



Illinois State Board of Education

100 North First Street • Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001
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James T. Meeks
Chairman

Tony Smith, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Education

September 16, 2015

TO: Eligible Applicants

FROM: Tony Smith, Ph.D.
State Superintendent of Education

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony Smith", written over the printed name and title.

Tatiana Gant
Executive Director, Illinois Arts Council

SUBJECT: **REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP):** FY2016 Arts and Foreign Language Implementation Assistance Grant

General Information

Eligible Applicants: School districts, public university laboratory schools approved by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), charter schools, and area vocational centers are eligible to apply.

Each applicant that received a previous planning grant under the Planning Assistance Grant Program is required to implement the program that was the focus of that planning effort (i.e., the arts or foreign language program the applicant developed under the planning grant). Recipients of such planning grants will be given priority consideration in the awarding of implementation grants under this RFP, although receipt of a planning grant is not a prerequisite for receipt of an implementation grant.

No grantee may receive more than one implementation grant for the arts and one for foreign language under this grant program. Applicants who have received an implementation grant for the arts and for foreign language are not eligible to apply for further grant awards under this program.

Grant Award: Annual grant awards will not exceed \$100,000 depending on the programmatic needs, size of district, and level of implementation proposed. Total amount of funding available for implementation grants in fiscal year 2016 will not exceed \$500,000.

Annual grant awards will be structured on a declining funding model. This provides an opportunity for each participating district to plan for sustaining their program with local funds after the completion of the anticipated three-year grant cycle. The *Fiscal Information* section of this RFP provides further information about the declining funding model. Amounts awarded in the second year will be approximately 75 percent of the original grant award, and the amounts awarded in the third year will be approximately 50 percent of the original grant award.

Grant Period: The grant period will begin no sooner than January 1, 2016, and will extend from the execution date of the grant until June 30, 2016. Two continuation periods are anticipated – July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017 (FY 2017) and July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018 (FY 2018). Funding in the subsequent years will be contingent upon a sufficient appropriation for the program and satisfactory progress in the preceding grant period.

Application Deadline: Mail one original plus two copies and provide an electronic copy on a compact disc (CD) or flash drive to Illinois State Board of Education, Attn: Linda King, College and Career Readiness Division, 100 North First Street, C-215, Springfield, Illinois 62777-0001, to ensure receipt no later than **4:30 p.m. on November 3, 2015.**

Proposals also may be hand-delivered to the following locations:

Springfield Office
Information Center
1st Floor
100 North First Street

Chicago Office
Reception Area
Suite 14-300
100 West Randolph Street

No late proposals, facsimile proposals, or electronic submissions will be accepted. Incomplete proposals will not be considered for funding.

Letter of Intent to Apply: Eligible applicants are encouraged to submit an electronic letter of intent to apply no later than October 13, 2015. The letter must include the following: subject area (arts or foreign language), the name and address of the applicant, and the name, telephone number, and email address of the contact person. This letter should be emailed to Linda King at lking@isbe.net.

Online Bidders' Forum: There will be an online interactive informational forum about the RFP designed to provide technical assistance to applicants as well as answer questions about the process. The date for this forum is Tuesday, October 6, 2015 at 1:30 p.m. Registration information will be posted at <http://www.isbe.net/arts-fl/default.htm>. The bidders' forum is optional. The application information will also remain available on the website until the application deadline.

Should the conditions of this RFP change as a result of this Online Bidders' Forum, the revised RFP will be posted at <http://www.isbe.net/arts-fl/default.htm>.

Changes to the RFP: Should changes to the RFP be made prior to the deadline, ISBE will post those changes to <http://www.isbe.net/arts-fl/default.htm>. Applicants are advised to check the site before submitting a proposal.

Contact Person: For more information on this RFP, contact Linda King at (217) 524-4832 or by email at lking@isbe.net.

