on job and/or life situations relating new or difficult concepts to existing base of experience.

Sensory Learning: Adult learning is enhanced when it appeals to multiple senses and includes sight, hearing and kinesthetic approaches. Use a variety of teaching styles. Examples: simulation, case studies, role playing, small group discussion, and facility tours or other field demonstrations.

Feedback: Adults need feedback on how they are progressing. Adults learn from their mistakes. Provide learners with continuous evaluation and feedback relating to personal learning objectives. Example: Ask others in the training to comment on what one group did well and poorly during a simulation.

Reinforcement: Adults are motivated to learn more when they are successful. Some adults may lack confidence in their ability to learn. Encourage sharing of success stories and reinforce and highlight information that is key to learning. Conduct educational programs over an extended period of time and include one or more follow-up sessions. Example: Instead of sending participants home from a one-day training with a binder of information, schedule the group to reconvene three months later with a specific homework assignment, to share their experiences trying to put what they learned into practice.

Recall: Adults gradually forget what they've learned. Provide opportunities to frequently repeat, recall or review material. Example: One facilitator set up a list-serv for a weekly on-line chat room where those who attended the training could discuss their experiences putting what they learned into action.

Comfort: Adults learn best in an environment that is physically comfortable and supportive. Some adults face barriers to learning, including diminishing physical abilities. Be aware of physical limitations and arrange learning environments for ease in hearing and sight. Stress mutual setting of goals and encourage free exchange of ideas. Allow learners to set their own pace and work toward their own goals. Provide sufficient time to allow the participants to comfortably interact one-on-one or in groups.

OEEF's Preferred Characteristics for Projects Targeting the Regulated Community Audience

The aim of OEEF grants to the regulated community is to change specific business behaviors through introducing more environmentally friendly processes, or providing specific direction to aid compliance with regulatory requirements. Because the purpose of the grant is to encourage/implement behavioral change, regulated community proposals should:

1. Have very specific situational objectives which are clearly and concisely stated;
2. Relate the subject matter to professional experience and job situations, and;
3. Provide continuous feedback/technical assistance during the learning process to assure progress toward project objectives.
4. Make some attempt to evaluate whether behavior change is happening over time as a result of the education project, and whether compliance rates are improving.

Regulated Community Grants Should:

- *have strong local, regional, or sector-wide impact, i.e., not just train the employees of a single company
- *improve the grantee's ability to address regulatory issues/achieve regulatory compliance through cooperation and collaboration
- *provide for collaborative implementation of the project
- *address environmental issues that are relevant to, or a priority for, the regulated community
- *identify long-term benefits of the project
- *identify strategies for follow-up after the project period ends
- *identify methods for up-dating materials that may become dated after the project period ends, particularly as regulatory requirements may change

Working with Adult Learners

OEEF prefers to support projects that are tailored to provide a meaningful learning experience for adults. Where appropriate, applications should demonstrate how the following adult learning principles have been built into the educational program.

Readiness: Adults are motivated by needs, benefits or interest. Get to know the intended learners and what they want and need to know. Link learning to the topics most immediately useful to them. Example: provide specific examples of how other companies have complied with the same regulation and reduced waste disposal costs in the process.

Flexibility: Adults have many different roles and responsibilities, with competing demands upon their time. Schedule events to meet learner needs and availability. Offer flexible time schedules and advance scheduling. Example: schedule a training workshop during the industry's "slow" season. Offer regional workshops rather than one statewide event. To reach an agricultural audience, one grantee offered farmer-to-farmer learning circles that met at kitchen tables rather than in formal classrooms.

Self Direction: Adults are self-directed and want others to see them that way. Involve learners in as many aspects of selecting, planning, doing and evaluating objectives and learning experiences as possible. Example: recruit managers and employees who struggle with compliance issues every day to design case study scenarios for the group to "solve".

Association: When presented with new information, adult learners unconsciously ask, "How does this information relate to what I already know?" Adults learn best when they can bridge the gap between the known and the unknown. Help learners relate their experiences to new concepts and skills. Build upon the learners' knowledge and vocabulary while providing a common denominator. Example: draw linkages between environmental compliance and compliance with safety and health regulations, or ISO 14001 efforts.

Application: Adults learn when they can understand and use the information. Adults want learning to be relevant to their life, immediately applicable and problem-centered. Use a problem-centered rather than a subject-centered approach. Make learning immediately useful by answering "how". Example: for the automotive service sector, showcase problem-solving examples from large auto dealerships and small repair shops.

