

Civic Education Grant - We the People

The Vermont Agency of Education (AOE) invites SUs/SDs the opportunity to complement the regular high school curriculum by providing students an innovative course of instruction on the history and principles of U.S. constitutional democracy through the [Center for Civic Education's We the People](#) program. This short duration competitive grant opportunity will award three proposals of \$10,000.00 each.

Application Due Date: November 15, 2019

Anticipated Grant Duration: December 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

Number of Awards: three awards at \$10,000.00 each

For additional information, contact:

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Vermont Agency of Education

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Montpelier, VT 05620-2501

Civic Education Grant Application

I. Introduction

In order to provide Vermont students the experience of participating in an engaging and academically-rich civic education curriculum, the AOE is offering a competitive grant opportunity to provide SUs /SDs the opportunity to complement the regular high school curriculum by providing students an innovative course of instruction on the history and principles of U.S. constitutional democracy through the [Center for Civic Education's We the People](#) program. *We the People* allows students to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of constitutional principles and have opportunities to evaluate, take, and defend positions on relevant historical and contemporary issues as they 'testify' in simulated Congressional hearings.

A research team from Georgetown University has conducted independent studies of *We the People* that have been confirmed by the U.S. Department of Education's What Works Clearinghouse, which includes the highest standards for research scholarship. The team found that *We the People* students scored significantly higher on tests of both civic knowledge and civic dispositions than their peers. These dispositions include (1) respect for the rule of law, (2) political attentiveness, (3) civic duty, (4) community involvement, (5) commitment to government service, and (6) the norms of political efficacy and political tolerance. <https://www.civiced.org/wtp-the-program>. Additional information and studies can be found at www.civiced.org/research.

The intent of this grant is to provide Vermont students with an engaging civic education opportunity which allows for authentic performance assessment, has an evidence base to show enhanced student civic dispositions and shares with the community a Vermont focus on civic education.

This grant will:

- a. Fund a classroom set of *We the People* textbooks/ebooks for the teaching of the 6-unit *We the People* civics course of instruction during the 2019-2020 school year where the classroom teacher agrees to have a class compete in the state-level hearing, and nationals if selected;
- b. Fund transportation and cover substitute teacher costs for a class of students to compete in a central Vermont location, should more than one Vermont school choose to participate; and
- c. Subsidize the Vermont state team and "wild card", if selected, to compete in Washington, D.C. in April 2020. (approx. cost of \$1200 per student)

Through a competitive grant process, awards will be granted to SU/SDs that shows the greatest promise for developing a *We the People* high school support program. Each grant recipient will:

1. Commit to student learning through the hearing process(es);
2. Collaborate with the Vermont *We the People* coordinator at the AOE, and communicate the status of goals and deliverables on a monthly basis; and
3. Develop a sustainability plan for *We the People* to continue beyond the allotted grant period at the receiving school.

The total amount available for this grant opportunity is \$30,000. Three applications will be awarded. Grant applications will be reviewed by the Agency of Education after the November 15, 2019 application deadline. Approved grants may be fully or partially funded. The final award will be determined by the reviewers.

II. Background

On January 29, 2019, H.R.849 was introduced into the House of Representatives with the aim of amending a 1965 education act by increasing civic education in public schools. Congress enumerated the following as support for this bill:

Congress finds the following:

- (1) The dearth of civics lessons available to students across the United States has helped to foster a political climate that is deeply partisan and divided.
- (2) Polarized party politics in the United States has fractured public morale in our institutions and has created an environment in which people are less likely to be well-informed on the current state of affairs and to participate in the political process.
- (3) According to the Annenberg Constitution Day Civics Survey conducted by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania—
 - (A) in 2018, only 32 percent of people in the United States surveyed were capable of naming all 3 branches of Government, while 33 percent of Americans were not able to name any of the branches of government;
 - (B) in 2018, 30 percent of people in the United States surveyed knew that the Senate is in charge of Supreme Court nominee confirmations; and
 - (C) in 2017, 37 percent could not name any of the rights guaranteed under the First Amendment.

