Fall 2019 Equity Literacy Grant Application

# Introduction

The Agency of Education (AOE) has engaged in multiple initiatives to develop an equity framework for education at the state level. Since beginning our efforts, the AOE has taken a multi-faceted approach -- from the ESSA State Plan development process, to an AOE-wide series of implicit bias trainings for all staff, to developing an Equity Lens Tool by which we examine statute, policy and guidelines we develop to ensure we surface equity gaps. As part of this multi-faceted effort, the AOE also completed the [Supporting Educational Equity (SEE) project](https://education.vermont.gov/documents/summary-of-outcomes-supporting-educational-equity-see-project) – a project whose goals were to ascertain what classroom level and systemic improvements are needed to fully leverage the equity-related changes in Vermont’s ESSA State Plan. Educators who participated in the project made many recommendations, including that Vermont’s PK-12 educators have increased opportunities for professional learning as it relates to equity literacy. In July 2019, the AOE awarded seven Equity Literacy grants to thirteen Vermont school districts and supervisory unions across the state. These grants, totaling nearly $200,000, are being used to address equity gaps within the participating school communities by providing professional learning opportunities which address equity literacy of both educators and students. It also aligns with Governor Scott’s priority of protecting Vermont’s most vulnerable populations, as well as the legislature’s 2019 passing of [Act 1 (H3)](https://legislature.vermont.gov/Documents/2020/Docs/ACTS/ACT001/ACT001%20As%20Enacted.pdf).

Equity literacy is defined “. . . as the skills and dispositions that enable us to recognize, respond to and redress (i.e., correct for) conditions that deny some students access to the educational opportunities enjoyed by their peers. Equity literacy also describes the skills and dispositions that allow us to create and sustain equitable and just learning environments for all families and students.” [(Gorski, 2014)](https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/imagining-equity-literacy)

In Vermont, equity literacy is essential for creating learners with a global mindset; in a small state, with pockets of diversity, there needs to be a concerted effort to open windows to the world. Additionally, an equity literacy perspective allows educators, students and the community to see and respond to situations where educational inequity may occur.

A deliberate effort to improve equity literacy of both educators and students will protect Vermont’s most vulnerable populations by reducing disparities and addressing inequities that exist in our state related to race, disability status, poverty status, gender, sexuality, English Learner status, religion, cultural literacy, immigrant status, and refugee status.

To support our schools and educators in this collective effort, the AOE has made available short-term funds for a second round of competitive grants to encourage school systems to engage in professional learning opportunities that will lay the foundation for educators to develop and implement strategies to improve equity literacy in their systems. Competitive awards will be granted to SU/SDs that show the greatest promise for positive change. **Those that create partnerships regionally will be prioritized.**

Due to the shortened timeline for these grants, applicants may apply for funding up to $25,000. The total amount of funding for this grant is $100,000. Grant applications will be reviewed by the Agency of Education after the January 15 application deadline. Approved grants may be fully or partially funded. The final award will be determined by the reviewers.

# Vermont Agency of Education Priorities

This grant will support projects that:

1. Provide professional learning opportunities to educators to improve equity literacy and protect Vermont’s most vulnerable populations by reducing disparities and addressing inequities that exist in our state related to race, disability status, poverty status, gender/gender identity, sexuality, English learner status, religion, cultural literacy, immigrant status, and refugee status;
2. Directly address topics of race, disability status, poverty status, gender, sexuality, English Learner status, religion, cultural literacy, immigrant status, and refugee status;
3. Are led by an interdisciplinary K-12 or secondary school/CTE grant leadership team ideally composed of administrators, staff, students, and community members;
4. Use data such as free and reduced lunch, equity gaps, vulnerable populations, surveys, expulsion rates, etc. to inform the grant request;
5. Encourage regional SU/SD partnerships;
6. Identify a reasonable timeline for deliverables;
7. Document learning over time in order to share information with other SU/SDs; and
8. Include a plan for sustainability.