Active Learning: Adults learn most effectively by doing. Provide hands-on learning opportunities. Example: Allow the learners to practice operating pollution control equipment, or conduct a waste audit in a real or simulated facility.

Segmented Learning: Adults need time to assimilate one group of facts before accepting the next group. Provide educational materials that are divided into parts and presented one step at a time in a logical sequence. Provide educational experiences based on job and/or life situations relating new or difficult concepts to the existing base of experience.

Sensory Learning: Adults favor different senses. Learning is enhanced when it appeals to multiple senses and includes sight, hearing and kinesthetic approaches. Use a variety of teaching styles. Example: simulation, case studies, role playing, small group discussion, and facility tours or other field demonstrations.

Feedback: Adults need feedback on how they are progressing. Adults learn from their mistakes. Provide learners with continuous evaluation and feedback relating to personal learning objectives. Example: Ask others in the training to comment on what this group did well and poorly during the simulation.

Reinforcement: Adults are motivated to learn more when they are successful. Some adults may lack confidence in their ability to learn. Encourage sharing of success stories and reinforce and highlight information that is key to learning. Conduct educational programs over an extended period of time and include one or more follow-up sessions. Example: Instead of sending participants home from a one-day training with a binder of information, schedule the group to reconvene three months later with a specific homework assignment, to share their experiences trying to put what they learned into practice.

Recall: Adults gradually forget what they've learned. Provide opportunities to frequently repeat, recall or review material. Example: One training facilitator set up a list-serv for a weekly on-line chat room where those who attended the training could discuss their experiences putting what they learned into action.

Comfort: Adults learn best in an environment that is physically comfortable and supportive. Some adults face barriers to learning, including diminishing physical abilities. Be aware of physical limitations and arrange learning environments for ease in hearing and sight. Stress mutual setting of goals and encourage free exchange of ideas. Allow learners to set their own pace and work toward their own goals. Provide a supportive learning environment that allows the participants to comfortably interact one-on-one or in groups.

Technical review of the proposal will be done by the OEEF staff, using the "OEEF staff review checklist" to determine whether the proposal has met the criteria found in these guidelines. The OEEF staff has been directed by the OEEF Advisory Council to assign extra points to proposals that provide a stronger match than the required 10%; proposals that demonstrate strong collaboration; and proposals for projects targeting one of the audiences OEEF has defined as "under-served." For 2012, OEEF's under-served audiences are defined as the regulated community, and proposals for projects in counties where fewer than two OEEF grants have been awarded. Staff decisions on compliance with these criteria are final.

Substantive review will be done by a committee comprised of representatives of Ohio EPA divisions and district offices, using the score sheet posted at http://www.epa.ohio.gov/oef/grantee_resources.aspx. After all applications have been scored individually, all proposals will be discussed at a meeting of the review committee, to develop consensus recommendations of which proposals to recommend to the Ohio EPA director for funding. All decisions of the director are final. Funding decisions will normally be reported to applicants within nine weeks of the application deadline, and to the OEEF Advisory Council at their next scheduled meeting.

FILLING OUT THE ONLINE APPLICATION

Applications must be submitted electronically through the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency's eBusiness Center at <https://ebiz.epa.ohio.gov/>. OEEF no longer accepts paper applications. Applicants will find information on the OEEF and previously funded grant projects on Ohio EPA's website, at www.epa.ohio.gov/oeef/oeefoverview.aspx.

Applications are submitted to the OEEF through a three-step process. First, the applicant creates a user name and password setting up an account at <https://ebiz.epa.ohio.gov/>. Applicants don't need a PIN to apply to OEEF. Second, the applicant will fill out an electronic letter of intent (LOI) to apply for a mini grant. This letter is a short form requesting contact information, the amount of funds requested, and a few questions about the target audience, location, and content of the proposed project. Once OEEF staff have approved the LOI, then the applicant can begin the third step of filling in the sections of the application. The applicant can use the "save" and "exit" buttons, to log out of the system, and return to work on the application when convenient. Once an applicant has selected the "yes" button in any section of the application, that section is locked against further edits. Only an OEEF staff member can unlock these sections.

Mini grant applications are limited in the amount of characters that can be submitted. These are character limits, not word limits. In most cases, 2,000 characters are allowed under the project description and activity areas. All parts of the proposal must be entered into the appropriate sections of the online application form. It is possible to "cut and paste" text from other software into some of the application sections, but other sections such as the budget must be entered directly. No attachments to the application should be uploaded except for a single electronic file containing all the signed letters of support and collaboration for the project, described below.