(4) In 2014, only 23 percent of eighth graders were found to have performed at or above the proficient level on the National Assessment of Educational Progress civics exam conducted by the National Center of Education Studies.

(5) A lack of knowledge on the basics of the structure of our democratic republic creates an increasingly ill-prepared electorate which overtime has, and will continue to, contribute to a weakened democracy.

Vermont's lens of proficiency-based learning, personalization and student agency leads to the point of view that civic proficiency can successfully be attained through means beyond a multiple-choice test. The recently adopted College, Career and Civic Life C3 State Standards for Social Studies (C3) focuses on three Dimensions -- inquiry, evidence and taking action, in addition to the dimension of testable content knowledge. These three areas allow for the development of transferable skills and make learning engaging, as students "make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world" (C3).

III. Vermont Agency of Education Priorities

This competitive grant will support a project that:

1. Demonstrates sufficient capacity to manage a *We the People* high school program;
2. Identifies how this grant is a complement to, and enhances, the school's current focus on civic education;
3. Includes a plan for implementation, monitoring and sustainability within the high school and/or SU/SD.

IV. Project Award and Timeline

The grant period is projected to begin on December 2019 and expire on June 30, 2020 with the expectation that program objectives are met and all reporting and monitoring requirements are successfully fulfilled. The grantee is expected to provide a plan, timeline, and budget request for the identified grant activity period.

Timeline

Grant Application Released: October 15, 2019

Application Deadline: November 15, 2019

Anticipated Grant Duration: December 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

Number of Awards: Three grants will be awarded.

V. Application Requirements

The narrative sections of the application must be double-spaced, and the font must not be smaller than 12-point and **shall not exceed 10 pages. Please use the templates provided in the appendices for the grant narrative, budget and budget justification, and contact information.** Each application must contain the following sections:

1. Grant Narrative (See Appendix A for Grant Narrative Template.):

- a. Project Description and Justification: A detailed description of the Civic Education program that includes:
 - i. The rationale/data behind this project;
 - ii. The intended civic outcomes for students;
 - iii. The number of students that will be served;
 - iv. Intended strategies for communication with and among the *We the People* coordinator at the AOE, and any stakeholders;
 - v. Strategies to sustain this civic education program through on-going initiatives; and
 - vi. A description of the measures that will be used to determine successful implementation of the program and student outcomes.
- b. Scope and Sequence:
 - i. **Project Goals, Plan, Timeline, and Benchmarks**: Provide a clear description of goals, an achievable plan and timeline, and monthly project benchmarks. This scope and sequence must be developed for the time period between December 2019 and June 30, 2020.

2. Budget and Budget Justification: (See Appendix B for the Budget and Budget Justification Template)

- a. Include a detailed budget for up to \$10,000; and
- b. Provide a budget justification that is clearly tied to the scope and sequence of the project.

3. Contact Information: (See Appendix C for Contact Information Templates.)

- a. Name, address, phone number, and email information for Lead Grant Contact and Business Manager. (Please see Appendices A and B.)

4. Evaluation to be submitted by July 15, 2020:

- a. Project Evidence and Final Evaluation Plan: A detailed description of how the project goals were met, measures of success, as well as any challenges that were encountered. Additionally, the final evaluation will include:
 - i. An explanation for how this work will be sustained.

Application Submission and Review

- A. **Submission:** Applicants must submit an original copy signed by an authorized institutional official to martha.deiss@vermont.gov at the Vermont Agency of Education. Electronic signatures will be accepted. To be considered for funding, original signed applications must be received at the Vermont Agency of Education by 4:00 PM on November 15, 2019. Applications submitted by mail or hand-delivered should be sent to:

Martha Deiss
Student Pathways
Vermont Agency of Education
1 National Life Drive, Davis 5
Montpelier VT 05620-2501

VII: The Review Process

A review panel will evaluate the eligible applications in accordance with the required application components.

