



Strengthening Civics Education in Appalachian Ohio *Request for Proposal*

A Joint Grant Opportunity from the Longaberger Family Foundation and the *I'm a Child of Appalachia Fund*® of the Foundation for Appalachian Ohio

Informed and engaged citizens are essential to a strong democracy.

This grant opportunity will support educators and service providers in Appalachian Ohio as they implement civics education programs for K-12 students. Ideal programs will provide students with opportunities to build a knowledge base in subjects related to civics education, forge positive relationships with the self and wider world, and analyze different views to feel empowered to participate in civic life.

Civics Education: An Opportunity for Additional Investment

A shift in priorities to focus on STEM education and standardized testing has led to a decline in resources available to implement a robust civics education. According to an Educating for American Democracy study, the federal government spends on average \$50 per student annually in STEM education, compared to just 5 cents per year per student for civics education.¹

This shift has created a gap in knowledge of civics education, with a significant impact on low income and nonwhite students. On the 2018 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) civics exam, students who qualified for the National School Lunch Program scored 30 points below their upper and middle income counterparts.²

An effective civics education equips students with the knowledge, skills, and disposition necessary to become informed and engaged citizens. This grant opportunity seeks to support those efforts, while providing students and educators with resources to actively implement and practice citizenship skills within the classroom walls and beyond.

¹ <https://www.educatingforamericandemocracy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Educating-for-American-Democracy-Report-Excellence-in-History-and-Civics-for-All-Learners.pdf>

² https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/hgc_2014/#civics/gaps; <https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/civics/results/groups/>

Efforts to cultivate citizenship skills may include encouraging students to acquire a broad, deep knowledge base in subjects integral to robust citizenship; forge positive relationships with the self and the wider-world; and work to analyze different views and take action. These efforts can create a strong understanding of the civic infrastructure around us while providing a supportive community and an opportunity to implement and practice new knowledge.

The Opportunity

This grant opportunity encourages innovative ways to provide civics education opportunities to K-12 public school students, including, but not limited to:

- Acquiring a broad, deep knowledge base, leading to a strong understanding of how civic and democratic processes work as well as how to engage in these processes
 - Classroom instruction in history, civics, government, and other subjects under the umbrella of social studies;
 - Discussion of current events and issues of political and policy disagreement;
 - Media literacy by emphasizing verification skills used by fact checkers;
 - Support for technology, educational materials, media kits, and other tools that facilitate civics education;
 - Activities that engage critical thinking through issues related to civics education;
 - Experiential opportunities, including field trips, to observe the practice of citizenship activities first-hand.
- Forging positive relationships with the self and the wider world, enabling the creation of community
 - Providing opportunities to engage in service learning;
 - Student participation in school governance, meaning not just student council, but also participation in administrative decision-making, including participatory budgeting;
 - Resources to implement community service and service learning opportunities;
 - Engaging in deliberation and dialogue through facilitated conversations practicing empathetic discourse;
 - Opportunities to support and encourage character virtues in addition to performance virtues.
- Analyzing different views and taking action by creating opportunities to practice
 - Extracurricular activities like debate, student council, Model United Nations, mock trial, and multicultural student organizations as well as performing arts, photo and visual arts contests, and other activities that reinforce civic virtues or engage students in civics

content in a meaningful way while encouraging collaboration and teamwork;

- Resources to conduct voter registration, candidate meet and greets, debates, mock elections, visits and discussions with current elected officials at the federal, state, and local levels, and other citizen activities as appropriate, including service as a poll worker;
- Action civics where students use their knowledge to practice hands-on democracy activities based on the knowledge they've acquired;
- Projects that connect students with local officials by identifying a local challenge and providing the opportunity for students to develop, present, and implement potential solutions with local officials.

Eligibility

Open to K-12 public schools and nonprofit organizations serving K-12 students in the [32 Appalachian Ohio counties](#). Please note that while nonprofit and public organizations are eligible to apply, projects must be implemented directly with K-12 students in partnership with K-12 public schools.

Requests must be between \$500 and \$5,000. At least \$30,000 is available in funding.

Online applications open Friday, September 17, 2021 and must be submitted by close of business, Friday, October 29, 2021. Please access the online application at www.AppalachianOhio.org/Civics.

APPLICATION

Organizational Information

- Organization Name and address
- Organization Primary Contact and Request Primary Contact
- EIN
- Tax Status Documentation (IRS Decision Letter, Most Recent Audited Financials, IRS Public Entity Letter)
- How the applicant heard about this grant opportunity
- County(ies) served by the grant opportunity

Request/Project Information

- Project Title
- Total Project Budget and Amount Requested
- Project Narrative describing civic education initiative, how it will be implemented, and how it will positively impact civic behavior and civics education outcomes
- Itemized Project Budget
- Project Implementation Timeline
- Number of Students To Be Impacted

- Collaboration
 - Was the project developed with other organizations or local partners? Will it be implemented in partnership with other organizations or local partners?
- Project Continuation/Sustainability
 - How will this project lay the ground work for future years of civics education or how will materials be reused and repurposed in future years?
- Youth Engagement
 - Were youth engaged in the project development? If so, will youth be involved in project implementation or evaluation? Will youth be impacted by the program? What barriers prevent youth engagement?
- Evidence Based
 - On what best practices or lessons learned from other organizations doing similar work is this initiative based? What observations from your organization's work and mission are you using to develop this program?
- Capacity and Technical Assistance
 - What, if any, barriers do you face in applying for funding opportunities, including, but not limited to, state and federal grants
- Please provide building administrator approval/support for the described project.