Please direct questions about the OEEF Grant Service user name and password software problems to Ohio Environmental Protection Agency eBusiness Center Helpdesk, Monday – Friday (except State Holidays), 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at (877) 372-2499 (1-877-EPA-BIZZ). Please direct all inquiries regarding OEEF's grant program policies and procedures, or the status of a grant application, to the OEEF staff at (614) 644-2873 or oeef@epa.state.oh.us.

PRE-REVIEW OF DRAFT APPLICATIONS

Applicants are encouraged to call the OEEF office to discuss project ideas early in the application process. OEEF staff members are happy to provide a formal pre-review of applications, to ensure that the application meets the guidelines and to offer suggestions. Please complete the draft in the OEEF Grant Management System well ahead of the deadline, the earlier the better, in order to allow yourself adequate time to respond to staff suggestions and make changes. *Use the "save" buttons rather than the "submit" and "exit" buttons if you wish to request a pre-review, so that you will still be able to make changes in response to suggestions.* OEEF staff members are only able to pre-review a proposal once, so please complete and "save" as much of the draft as possible before calling or e-mailing a request for a pre-review to the OEEF office.

SECTIONS OF THE MINI GRANT APPLICATION

- Application Cover Sheet with Audience Categories and Project Issues (This will initially be generated from your LOI, but you may make edits to change some of the information after submitting your LOI.)
- Project Description
 - Background of Organization
 - Project Summary
 - Project Justification
 - Dissemination
 - Budget Narrative
- Budget Spreadsheet
- Project Description
 - Objectives
 - Activities
 - Timeline for Activities
 - Outcome Measurements: Initial and Long-Term Effects
- Applicant Contact Information (also generated from your LOI, but you will need to add additional contacts for the fiscal and authorizing agents)
- Uploaded .pdf file (one file only) with signed letters of collaboration and support (scanned from the author's letterhead)

APPLICATION COVER SHEET

(Note to applicants: The information in this section will initially be filled in automatically from what you provided in your LOI, but you may edit some of the information as you work on your draft application.)

Application Number: (this number will be assigned by the OEEF when your LOI is approved, and may not be modified)

Project Title: _____

Applicant Organization _____
(This is the legal name of your organization. A school should supply the name of the school district first, followed by the school applying for the grant. A college or university should supply the name of the institution followed by the department that will be responsible for carrying out the project.)

OEEF Educational Priority: _____

Anticipated List of Collaborators: _____

Which Ohio counties will the activities take place in? _____
 (You may also select "statewide")

Brief Project Description (two or three sentences only): _____

Which group best describes the primary target audience for the project?

Pre-school to university students and/or teachers

Ohio adults (general public)

Regulated community (public and private sector entities who much comply with state and/or federal environmental regulations; and agricultural producers)

(If your project targets more than one audience, please indicate which is primary and which is secondary)

If this is a revision of a previous application to OEEF, please give the previous application number: _____

If you have previously RECEIVED a grant from the OEEF, please give that grant number:

Amount of grant funds requested: \$_____

Proposed Start Date: _____

Proposed Completion Date: _____

Have you ever attended an OEEF grant-writing workshop? yes no

Will this project have statewide impact?

Audience Categories:

(This information from your LOI will be used to match your application with appropriate peer reviewers. Contact the OEEF staff if you have questions about which categories your project fits.)

Project Issues:

(This information from your LOI will be used to match your proposal with appropriate OEEF peer reviewers. Contact the OEEF staff if you have questions about which issues your project fits.)

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

BACKGROUND OF ORGANIZATION: What are the goals and accomplishments of your organization that equip you to carry out the proposed project? Describe the qualifications of those who will manage and conduct the project. How will other organizations be involved in this project? (Upload letters (only one file) documenting specific commitments from collaborators.)

PROJECT SUMMARY: Please provide two or three sentences summarizing the overall project, how it will further environmental education, and how many people are likely to benefit directly.

PROJECT JUSTIFICATION: Why is the project needed by the target audience? Applications for K-12 projects **MUST** discuss how the proposed student activities are or will be aligned with the Academic Content Standards published by the Ohio Department of Education, available at www.edu.state.oh.us/.

DISSEMINATION: How will information and results be shared? Include steps that may come after the project timeline, e.g., if you plan to make a presentation at a professional meeting.

BUDGET NARRATIVE: Fill in this section **AFTER** you have completed the budget spreadsheet, providing any needed details to explain how the amounts listed in the line items of your application budget were calculated. Provide justifications to help reviewers understand the need for higher-cost equipment or other items.