Background and Program Specifications

Given the increasingly global nature of our society, the need for Americans to speak a variety of languages other than English is growing daily. Many smaller districts in rural areas, as well as some in urban and suburban areas, have experienced budget cuts that prevent them from offering adequate instruction in foreign languages. While foreign language is a required instructional component of the comprehensive curriculum offered at the high school level under ISBE administrative rules (23 Illinois Administrative Code 1.440(a)(5); <http://www.isbe.net/rules/archive/pdfs/oneark.pdf>), beginning language study at the high school level does not provide much time for students to learn to communicate effectively. To fully master a foreign language, students require carefully planned and well-sequenced learning opportunities that provide practice in using the language beginning at a younger age. A longer sequence of study would provide more opportunity for students to attain the ability and confidence necessary to interact fluently with native speakers in oral and written contexts. Unfortunately, budgetary restrictions make the implementation of such a curriculum in elementary grade levels rare.

The benefits of arts education are well-documented and have been acknowledged by the state of Illinois. Section 27-1 of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/27-1) identifies fine arts as one of the fundamental areas of learning and requires all school districts to "give priority in the allocation of resources, including funds, time allocation, personnel, and facilities, to fulfilling the primary purpose of schooling." Districts are required to establish learning objectives consistent with the Illinois Learning Standards for Fine Arts (http://www.isbe.net/ils/fine_arts/standards.htm) and to develop appropriate testing and assessment systems to determine the degree to which students are achieving the objectives. Also, 23 Illinois Administrative Code 1.430

and 1.440 require that each school district offers in all elementary and secondary schools a comprehensive curriculum that includes fine arts (<http://www.isbe.net/rules/archive/pdfs/oneark.pdf>).

Many schools and districts, however, have had to neglect some instructional areas due to budgetary concerns or increased concentration on English language arts, mathematics, and/or the sciences, as required under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). In other cases, fine arts programs, in particular, may have languished or been incorporated into classroom activities, rather than being offered as distinct courses taught by staff specifically certified to teach music or art, for example.

Section 2-3.65a of the School Code (105 ILCS 5/2-3.65a) authorizes ISBE and the Illinois Arts Council Agency (IACA) to provide grants to school districts and other eligible applicants for the purpose of supporting arts and foreign language education in schools, with an emphasis on ensuring that these areas become part of the school's core curriculum. The purpose of this RFP is to solicit proposals from eligible applicants that are seeking resources to implement and continue beyond the grant period programs in the fine arts (e.g., visual art, music, drama, dance) or foreign language designed to strengthen or expand the instruction currently being provided or to introduce foreign language instruction in circumstances where none is now available.

Each proposal for an Arts and Foreign Language Implementation Assistance Grant must address the following:

1. **Planning:** A comprehensive and focused planning effort conducted before a new program is implemented helps ensure that the program will effectively address the needs of the applicant's students and staff and facilitates successful implementation. Therefore, each applicant must describe the planning process used to design the program being proposed.

All applicants must conduct a planning process before submitting their proposals for implementation. Applicants that received a previous Arts and Foreign Language Planning Grant must implement the program addressed by that planning effort, and must use the implementation grant funds to support the specific program to which the planning grant pertained. Applicants that did not apply for or did not receive a previous planning grant must document a planning process that must include school administrators, teachers, and other relevant staff members, as well as parents, students, and community-based organizations with an interest in fostering the availability of fine arts or foreign language programming, as applicable.

Each applicant must submit as a component of its proposal an action plan outlining the goals and objectives of the program to be implemented, as determined through analysis of the applicant's curricular needs. Each action plan must contain evidence of the following:

- Curriculum alignment and evaluation of the proposed program to be implemented with the Illinois Learning Standards for Fine Arts or Foreign Language, as applicable;
 - Assessment and data collection activities to ascertain the growth of student skills and understanding, proposed numbers of students participating, and proposed time allocated during the school day to arts or foreign language instruction;
 - Proposed activities to build teaching capacity through staffing and professional development;
 - Community collaborations that can include partnering with relevant community organizations, businesses, government agencies, and parents;
 - Scheduling and infrastructure resources to be used, such as identifying time, space, materials, and equipment;
 - Consideration of district and/or school resource allocation and identification of potential resources necessary for program implementation and sustainability; and
 - Proposed activities to evaluate the program's impact on student achievement and school curriculum.
2. **Professional Development:** All professional development must be directly related to the proposed instructional program. Activities may include, but are not limited to, collaborative planning, curriculum alignment, and pedagogy. Sources for this professional development may include, but are not limited to, cultural organizations, linguistic organizations, teaching artists, and other qualified professional development providers.