# Project Award and Timeline

Grants will begin in December and expire on June 30, 2020 with the expectation that program objectives are met and all reporting and monitoring requirements are successfully fulfilled*.* Grantees are expected to provide a plan, timeline, and budget request for the identified grant activity period.

**Timeline:**

Grant Application Released: October 4, 2019

Application Deadline: January 15, 2020

Grantees Announced: January 24, 2020

Anticipated Grant Duration: February 14, 2020 – June 30, 2020

Number of Awards: Multiple awards are anticipated.

# 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.):**
   1. Project Description and Justification: A detailed description of the professional learning that includes:
      1. The rationale/data behind this project;
      2. The intended equity literacy outcomes for educators;
      3. The anticipated number of educators who will be served;
      4. Intended strategies for communication with and among the school(s), AOE staff, and any stakeholders;
      5. Connections to the Continuous Improvement Plan;
      6. An explanation of how the professional learning will be integrated into school systems and sustained through on-going initiatives; and
      7. A description of the measurements that will be used to determine how the project is progressing towards your equity literacy goals for educators.
   2. Partnerships: Partnerships that include multiple SUs/SDs will be prioritized. A detailed description of the partnerships that includes:
      1. **At least one secondary school,** but ideally K-12 systems;
      2. A description of how partnering will enable you to meet intended outcomes; and
      3. **Clearly defined roles** and **responsibilities** of partners
   3. Scope and Sequence:
      1. **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 16, 2019 and June 30, 2020.
2. **Budget and Budget Justification: (See Appendix B for the Budget and Budget Justification Template)**
3. Include a detailed budget for up to $25,000; and
4. Provide a budget justification that is clearly tied to the scope and requirements of the project.
5. **Contact Information: (See Appendix C for Contact Information Templates.)**
6. Name, address, phone number, and email information for Lead Grant Contact, all participating Superintendents, and Business Manager. (Please see Appendices A and B.)
7. **Evaluation to be submitted by July 15, 2020:**
8. Project Evidence and Final Evaluation Plan: A detailed description of how the project goals were met, as well as any challenges that were encountered. Additionally, the final evaluation will include:

i. An explanation of how the partnership functioned including strengths and challenges; and

ii. An explanation for how this work will be sustained.

# Application Submission and Review

* + - 1. **Submission:** Applicants must submit an original copy signed by an authorized institutional official to Pat Fitzsimmons via email ([pat.fitzsimmons@vermont.gov](mailto:pat.fitzsimmons@vermont.gov)) at the Vermont Agency of Education. Electronic signatures will be accepted.
         1. To be considered for funding, signed applications must be received at the Vermont Agency of Education by 4:00 PM on January 15, 2019. Applications submitted by mail or hand-delivered should be sent to:

Pat Fitzsimmons

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. (For support, please see Appendix D.)

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| **Criteria** | **Points** |
| Project Description and Justification | 40 |
| Partnerships | 20 |
| Scope and Sequence | 20 |
| Budget and Budget Justification | 20 |

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| **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

1. **Notification of the Award:** The SU/SD designee will be notified of the status of their application within three weeks after the application deadline.
2. **Reporting Requirements:** The Leadership Team and/or SU/SD designee 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:

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| **Grant Narrative Template** |
| 1. **Project Description and Justification** (40 Points): A detailed description of the professional learning that includes:  * The rationale/data behind this project; * The intended equity literacy outcomes for educators; * The anticipated number of educators who will be served; * Intended strategies for communication with and among the school(s), AOE staff, and any stakeholders; * Connections to the Continuous Improvement Plan; * An explanation of how the professional learning will be integrated into school systems and sustained through on-going initiatives; and * A description of the measurements that will be used to determine how the project is progressing towards your equity literacy goals for educators. |
| **Project Description and Justification**: |
| 1. **Partnerships** (20 Points): Partnerships will be prioritized. A detailed description of the partnerships that includes:  * **At least one secondary school,** but ideally K-12 systems; * A description of how partnering will enable you to meet intended outcomes; and * **Clearly defined roles** and **responsibilities** of partners. |
| **Partnerships:** |
| 1. **Scope and Sequence:** (20 Points) This scope and sequence must be developed for the time period between December 16, 2019 and June 30, 2020.  * **Project Goals, Plan, Timeline, and Benchmarks:**    + Provide a clear description of goals;   + Include an achievable plan and timeline; and   + Identify monthly project benchmarks. |

**Scope and Sequence:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Timeline** | **Goal/Purpose** | **Description of**  **Activity** | **Participants** | **Deliverable/**  **Product** |
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## 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 $25,000.

