

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

THE NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION'S OPEN OUTDOORS FOR KIDS GRANT PROGRAM

Grant Applications Due: Friday, June 17, 2022

The National Park Foundation (NPF) is pleased to announce that it is accepting applications from ALL National Park Service units and affiliated units officially administered by the National Park Service to participate in the 2022-2023 Open Outdoors for Kids Grant Program.

Overview:

As we continue to understand how school districts are emerging from disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic—especially the capacity to resume in-park field trips—the Open Outdoors for Kids (OOK) grant program seeks to aid national parks and partners in the delivery of distance learning modules that work best to connect fourth graders of Title I schools to parks, and to deliver onsite fieldtrips to the extent possible. Therefore, this year's grant is intended to support a wide range of OOK program needs, including implementation of new learning modules, temporary staff/interns, new content development, equipment, and program marketing for both onsite and synchronous/asynchronous distance learning for fourth grade classroom engagement.

Guiding Principles:

Together, we endeavor to connect schools, students, families and parks, recognizing there may need to be timely, flexible adjustments made for the 2022-2023 school/program year:

1. **Adaptation:** What do teachers, students, and families need now? How is your site monitoring classroom participation in your OOK program and can you switch to offer a different engagement approach throughout the year?
2. **Inclusion:** Envision education impacts beyond curriculum alignment by addressing social and emotional learning, physical accessibility, language, awareness of climate impacts, women's history, indigenous perspectives, and other inclusive practices as fostering deeper connections to the world and enriching childhood development.
3. **Shared Learning:** Help NPF listen and learn. Join grantee cohort calls 2-3 times per year to facilitate sharing of ideas.

Proposals should:

- Outline how outcomes are defined and measured.
- Describe the audiences this grant will engage, prioritizing Title I engagement.
- Leverage prior OOK work, if your park has received grants before.
- Define how roll over funds from a prior grant or other designated funds will be used in support of this current proposal.
- Describe how you monitor school OOK participation and if you will change your offerings if, for example, schools can't join in-person field trips because they're catching up for lost class time?

Informational Call: Optional informational calls to discuss this RFP will be held on the dates listed below. NPF would like to hear from you as your input is essential in helping us continue to adapt grant criteria to support your OOK needs. Participation is encouraged, but it is not a requirement.

Informational Call dates:

- **Thursday, June 2nd: 1:00-2:00 pm ET**
 - Link to join Zoom Call: <https://nationalparks-org.zoom.us/j/84093227317?pwd=Wk1paERoMmYvTjZxbEUxdGw1OVF0QT09>
 - Meeting ID: 840 9322 7317

- **Tuesday, June 7th: 2:00-3:00 pm ET**
 - Link to join Zoom Call: <https://nationalparks-org.zoom.us/j/83178467595?pwd=RHM5M0NHZXBBDQXFxOU9TTE5MeE1OQT09>
 - Meeting ID: 831 7846 7595

Award Amount:

Will be commensurate with demonstrated need, use of multiple modules (in person, synchronous and asynchronous distance learning), number of Title I fourth graders served and ability to scale 2022-2023 activities as schools hopefully can increase activities with parks.

Notification: Applicants will be notified of award selections by August 2022.

Selection Process: Applications will be reviewed by a committee comprised of representatives from the National Park Foundation and National Park Service. Selections will be based on the applicant's ability to meet and exceed program requirements and outcomes.

Questions: Contact Karen Lee, klee@nationalparks.org Director, Education Programs.

RFP Contents:

- A. Program Overview
- B. Program Requirements
- C. Program Goal and Outcomes
- D. Program Timeline
- E. Program Evaluation
- F. Proposal Instructions
- G. Proposal Template
- H. Checklist

A. Program Overview

Recognizing that a wide range of circumstances may evolve during the 2022-2023 school year, this grant prioritizes funding for onsite and distance learning modules that are adaptable, and for park staff taking an intentional approach to monitoring school enrollment in your OOK activities so your team can modify delivery methods (in person or virtual) to meet schools changing needs as they work to recoup lost class time.