3. **Resource Allocation:** Since many applicants lack sufficient resources to implement their proposed programs, it is essential that applicants consider leveraging district and/or school resources (i.e., human and financial) and/or acquiring other sources of revenue and support that will be necessary to implement and sustain the program over time.

In order for applicants to ascertain long-term implementation of the proposed program, applicants must anticipate providing an increasing level of support over the three-year period of the grant and beyond. Applicants should consider the steps necessary (e.g., ongoing assessments, progress reports, routine communication with the school board and superintendent) to ensure smooth and effective continuation of the program in each year of the grant.

4. **Evaluation:** Applicants must propose an evaluation plan that includes a detailed description of the methodology to be used and the quantitative and qualitative data to be collected to determine whether the program has been effective. Additionally, each grantee will be expected to participate in any state-level evaluation conducted by ISBE or its contractor.
5. **Reporting:** In addition to expenditure reports, each grantee will be required to submit a final performance report including an outline of the activities completed with grant funds, enrollment and participation trends, outcomes of activities related to objectives, and an action plan for future activities. This report form will be available at the end of the project period at <http://isbe.net/grants/html/arts-fl.htm> and will be due July 30, 2016.

Fiscal Information

For FY 2016, no more than \$500,000 is available for new Arts and Foreign Language Implementation Assistance Grants. Individual grant awards will vary depending on the programmatic needs, number of students involved, and the level of implementation proposed, but in no case shall a grant exceed \$100,000 per year.

The Arts and Foreign Language Implementation Assistance Grant is built upon a declining funding model, which means that during the course of the three-year funding cycle, the award amount will decrease while the district's match expectation will increase. This encourages the district to plan for sustaining the program with local funds beyond the life of the grant cycle. The amount allocated in Year 1 will establish the funding base of 100 percent. In Year 2, funding will decrease to 75 percent of the original award, and in Year 3, funding will decrease again to 50 percent of the original award.

Recipients of this grant award will be required to provide a match of cash and in-kind donations (e.g., materials, staff time beyond the regular workday, services that would otherwise be a cash expense). In any grant year, the in-kind donations match must not exceed 50 percent of the total match required. Applicants should propose a match based on the grant amount requested; however, the amount of the final match may vary depending on the total funding awarded as follows (refer to Attachment 7):

- Year 1, a match equal to 25 percent of the total grant received in FY 2016;
- Year 2, a match equal to 50 percent of the total grant received in FY 2017; and
- Year 3, a match equal to 100 percent of the total grant received in FY 2018.

Grant funds may be used for expenditures directly related to the delivery of the proposed instructional program, including salaries, professional development, curriculum planning and development, supplies and materials, and necessary technology or equipment, with the following provisions:

- No more than 5 percent of the grant award may be used for general administrative expenses;
- No more than 50 percent of the salaries of staff members who hold educator licensure and who are involved in the program may be paid out of funds under this grant program. Salaries of nonlicensed personnel will not be allowed;
- At least 10 percent of the grant award must be used for professional development of the licensed educators associated with the program, which may include the services of "teaching artists"; and

- Grant awards may be expended in connection with the utilization of community resources to the extent that these directly affect the delivery of instruction or the availability of resources for the instructional program.

