

## Excel Mini Grants: Frequently Asked Questions



Welcome to our *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) page*. Please review the grant guidelines below carefully for information on grant award changes, application requirements and restrictions.

### **How do I apply?**

Grant requests are accepted online through January 22, 2021. Applications can be accessed [HERE](#).

### **Who is eligible to apply for an Excel Mini-Grant?**

All employees (full- and part-time) of Highline Public Schools are eligible to apply an Excel Mini-Grant.

### **How many Excel Grants are awarded?**

We will be awarding up to \$25,000 in Excel Mini-Grants.

### **If I am applying for a grant, do I need to fill out the district grant form?**

No. The Foundation will submit a grant form for all awarded grants. You do not need to submit for them individually with your application.

### **If I received an Excel Grant from Highline Schools Foundation in the past, can I apply for another grant?**

Yes. As long as you have submitted the required reports for a previous grant(s), you may apply for an Excel Mini-Grant.

**Can computers and software be included in Excel Mini-Grant applications?** No computer hardware can be purchased with the mini grant process. However, if there is a software application that can help with full remote learning, we are happy to consider a proposal for that.

### **Are there types of projects that are more likely to be funded?**

No. Each year is different and unique. The Foundation is interested in supporting teachers and staff in their efforts to provide engaging online learning opportunities outside of the standard curriculum. The Foundation does not fund professional development for teachers or staff – so proposals for this will not be funded. The one thing in common of ALL funded programs is that they tie to Highline Public School's strategic plan.

### **My grant project is going to involve some after-school planning time. In my grant budget can I include stipends for the teachers who will be helping?**

No. Professional development, compensation for substitute teachers, and salaries or stipends for additional staffing will not be funded and should be *excluded* from your budget summary. Applications that include these expenses will not be considered.

### **How are the grant winners decided?**

Grants are chosen in a blind evaluation process with Foundation trustees as reviewers. The Foundation funds projects that augment and enrich the curriculum and do not supplant programs traditionally funded by district, state or federal budgets. These trustees are not necessarily educators so please do not use educational jargon or acronyms in your proposal.

### **When we will be notified?**

Announcements and notifications of winning grants will be made by February 8, 2021.

### **If my grant application is selected, how do I receive my grant check?**

For the mini grant process, we are doing things differently. You may either purchase the items for an awarded grant and you will be reimbursed. Or, you can send a list to the Foundation and their staff will purchase the items for you and have them shipped to you.

### **What programs or activities will the Foundation NOT fund through an Excel Grant?**

- Teacher salary or release time (subs)
- Teacher education/training/dues
- Computer hardware
- Basic items that could be funded through building or department budgets

### **What happens to equipment or supplies purchased with an Excel Grant if I leave Highline?**

All equipment and supplies purchased with grant funds are owned by the district. All purchased materials will remain the property of the district if you leave Highline Public Schools. You may use items in your home during remote learning – but all purchased items are expected to be brought back to your classroom or office when remote learning ends.

### **What is expected in the final report?**

Your final report will include both financial and program information and should include a narrative account of what was accomplished by the grant. **We use your stories to help us secure future funding**, so please be as excited and emotional as you were on your application! We will post stories and photos on our [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) – and we invite you to share these with your friends, coworkers and school families. The final report is due by May 30, 2021.

### **What happens if I learn that the program will cost more after I receive funding?**

The Foundation awards 100% of its Excel grant budget. If you discover that there are additional or unanticipated costs, you will need to find other non-foundation funding to cover those expenses. This includes sales tax and shipping on items purchased. Please take time to put together a complete budget with your application.

### **Why is the deadline for the final report on May 31?**

We want to wrap up these grants by the end of 20221 school year so that we can move to our regular Excel grant process in the next school year.

### **Things to consider before you submit your application:**

- Submit your application on time and online. The application is due January 22, 2021. There are no extensions granted. Please make sure you receive confirmation of your grants' submission.
- **Give your idea full credit for the number of students impacted by your grant request and the longevity of your program or project.** Note how your project may directly or indirectly affect other students in the school.
- **Keep your audience in mind.** Remember that grant reviewers are not educators so try to use laypersons' language or explain "edu-speak". **Please do not use acronyms.**
- **Communicate your enthusiasm for the idea!** Get the review committee excited about your project. It is important to include as much detail as possible in your request; and a well-defined budget is essential to the review committee.
- **Request only the appropriate amount of funding needed.** An Excel Mini-Grant is an award up to \$500 per classroom/staff. Do not automatically request the maximum amount. Also, list any additional or alternate sources of funding that have been pursued.
- Individual teachers may apply for multiple grants. (Each grant application needs to be submitted separately.)

- Your application should have the **knowledge and support** of your principal or supervisor.
- Applications can go up to \$2,000 for four applicants. Remember, it is a \$500 maximum request per classroom/teacher/staff member.

**Common reasons that grants do not get funded:**

- Incomplete or late application
- Lack of a definite project or detailed budget
- Request for items covered by HPS budget
- Items not tied to remote learning
- Final project report for previous grant not submitted
- Program not understood when reviewed by Foundation board members
- Lack of measurable evaluation criteria
- Proposal includes professional development or stipends for teachers/staff.

Please contact us with any questions about the process or if you need assistance with the application.

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