Criteria	Points
Project Description and Justification	40
Scope and Sequence	35
Budget and Budget Justification	25

Score	Scoring Guide: Criteria are awarded a score of 1 to 20, with 20 being the highest. We offer the following as a guide to assist you.
16-20 = Excellent	The proposal demonstrates the highest level of thinking, capacity or impact. The content of the responses is exemplary in this particular criteria area and could be an example to others.
11-15 = Good	Exhibits ideas that will affect positive change. While the criteria are not fully addressed, the responses are thoughtful and striving for effectiveness.
6-10 = Fair	Gaps are apparent. Criteria are not addressed fully. Responses lack detail.
0-5 = Poor	Weaknesses are apparent in the criteria; the question is not addressed, or the logic is faulty.

The Agency reserves the right to award in full or in part, to reject any and all applications in whole or in part, and to waive technical defects, irregularities or omissions if, in its judgement, the best interest of students would be served. After receiving the application, the Agency reserves the right not to award a grant, to negotiate specific grant amounts and to select certain grantees regardless of points awarded as part of the process to meet federal requirements or State Board of Education priorities.

VIII. Award Administration

- A. Notification of the Award:** The Lead Contact will be notified of the status of their application within two weeks after the application deadline.

- B. Reporting Requirements:** The Lead Contact will provide quarterly updates on progress to a designated staff person at the Agency of Education.

Appendix A: Grant Narrative Template

The narrative sections of the application must be double-spaced, and the font must not be smaller than 12-point and **shall not exceed 10 pages**. Each application must contain the following sections:

- a. **Project Description and Justification** (40 Points): A detailed description of the professional learning that includes:
1. The rationale/data behind this project.
 2. The intended civic outcomes for students.
 3. Intended strategies for communication with and among the WTP coordinator, AOE staff, and any stakeholders;
 4. An explanation of how this civic education program could be sustained through on-going initiatives; and
 5. A description of the measurements that will be used to determine how the project is progressing towards civic education goals within the receiving school.

Project Description and Justification:

- b. **Scope and Sequence:** (35 Points) This scope and sequence must be developed for the time period between December 16, 2019 and June 30, 2020.

- Project Goals, Plan, Timeline, Participants, and Deliverable Products (see below):**
- Provide a clear description of goals, including participants;
 - Include an achievable plan with supporting activities and timeline; and
 - Identify monthly project deliverables

Scope and Sequence:

Timeline	Goal/Purpose	Description of Activity	Participants	Deliverable Product
<i>Example: December</i>	<i>Student learning/hearing preparation</i>	<i>Order textbooks/ebooks</i>	<i>Teacher of record and business manager</i>	<i>Student learning/assigning of units</i>

Appendix B: Budget and Budget Justification

Budget Template: This form is a **required element** of the grant application. Justification for each of the categories shall be included in the **budget narrative** portion of the application. The funding request can be up to \$10,000.

Functions	Salaries (100)	Employees Benefits (200)	Professional and Technical Services (300) Consultants Contracts	Other Purchased Services (500) Travel Printing	Supplies (600) Food Books Periodicals	Miscellaneous Expenditures (800) Subgrants, Dues, and Fees	Total
2213 - Instructional Staff Training							
2219 - Other Improvement of Instruction Services							
2290 - Other Support Services - Instructional Staff							

Functions	Salaries (100)	Employees Benefits (200)	Professional and Technical Services (300) Consultants Contracts	Other Purchased Services (500) Travel Printing	Supplies (600) Food Books Periodicals	Miscellaneous Expenditures (800) Subgrants, Dues, and Fees	Total
2715- Field Trips (Education related)							
2901-Other Support Services							
Total							

Appendix C: Contact Information

Superintendent

Institution or Organization	
Name	
Title	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	
Fax	
Signature	

Lead Grant Contact

Institution or Organization	
Name	
Title	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	
Fax	
Signature	

Business Manager

Institution or Organization	
Name	
Title	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	
Fax	
Signature	