Parks increasingly provide distance learning for students nationwide, connecting schools to parks they'd otherwise not be able to visit. Parks are encouraged to use this grant to continue national distance learning, alongside the priority given for local in-person programming.

This grant continues to complement the *Every Kid Outdoors* federal program/pass, amplifying the opportunity for 4th graders and their families to visit national parks/federal lands for free.

The National Park Foundation Open Outdoors for Kids Grant Program has five main eligibility requirements to be considered for a grant:

1. **Qualities of Onsite or Distance Learning Engagement:** Programs foster social & emotional well-being while delivering science, history, or humanities content, and help youth identify with parks as places that welcome them and their families. Staff recognize complexity of human experience, so when feasible, they incorporate bilingual elements, awareness of climate change impacts, women's history, indigenous perspectives, among other equity and inclusion best practices. **Please describe how your program will increase access to the above.**
2. **Three-Touch Model:** A tenant of OOK grant program is prolonged engagement of students through a three-touch activity model. For onsite field trips, this may include a pre-visit, field day, and post-visit activity. For distance learning, this may entail a series learning modules to extend meaningful contact with program participants. **Please describe your 3-touch model.**
3. **Cost-Ratio Per Student:** Successful grant applications will keep their cost ratio around \$15 per youth. Should your costs exceed this parameter, please provide a compelling reason. In addition to providing a budget for 2022-2023 spending, account for unspent rollover funds from prior OOK grant.
4. **Demonstrated Support:** You must submit a letter of support from your superintendent/site manager and a letter of support from your school or youth-serving partner.
5. **Under-resourced:** Priority for Title I school engagement, but NPF recognizes other considerations that factor into school participation. Please explain your prime audience's socioeconomics.

B. Program Requirements

1. Engage under-resourced/Title I students
2. Get youth outdoors for some portion of their on-site or distance learning program
3. Actively engage participants in a “three-touch” activity model
4. Be mindful of cost ratio per youth, provide a detailed budget, account for roll over spending.
5. Participate in evaluation and provide materials as requested for reports to donors, including mandatory final report
6. Provide NPF with photos (released for publication), blogs, videos/podcasts, and media that will help tell the story to various audiences including donors

C. Program Goal and Outcomes

The Program Goal is to expand opportunities for new students to directly experience national parks, where natural, cultural, and historic settings inspire powerful memory building.

The program **Outcomes** defined below are designed to provide a platform through which grantees can:

- Create or deepen connections between national parks, youth, and local schools.
- Diversify the next generation of national park visitors and inspire their support.

Participant (Student) Outcomes

1. Participants visit NPS sites in-person or online, for the first time
2. Participants feel welcome and inspired, enhancing their knowledge of the NPS site
3. Participants express interest in parks or visiting with families

Partner (Teachers and Group Leaders) Outcomes

4. Partners develop awareness or understanding of NPS sites as a resource for youth engagement and learning

National Park Service Outcomes

5. Engagement with public and partners improves engagement with new audiences and partners through inclusive programming creating the next generation of NPS visitors
6. Sites enhance their ability to meet changing needs of teachers, including social-emotional wellness and serving local and distant audiences through live and online activities.

D. Program Timeline

May 23, 2022 RFP open

June 17, 2022: RFP submission closes *Reminder to submit Fluxx registrations three-days prior

August 2022: Applicants notified of grant status

September 2022: Grant Agreement process
February 2023: Mid-Year Report/Data Request
June 30, 2023: Activities completed
July 31, 2023: Final Report due to NPF

E. Program Evaluation

The National Park Foundation contracts the services of professional evaluators to assess the adaptation and effectiveness of this program. NPF staff seeks to be reflective and learn with parks and partners through the evaluation process and use annual findings to improve the program. NPF will analyze all the data and provide each grantee with a written report on activity outcomes.