BUDGET Spreadsheet

You may want to complete this section after you have completed the objectives and activities on the Activities tab. Prepare your project budget using the format provided in the OEEF Grant Service. Be sure the budget is realistic and appropriate to your objectives. **A 10% match in cash or in-kind contributions from the applicant and/or other funding sources is required for all proposals.** Larger matches are encouraged to demonstrate the applicant organization's commitment to the project. Indicate the contributed amount on the lines provided. Double check to be sure the budget is accurate and consistent with the budget narrative. ***Please round all amounts to the nearest dollar.***

Personnel:

Salary/Wages: Provide position title, number of hours, and hourly wage (or annual salary) for each person. OEEF will not provide 100% of any employee's salary/wage costs for any period. OEEF strongly discourages proposals with more than 50% of the grant funds allocated to salary and benefits. Personnel costs that are included in the contractual portion of the budget will be regarded by OEEF staff and Advisory Council members as salary, and included in calculating 50% of the grant funds. Applicants who feel they must request more than 50% of the grant funds for salary and benefits should provide extraordinary justification, and should understand that their proposal may be disqualified. Daily stipends and substitutes for teachers will not be calculated against the 50%.

Benefits: Explain in the budget narrative how the benefit rate is calculated by your organization, and provide percentages of any salaries/wages being devoted to the proposed project. For example, if OEEF is being asked to provide 20% of a staff person's salary over the project period, OEEF will also be willing to provide 20% of that staff person's benefit costs for the same period. (It is permissible instead to use the percentage of employee benefits paid by the applicant organization as a match for OEEF grant funds, but this may not exceed the proportion of the employee's time to be devoted to the grant project.)

Stipends and Substitutes: Provide unit cost for stipends and substitutes. (OEEF will cover costs for a stipend or for a substitute to enable a teacher to participate in the project. However, OEEF will not cover both a stipend and a substitute for the same teacher on the same day.)

Non-Personnel:

You may use the definitions traditionally used by your organization when identifying expenditures under the supplies and equipment. OEEF generally regards supplies as consumables, and equipment as hardware.

Supplies: Itemize large quantity or higher priced items and provide unit price (e.g., rewritable CDs, 10 pkg. of 50 @\$122/ea). Some items may be grouped together and given a total price, but be sure to identify the items or give a title to the group of items (e.g., postage/envelopes; safety goggles/latex gloves). Vague entries such as “office supplies - \$500” will not be funded.

Equipment: Itemize and provide unit price (e.g., YSI model #55 handheld dissolved oxygen meters, 1 @ \$699/ea). Please note that the reviewers will look closely at equipment costs that look unreasonable or are not well-justified and itemized.

Printing: Itemize, provide number of copies & unit price (e.g., 1000 @ 50 cents/page = \$50.00).

Other: Provide line items that do not fit under Supplies, Equipment or Printing expenditures. List each item separately (e.g., Travel, Phone Calls, Resource Guides) and provide unit price. Do not title an entry "Miscellaneous" or "Contingencies".
NOTE: Mileage and hotel costs can only be reimbursed at the current State of Ohio rate. Mileage is currently 45 cents per mile. Applicants should consult with OEEF staff on the allowable hotel rates for specific locations.

Contractual:

Identify the service being provided, the name of the organization or individual providing the service, number of hours and hourly wage. Monies from the OEEF grant cannot be used to cover indirect costs for contractual services. As noted above, OEEF prefers not to fund proposals with more than half the project budget devoted to salary costs. Proposals with extensive salary costs in the contractual section require extra justification and will receive extra scrutiny. Any contractual services related to the grant shall not relieve the Grantee of any of its responsibility under the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement.

Indicate income to be generated from the proposed project, if any.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This section of the online application requires you to first name and enter a specific objective, then attach appropriate associated activities to that objective, filling in the expected start and end date for each activity, and the percentage of the overall project

budget associated with each activity. You will also be asked to provide a short-term and long-term outcome measurement for the results of the objective. Your project may have more than one objective, depending upon which audiences are learning what. There may be more than one activity for each objective. In general, however, you should try to limit the number of objectives to keep the project focused and workable.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES:

Define what the project will accomplish, specifically in terms of who will learn what. Explain how your project will address one or more of OEEF's educational priorities for 2011, and whether it has the potential to serve as a model for use in other locations with similar audiences. The NAAEE Guidelines for Excellence recommend SMART objectives that are **S**pecific, **M**easurable, name the **A**udience, are **R**elevant to the audience's needs, and **T**ime-bound.

Examples of Objectives

Weak Objective: The objective of this project is to educate students on the benefits of recycling.

