

AZGFD Heritage K-12 Small Grant Program

OVERVIEW

The goal of this grant program is to provide financial resources (up to \$2000) to Arizona teachers to help implement quality wildlife education in their classrooms.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Any education professional who is currently operating within the state of Arizona. This includes employees of the federal government, any federal department or agency; Indian tribes; all departments, agencies, boards, commissions and political subdivisions of the state of Arizona; counties; school districts; charter schools; cities; towns; all municipal corporations; and any non-profit group which meets the Internal Revenue Service definition of a 501(c) organization. However, preference will be given to applicants who are current K-12 teachers within the formal public classroom education environment.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

In order to be eligible to receive funding, a project must fit at least one of the criteria below:

Criterion 1: Prior AZGFD Educator Workshop Participant Projects

The purpose of this criterion is to provide funds for educators who have attended one of the Department's educator professional development (PD) opportunities within the past 3 years. Eligible PD opportunities include in-person workshops, conference presentations, and live and archived webinars all hosted by Department education staff. Wildlife education staff must confirm participant eligibility. Funds must be used for the development and/or implementation of resources or programs directly related to the PD attended.

Criterion 2: Future AZGFD Educator Workshop Participation

The purpose of this criterion is to provide funds to help offset costs for educators who plan on attending a future PD opportunity offered by the Department. Eligible PD opportunities include in-person workshops and conference presentations hosted by Department education staff or volunteers. Wildlife education staff must confirm PD eligibility. Funds can only be used to cover required costs incurred as a direct result of attending the PD, including substitute teacher time, admission/parking fees, lodging and travel. In addition, districts or organizations that will be receiving customized PD from Department wildlife education staff can use funds to provide participant resources related to that PD. Applicant must clearly describe how they and their students will benefit from this experience.

Criterion 3: AZGFD Educational Partnerships

The purpose of this criterion is to improve education centered around Department activities and projects. Funds will be provided to educators that develop and carryout education directly related to existing Department projects. These projects could include (but are not limited to) biological studies, research projects, education programs and citizen science opportunities. A letter (or email) of support from the Department staff involved in the project must be included with the application.

Criterion 4: Teacher-designed Field Experiences

The purpose of this criterion is to provide funds for classroom teachers who have developed a unique and original educational opportunity that gets students into nature to explore habitats and wildlife firsthand, at one or more outdoor settings located throughout and within Arizona. Priority will be given to projects that involve students in hands-on problem solving or scientific practices. Funds should not be used to cover costs for established programs hosted by other organizations.

GRANT CYCLE AND DEADLINE

The grant cycle follows the Arizona state fiscal year (July - June). For the current fiscal year funding cycle, there can be up to three distinct deadlines: September 1, January 1 and May 1. Information will be posted and available on the Department's website at least 6 weeks prior to the first available deadline. All deadlines cover the same grant cycle. If applications come in after the September or January deadline, then they will automatically be moved to the next deadline date and the applicant will be notified. In addition, all three deadlines utilize the same pool of money. If all available money is awarded during an earlier deadline, then the grant cycle will close and all remaining deadlines will no longer be valid. Information will be posted on the Department's website indicating that the grant cycle is closed.

AVAILABLE FUNDS

A total of \$32,000 is available during this grant cycle. This money is provided by the Arizona Game and Fish Department's annual allocation of Arizona lottery Heritage funding.

APPLICATIONS

Applications are completed online and must be submitted by 11:59pm on the date of the deadline. To complete the application, visit

<https://www.azgfd.com/wildlife/heritagefund/program/k-12-small-grants/>.

APPLICATION SCORING

Grant applications will be scored using the scoring rubric found in the materials accompanying the application on the website.

All grant applications will be initially reviewed by the Department's wildlife education coordinator for eligibility (first row on the scoring rubric). All projects that strongly meet the eligibility criteria (a score of 4 on the rubric) will advance to the scoring committee automatically. Any projects scoring a 2 may be advanced if there appears to be a low number of applications. A score of 0 is not eligible and will not be scored by the committee.

Three Department staff or representatives (at least two of whom work in the Education Branch) will individually score each of the eligible applications using the scoring rubric. Scores from the three reviewers will be averaged to determine the final score. Applications must receive an average score of 18 points or more to qualify for funding. If more projects qualify than there is money to award, all projects will be rank ordered by score and funds will be distributed from highest to lowest until all available money is awarded. In the case of a tie, the scoring team can meet to discuss appropriate funding options. The final scoring team recommendations will be forwarded to the Department's Director and/or Deputy Director for

final approval. The Arizona Game and Fish Commission may officially confirm scoring results. Once the results are official, award recipients will be notified.

RECIPIENT REQUIREMENTS

All grant recipients will receive an email notification of their award, along with a grant contract outlining specific details and conditions, within four weeks of the deadline. They must reply to the email acknowledging the award and the conditions within three days and the contract must be returned within two weeks, otherwise the offer will be nullified. Award funding will be available within four weeks of the award acknowledgement being received by the Department.

All grant recipients must spend the award within 12 months of receiving the money. It must be spent as stated in the original application and/or the conditions outlined in the grant contract. A final report of spending and project success (including number of students benefited by the project) must be submitted at the completion of the project but no later than 18 months after the award notification was sent. This report will be submitted via an online form provided by the Department.

Applicants can only receive one grant per grant cycle. Successful grant recipients will not be eligible for another AZGFD Heritage K-12 Small Grant until all outstanding grant requirements are fulfilled in good standing.