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| **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 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **UCOA Function** | **Function Name** | **Function Description** |
| **2213** | **Instructional Staff Training** | Instructional Staff Training. Activities associated with the professional development and training of instructional personnel. These include such activities as in-service training (including mentor teachers), workshops, conferences, demonstrations, courses for college credit (tuition reimbursement), and other activities related to the ongoing growth and development of instructional personnel. Training that supports the use of technology for instruction should be included in this code (states may establish a sub-object code for specific tracking of technology-related training costs). The incremental costs associated with providing substitute teachers in the classroom (while regular teachers attend training) should be captured in this function code. All costs should be charged to this code regardless of whether training services are provided internally or purchased from external vendors. It should be noted that the salary of a teacher who is attending training would still be reported in function 1000. |
| **2219** | **Other Improvement of Instruction Services** | Other Improvement of Instruction Services. Activities for improving instruction other than those classified above. |
| **2290** | **Other Support Services - Instructional Staff** | Other Support Services—Instructional Staff. Services supporting the instructional staff not properly classified elsewhere in the 2200 series. (Used with all programs 100–900.) |

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| **Object** | **Object Code Name** | **Object Code Description** |
| **100** | **Personal Services - Salaries** | Amounts paid to both permanent and temporary school district employees, including personnel substituting for those in permanent positions. This includes gross salary for personal services rendered while on the payroll of the school district. (Used with all functions except 5000 Debt Service.) |
| **200** | **Personal Services - Employee Benefits** | Amounts paid by the school district on behalf of employees (amounts not included in gross salary, but in addition to that amount). Such payments are fringe benefit payments and, although not paid directly to employees, nevertheless are part of the cost of personal services. (Used with all functions except 5000 Debt Service.) |
| **300** | **Purchased Professional and Technical Services** | Services that by their nature can be performed only by persons or firms with specialized skills and knowledge. Although a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided. Included are the services of architects, engineers, auditors, dentists, medical doctors, lawyers, consultants, teachers, and accountants. It is recommended that a separate account be established for each type of service provided to the school district. Services purchased from another school district or from other government sources should be coded to one of the object codes from 590 through 592. |
| **500** | **Other Purchased Services** | Amounts paid for services rendered by organizations or personnel not on the payroll of the school district (separate from professional and technical services or property services). Although a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided. |
| **600** | **Supplies** | Amounts paid for items that are consumed, are worn out, or have deteriorated through use or items that lose their identity through fabrication or incorporation into different or more complex units or substances. Refer to appendix E for the criteria for distinguishing between a supply item and an equipment item. |
| **800** | **Debt Service and Miscellaneous** | Amounts paid for goods and services not otherwise classified above. |

## Budget Justification

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| Provide a budget justification that is clearly tied to the scope and requirements of the project. |
| **Budget Justification:** |

## Appendix C: Contact Information

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|  | **Superintendent** |
| Institution or Organization |  |
| Name |  |
| Title |  |
| Address |  |
| Telephone |  |
| Email |  |
| Fax |  |
| Signature |  |

**Note:** If multiple SU/SDs form partnerships, each superintendent will need to submit contact information and sign the grant application.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **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 |  |

## Partner Contact Information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Partner** |
| Institution or Organization |  |
| Name |  |
| Title |  |
| Address |  |
| Telephone |  |
| Email |  |
| Fax |  |

## Partner Contact Information

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Partner** |
| Institution or Organization |  |
| Name |  |
| Title |  |
| Address |  |
| Telephone |  |
| Email |  |
| Fax |  |

**Note:** Additional partners may be added.