In the 2022-23 evaluation, we will track:

- Primary school program participants
- Demographics of population your project worked with
- Project summary
- Leveraged contributions
- Assessing changes to your program model for onsite and online activities

We will also begin tracking social/emotional indicators of engagement, expansion of accessibility including language, adaptability of program delivery to changing classroom circumstances and interest of parks to incorporate climate impacts, women's narratives, indigenous perspectives and other inclusive practices in interpretation/education to help raise awareness of our nation's multifaceted history.

F. Proposal Instructions:

***Please note changes in what this Grant Supports: in person and distance learning modules, promotion of teacher and student well-being, expansion of inclusivity.**

All NEW users to Fluxx must create an account, which can be used to apply for future grants and complete final reports for NPF. Fluxx registration is a two-step process, as new accounts must be approved before grantees gain access to the portal. If you are a new user to Fluxx, begin your application at least 3 days prior to when you intend to submit your application as the registration process takes time. If you already have an account, access the application using your Fluxx credentials.

Fluxx Registration

- If you do not already have an account through Fluxx, you will have to register first. To register for an account in Fluxx, please go to NPF's Grantee Portal and click on "Create an Account Now" to fill out the form: <https://nationalparks.fluxx.io/>

- **Reminder:** Registration can take two to three days to receive approval prior to being able to access the online application, so please allow for this time during the application period. Please register for Fluxx at least **three days in advance** to avoid technical delays and ensure timely submission of all grant proposals.
- Once NPF has reviewed and approved a registration request, grantees will receive an email and link to set up an account password. *The registration email will come from Do-not-reply.grants07-us-east-1@fluxx.io (please check your junk/spam folders).
- Please log into the grantee portal, navigate to the left-hand menu, and click on “Apply for Funding”. On this webpage, select “**Open OutDoors for Kids Application**” to get started.
 - **Reminder:** Fluxx **does not** automatically save. **Click on the “Save” button** frequently to ensure that no information is lost. You may save applications to continue working on it later. We recommend you complete your application in Word first to ensure you don’t lose any information.
- “Primary Contact” & “Primary Signatory”: Please be sure to select the correct person based on the following. If you do not see the correct person’s name, reach out to parkpartners@nationalparks.org and provide us with their name, email address, and title to have them added to the system.
- Primary Contact will receive automated emails and reminders from the system, all reports will be added to this individual’s account, as well as our staff may reach out directly as needed.
- Primary Signatory will automatically receive any potential grant agreements or documents that may need signature.
- “Superintendent Certification”: If you are a partner without access to Superintendent, please provide a letter from your organization’s Executive Director or Board President.
- “Organization Documents”: If you believe you have not received funding from us before or have had any changes to your organization’s address, account information, etc., please upload a W9 Form and Vendor Profile Form found on the Fluxx grantee portal.

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For assistance using Fluxx, please contact: applications@nationalparks.org

Proposals are due no later than midnight (ET) Friday, June 17

G. Application Template

See below

H. Checklist

See page 10

NATIONAL PARK FOUNDATION'S PROPOSAL APPLICATION
2022-2023 OPEN OUTDOORS FOR KIDS GRANT PROGRAM

I. PARK/PARTNER CONTACT INFORMATION

- a. National Park Site or Organization Name
- b. NPS Project Contact
- c. Partner Project Contact (if applicable)

II. PROGRAM/PROJECT INFORMATION

- a. Program Title
Please provide a concise descriptive title that captures your project.
- b. Program Type *[drop down]*
 - i. Field Trip (in-person only)
 - ii. Distance Learning (online/live-virtual)
 - iii. Multiple Modalities (in-person and online combination)
- c. Program Abstract
One paragraph overview that describes the program.
- d. Program Description
Please provide a detailed description of the program, including your intention to conduct live, online, in-person or a combination of programming. Are you creating a new program, continuing an existing one? How does your program deliver what local teachers and students need now? Can you add strategies to bring intentionality to helping teachers and students revive and experience the healing power of parks to restore a sense of well-being?
- e. Program Audience
Please estimate number of students, teachers, and schools you hope to reach. Include partners who will help you engage audiences. Specify in person, distance or a hybrid modules approach to your 2022-23 program.
- f. Inclusion
What's your strategy for expanding Title I school engagement, as compared with previous years? If you plan to conduct distance programming, will you market to schools nationally? If not, why? How will you expand accessibility, both in person and via distance modules, for students who have experienced social disenfranchisement,