Strong Objective: This project will educate 500 fifth- and sixth-grade children from inner city schools on the benefits of recycling yard waste into compost, by providing hands-on urban gardening activities for one full growing season. Students will learn how composting reduces waste and produces a valuable commodity, and how organic methods of cultivation reduce adverse environmental impacts.

ACTIVITIES

Activities should be specific, sequential, reasonable for accomplishing the objective, and appropriate for the age of the audience. They should also be relevant to real-world issues affecting Ohioans. Demonstrate that the project does more than disseminate information: show how learners will engage in hands-on activities, problem-solving, and/or skill-building. Explain how the activities will utilize or adapt already existing environmental education materials. If new materials must be developed, provide a justification. Include what steps will be taken to ensure that the project information is scientifically valid and unbiased, and that more than one point of view is being presented.

Timeline: Enter a start date and stop date for each activity. Please keep in mind, activities being paid for with OEEF grant money cannot be initiated until the lead organization has a signed grant agreement. It can take up to several weeks from the date a grant award is announced until the agreement is signed. Use the "Earliest Start Date" provided in the guidelines when calculating activity start times.

For each activity, enter an approximate percentage of the proposed project budget that you anticipate will be needed. The more specific the activity, the easier it will be to estimate the amount of budget needed. An activity that is related to the project but not being supported by the OEEF grant can be reflected under the budget column with a 0%.”

OUTCOME MEASUREMENTS

For each objective, describe how you will measure the initial outcome of the project and its long-term effects, in order to determine the success of the project. How will you demonstrate that the project uses quality educational products or methods that teach critical-thinking, problem-solving, and decision-making skills. Outcome measurements may include evaluation tools such as surveys, rubrics, and observation or outside consultation.

CONTACT INFORMATION

This section of the online application form will initially be filled in automatically from the information you provided in your LOI . You may add or remove contacts from this section. Each application should list contact information for three different roles: the Project Director, the Fiscal Agent, and an Authorizing Agent. According to generally accepted accounting procedures, any two of these three roles may be fulfilled by the same person, but not all three, so that there can be two signatures on each fiscal report submitted to the OEEF explaining the expenditure of grant funds.

Project Director: *the person with primary responsibility for carrying out the project.*

Fiscal Agent: *This is the person with primary responsibility for managing grant funds, who will assist the project director in preparing all required expenditure reports.*

Authorizing Agent: *This is the individual who will sign the Grant Agreement contract on behalf of the recipient organization.*

LETTERS OF COLLABORATION AND SUPPORT

All letters should be secured by the applicant, signed and on letterhead from the writer’s organization, prior to submitting the application. These letters should be combined into a single .pdf file and uploaded as an attachment to the online application, using the “Add Document” blue link on the Upload Document tab. If you are not able to create a single .pdf file, please contact the OEEF staff for assistance. It is important that the letters be combined into a single uploaded file so that the peer reviewers can easily find all the letters in one place.

Collaboration

Collaboration refers to active involvement of another organization, whose assistance is integral to the project. **LETTERS MUST ACCOMPANY THE APPLICATION IF YOUR PROJECT INVOLVES COLLABORATION.** For example, if you intend to conduct an event in a local park, and the park district is providing publicity and helping you recruit participants, then the park district is a collaborator on your project and you must include a letter from them. The letter should provide a commitment from the collaborating organization to provide the specific services needed.

Support

OEEF refers to letters from persons who support your organization's efforts or attest to your organization's capabilities as letters of support. Letters of support do not establish participation of the person or organization in the project. Letters of support are optional but encouraged.

It is recommended that applicants make early requests for electronic (.pdf file) letters of collaboration or support on letterhead from their project partners and/or supporters. OEEF will not consider unsigned letters, emails in lieu of letters, or letters received after the application deadline.

If a previous application is being re-submitted, the same letters may be used in the next grant round (provided this is within one calendar year of the date the original letter was written) if the letter writer's commitments have not changed in any way. If the letter writer's involvement has changed, the applicant should secure new letters. OEEF will not consider letters older than one year.

SUBMITTING THE FINAL VERSION OF YOUR APPLICATION

Use the "save" and "exit" buttons in each section of the online application for as long as you are still making edits, and if you wish for the OEEF staff to pre-review your draft application keep the "no" button marked. Once you have made all the changes you wish to make to the draft, use the "yes" buttons in each section of the application to submit and lock that portion of the application. Review the checklist on the Application Summary tab of the online application to be sure that you have completed each section of the proposal and uploaded your letters of support and collaboration. Then use the "Submit Application" button on the Application Summary tab of the online application to submit and lock the final version of your application. Once this final version of the application has been submitted, you will receive an email message from OEEF confirming receipt of your application.