Expenditures **may include**, but are not limited to, the following categories:

- General administrative expenses directly related to the program (no more than 5 percent of the grant award);
- Staff salaries and benefits (no more than 50 percent of grant award);
- Technology and equipment directly related to implementation of the proposed program;
- Supplies and materials related to the program;
- Professional development for licensed educators (must be at least 10 percent of the grant award);
- Travel for licensed educators directly related to the program (e.g., approved conferences, ISBE meetings, site visits to exemplary program in or out of state);
- Field trips (e.g., transportation, admission charges) that support the instructional program;
- Contracts with outside community organizations to provide resources for the program; and
- Substitute teachers to allow for release time of licensed educators to participate in services directly related to the program.

Funds made available under the Arts and Foreign Language Implementation Assistance Grant **may not** be used for the following purposes:

- Fundraising activities;
- Salaries of unlicensed personnel;
- Expenses for outside organizations or individuals and/or short-term projects that are not connected to the program being implemented and are not aligned to the Illinois Learning Standards; and
- College or university tuition.

Proposal Format

Each proposal must be submitted in the format outlined below. Please use the following as a checklist in assembling your completed proposal.

- _____ **1. Cover Page (Attachment 1):** This must be signed by the school district superintendent or official authorized to submit the proposal. One copy must be submitted with an original signature (i.e., no facsimile, photocopied, or electronic signatures).
- _____ **2. Proposal Abstract (Attachment 2):** Briefly describe in the order listed the (a) overall goals, (b) objectives and activities, and (c) sustainability plans of the project. This should not exceed one page.
- _____ **3. Arts or Foreign Language Plan:** Attach a copy of either (1) the action plan completed with the grant previously received from the Planning Assistance Grant Program, or (2) if no previous planning grant was received, then the action plan regarding the arts or foreign language program for which an implementation grant is being sought that the district and/or school completed within the last two years. (See the *Background and Program Specification* of this RFP for specific plan requirements.)
- _____ **4. Proposal Narrative (Attachments 3 and 4):** Use the attached form to respond to each of the following in the order in which they are presented below. These responses should address the three-year plan for implementation. Information submitted in Attachment 3 should not exceed two pages.
 - A. Need (Attachment 3).** Describe the planning used to determine the need for the program and the program design. Include evidence that the process meets the requirements listed under

“Background and Program Specifications,” pages 2-5. Using appropriate documentation, describe the need for the proposed arts or foreign language program to be implemented, to include:

- i. How the need was determined;
- ii. The status of the current program (e.g., staffing, equitable access, nonexistent programs, changes in recent years); and
- iii. Funding limitations that the district is currently facing.

B. Proposed Program (Attachment 3). Present an overview of the program to be implemented, responding to each of the following in the order presented below.

- i. Indicate specific areas of instruction of the arts or foreign language (e.g., visual arts, vocal music, French) to be offered;
- ii. List the full official name of the schools to be involved and provide a rationale for why each was chosen;
- iii. Indicate the expected program outcomes for each year of the grant (e.g., curriculum, staffing, student achievement);
- iv. Describe how the program to be implemented will improve equitable access to comprehensive, standards-based arts or foreign language instruction for those students to be served;
- v. List the licensed educators who will implement the program. Describe the professional development to be provided and how it will meet the needs of licensed educators who will be working with the program; and
- vi. Detail the district and/or school resources (i.e., human and fiscal) that will be available to support program implementation.

C. Sustainability Portfolio (Attachment 4). Present a portfolio of available district resources and funding from outside sources for which commitments may be secured so that the program can be sustained in future years. Describe the person responsible and the steps that will be taken to ensure that continuation of the program in Years 2 and 3 will be done in an effective and efficient manner.

Use the form provided to identify sources of support to sustain program activities, and **attach letters from local cultural or linguistic organizations, business partners, parent organizations, regional philanthropic organizations, and other private funding sources that are committed to providing funds and other resources to help implement and sustain the project.** Each letter must be signed by the official authorized to commit the resources on behalf of the entity and include a brief description of the support that will be provided.