physical or language barriers? Do you plan to include women's history, indigenous perspectives or other inclusive narratives? If not, why?

g. Adaptation

How will your team monitor school participation in your OOK program and make changes to increase school engagement if you note lack of enrollment?

h. Desired Program Outcomes

*If this is your first OOK grant request, what do you hope to achieve? If you have received prior grants, what changes to your program will you make this year, based on what you learned last year? **If you had an OOK grant last year and intended to hire Seasonal staff or interns using the grant, were your plans hampered due to lack of availability? Please explain. Are there ways to fix this year?***

i. Project/Program Timeline

What are your major milestones? Please specify when activities will take place and what kinds of activities they are (in person, distance, hybrid modules). Feel free to attach your schedule as a Word or Excel document to the online application.

j. Supporting Multiple Modalities

Please describe the staffing and logistical needs to implement your program; what will staff roles be? How are you thinking of engaging interns, seasonal staff, volunteers, teacher corps, and other broader community engagement, to build capacity and conduct program activities (in-person, online, or multiple modalities).

- How many staff, interns, volunteers, etc. will be needed to conduct your activities (**if hiring was hampered last year, please explain how you may be able to work around that this year**) *[text field]*
- How many fourth-grade students do you anticipate the program to serve? *[text field]*
- How many elementary school students (excluding fourth graders) do you anticipate the program will serve? *[text field]*

III. **AMOUNT REQUESTED AND BUDGET**

a. Request Amount

*Please identify the total amount being requested and **how you will spend any roll over from last year.***

b. Project Budget Narrative

A budget may also be attached at the end of the application. Distinguish between costs for online and onsite programming.

- c. Checks Made Payable To
Please indicate amounts and to whom grant funds should be made payable (including the NPS unit, if applicable). You may indicate whether EFT or check payment is preferred, and please include mailing address for check. For each third party, NPF needs a W9 with the organization(s) (upload in attachments section).

IV. SUPERINTENDENT CERTIFICATION

All programs/projects that will occur at an NPS site MUST have Superintendent/Site Manager approval before submitting. By providing the information below & uploading a letter of support from the Superintendent/Site Manager, you are certifying that they approve of this application. If this does not apply to your program/project, please put N/A for the following questions.

Letters can be addressed to “National Park Foundation Programs & Partnerships team.”

- a. NPS Site or Office
- b. Name of NPS Superintendent or Program Manager Associated with this Application
- c. Title (i.e. Superintendent, Site Manager, Division Chief, etc.)
- d. Email of Superintendent/Program Manager

V. DOCUMENT UPLOADS

- Superintendent Letter (required)
- Budget
- Timeline
- W-9 Form
- Open-ended upload

H. CHECKLIST

Prior to submitting your online application, please use the following checklist to ensure that you have completed all elements of the proposal requirements:

- Budget (PDF). Sample template included below for convenience.
- A letter of support from Superintendent, Executive Director or equivalent.

- A letter of support from school partner or youth-serving organization.
- W-9 Form if directing funds to a partner organization/vendor.

Sample Budget Template <i>(Please round up to nearest \$)</i>				
Category/Line Item	Amount	Partner Contribution	Total NPF Ask	Comments
Staff /Interns (non FTE)				
Transportation				
Materials				
Other				
Totals				

Questions: Contact Karen Lee, Klee@nationalparks.org

An electronic copy of this RFP will be posted at www.nationalparks.org/grant-applications