- _____ **5. Objectives and Activities (Attachment 5):** Use the form provided to list the objectives and activities being proposed for the three-year grant period (i.e., FY 2016, FY 2017, and FY 2018) in a time-specific format and specifying the year(s) in which each will occur. All objectives must include an explanation of the activity, a timeline for each (with start and completion dates), and person or persons responsible. (If you have more than four objectives, please download and use additional pages of this attachment, as necessary.)
- _____ **6. Evaluation Design (Attachment 6):** Use the form provided to describe in detail the methodology to be used and quantitative and qualitative data to be collected to determine whether the program has been effective.
- _____ **7. Budget Summary and Payment Schedule (Attachment 7):** This must be submitted on the form provided and signed by the district superintendent or official authorized to submit the proposal. The Payment Schedule must be based on the projected date of expenditures and be in accordance with ISBE's *State and Federal Grant Administration Policy and Fiscal Requirements and Procedures* handbook found at http://www.isbe.net/funding/pdf/fiscal_procedure_handbk.pdf. (Refer specifically to Section C: *Procedures for Administration of Grants.*)

- _____ **8. Budget Summary Breakdown (Attachment 8):** This must include descriptions of the anticipated expenditures, correlated to the line items set forth in the Budget Summary.
- _____ **9. Match Detail (Attachment 9):** Using the form provided, indicate the amount of the match for each year of the grant (i.e., FY 2016, FY 2017, and FY 2018) and the proportion of cash and in-kind donations. For in-kind donations, describe in detail the nature of the donation being provided and its estimated value. For any match provided by an outside source, indicate whether the commitment is pending or confirmed. (See the *Fiscal Information* Section of this RFP.)
- _____ **10. Certifications and Assurances (Attachments 10 and 11):** Each applicant is required to submit the certification forms attached. These must be signed by the official legally authorized to submit the proposal and to bind the applicant to its contents.
 - A.** Program Specific Terms of the Grant (Attachment 10)
 - B.** Certifications and Assurances and Standard Terms of the Grant (Attachment 11)

Criteria for Review and Approval of Proposals

Proposals will be reviewed according to the criteria listed below. The maximum number of points a proposal may earn is 100. It is the intention of ISBE and IACA to fund as many programs as possible that show substantive and sustaining interest in supporting arts or foreign language instruction.

A panel of experts familiar with arts or foreign language programming will evaluate proposals. ISBE and the IACA reserve the right to negotiate budget amounts and program activities based on readers' comments and staff review, and to award grants on the basis of fair and equitable distribution of programs throughout the state. Please note: The decision of the State Superintendent and the IACA Executive Director is final, and no appeals of funding decisions will be considered.

Selection criteria and point values are as follows:

- 1. **Quality of the Plan** (40 points)
 - A. The proposal demonstrates that the program to be implemented is based on information derived from the planning process.
 - B. The proposal identifies the aspects of the program that cannot currently be implemented in the absence of grant funding and demonstrates that plans exist to ensure the availability or redeployment of resources to sustain the program with declining reliance on state funding.
 - C. The proposal demonstrates that teachers with the appropriate educator licensure are available to deliver instruction in the program and that their specific needs are reflected in the professional development that has been chosen.
 - D. The proposal demonstrates that the affected students will have systematic access to relevant linguistic, artistic, or cultural resources as an integral part of their participation in the instructional program.
- 2. **Sustainability** (30 points)

The proposal presents a portfolio of available local resources for which commitments have been secured so that the program can be sustained in future years when no further state funding will be provided.
- 3. **Need** (20 points)
 - A. The proposal describes the status of the applicant's instructional programs in the arts or foreign languages, as applicable, and demonstrates that students' access to educational opportunities in this curricular area is limited to an undesirable degree.
 - B. The proposal demonstrates that other sources of funding are limited to such an extent that the applicant is unable to conduct or expand the program as proposed without funding from this grant.

4. **Cost-Effectiveness** (10 points)

The scope of the proposed activities is reasonable in light of the amount of funding to be provided, and the project will be cost-effective considering the number of students to be served.

Following the notification of grant awards, an applicant may request copies of reviewer comments by contacting the division responsible for issuing the RFP. (See "Contact Person" under "General Information".)