

## EDUCATION GRANT SERIES 2022

# EMPOWERING K-8 YOUTH THROUGH PLACE-BASED EDUCATION PROJECTS AND PROGRAMS



The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine’s Gulf Research Program (GRP) aims to increase the scientific and environmental literacy and problem-solving skills of children and youth in the Gulf of Mexico region. This funding opportunity will support the next generation of informed citizens, scientists, engineers, and decision-makers in understanding the socio-environmental challenges of their local communities and providing opportunities to increase their capacity to address them.

Specifically, the GRP is seeking proposals that engage children and youth in place-based educational activities that will foster the development of the scientific and environmental skills, competencies, and capabilities that are critical to solving complex issues in the Gulf now and into the future. The GRP will accept proposals from nonprofit, state, and local entities, excluding federal agencies, which support educational, service, and/or coordination activities for children and youth in the K-8 grade range. Post-secondary institutions are eligible to apply as Project Team Members working under a Program Director who has programmatic experience serving children and youth (e.g. through a school district or community-based organization).

A total of \$1M is available for this funding opportunity, with the number of proposals being funded dependent on the quality and quantity of applications. Applicants must request at least \$75,000 for projects, commensurate with the scope of work, that are up to 30 months in duration.

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## Purpose

The Gulf Research Program (GRP) seeks to increase the scientific and environmental literacy and problem-solving skills of children and youth. Environmental education increases student engagement in science and STEM learning, improves student achievement in core areas, and provides critical skills necessary for a 21st century workforce<sup>1</sup>. Proposed projects should focus on place-based education (PBE) linked to topics that are relevant to advancing the Gulf Research Program's mission. The mission of the GRP is to develop, translate, and apply science, engineering, and medical knowledge to enhance offshore energy safety, environmental protection and stewardship, and human health and community resilience in the Gulf region in ways that empower its citizens.

For the purpose of this opportunity, place-based education (or place-based learning opportunities) is defined simply as teaching and learning situated in place. The history of place-based education can be traced back to teaching philosophies and practices of indigenous peoples such as Native Americans and Alaska Natives<sup>2</sup> and the locally situated, culturally and environmentally informed pedagogies used by educators, described and advocated by Dewey<sup>3</sup>. Proposed projects for this grant opportunity should engage children and youth in ways that ensure that the next generation of informed citizens, scientists, engineers, and decision-makers understand the socio-environmental challenges and opportunities in their local communities and have the capacity to address them.

"The primary value of place-based education lies in the way that it serves to strengthen children's connections to others and to the regions in which they live. It enhances achievement, but, more important, it helps overcome the alienation and isolation of individuals that have become hallmarks of modernity. By reconnecting rather than separating children from the world, place-based education serves both individuals and communities, helping individuals to experience the value they hold for others and allowing communities to benefit from the commitment and contributions of their members".<sup>4</sup> The Gulf Research Program expects the main outcome of this opportunity to be a stronger connection to and understanding of the Gulf of Mexico region for the children and youth who participate in programming.

## Who Should Apply

For the purpose of this grant opportunity, applications will be accepted from all nonprofit, state, and local entities, excluding federal agencies, which support educational, service, and/or coordination activities for children and youth in the K-8 grade range. Post-secondary institutions are eligible to apply as Key Personnel working under a Program Director who has programmatic experience serving children and youth (e.g. through a school district or community-based organization).

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<sup>1</sup> Coyle, K. (2005). Environmental literacy in America: What ten years of NEETF/Roper research and related studies say about environmental literacy in the US. National Environmental Education & Training Foundation.

<sup>2</sup> Cajete, G. 1994. Look to the mountain: An ecology of indigenous education. Skyland, NC: Kivaki Press.

<sup>3</sup> Dewey, J. 1916. Democracy and education: An introduction to the philosophy of education. New York: Macmillan.

<sup>4</sup> Smith, G. A. (2002). Place-based education: Learning to be where we are. *Phi delta kappan*, 83(8), 584-594.

Preference will be given to applicants with a history of working with children and youth, particularly those who work with underrepresented or underserved populations, including but not limited to racial/ethnic minorities, tribal youth, LGBTQ+ youth, students demonstrating low socio-economic status as established by the free and reduced lunch program, children with disabilities, first-generation immigrants, students from rural or remote areas, and/or students experiencing or at risk of homelessness. *Programmatic activities must occur in the United States Gulf of Mexico region.*

### What We Are Looking For

This grant opportunity aims to support experiences that foster the development of the scientific and environmental literacy, skills, competencies, and capabilities that are critical to cultivating a next generation of informed citizens, scientists, engineers, and decision-makers. Activities should focus on place-based education/learning opportunities in the Gulf of Mexico region that advance the mission of the Gulf Research Program. These activities may take place in formal or informal educational settings, should target children and youth in the K-8 grade range, and be complementary to formal education standards and learning objectives.

Projects should be grounded in appropriate pedagogy for the goals of the project/program, which may include learner-centric, inquiry-based, hands-on approach to learning as well as student-led design thinking. Projects should use the community as a classroom and empower students to address local issues and/or solve local problems.

Applicants should carefully review the Merit Review Criteria prior to submitting an application.

### Project Structure

All proposed activities should focus on place-based education/learning opportunities that actively engage students in solving real-world problems relevant to the GRP mission. Proposals that empower students to address chronic or emerging challenges facing their communities are encouraged. The focus of this funding opportunity is programmatic activity with children and youth; however, proposals with complementary professional development activities for teachers and other educational professionals will be considered. In addition:

- Applicants may propose new programs or activities based in research or experience; or propose to extend existing programming across geographic, sectoral, socioeconomic, or cultural boundaries and/or topic/discipline areas to reach a broader range of participants.
- Applicants may propose activities that pilot or test new approaches for developing and implementing educational programs critical to advancing students' scientific and environmental literacy, skills, and competencies. This could include new partnerships between community-based organizations and academic institutions or activities that create a structure for meaningful engagement between children, youth, and the issues and needs of their communities.

- Applicants may seek funding to sustain and expand existing programming activities if the proposal demonstrates significant positive impact(s) and anticipated programmatic growth.
- Activities currently under consideration for funding from other sources are not eligible.

### Project Evaluation

All applicants will be required to include a program/project evaluation plan within the full proposal. The evaluation plan must be developed, and implemented, by a qualified, INDEPENDENT, program evaluator. Independent being defined as not associated with the Project Director or their organization.

The Gulf Research Program intends these program/project evaluations to:

- Help build an evidence-base that both grantees and GRP can use to understand and communicate their impact.
- Enable organizational learning and increase capacity to provide quality educational programming.
- Support the sharing of successes, challenges, and insights among funders, grantees, and stakeholders.

If awarded, Project Directors and Evaluators will participate in a Grantee Peer Learning Meeting at the close of the period of performance to present their evaluation results, grant highlights, success stories, and lessons learned with their fellow grantees and GRP staff.

### The Program will not consider funding:

- Proposals for political lobbying or advocacy activities.

### Award Information

- Total funding available: \$1 million, with a minimum request of \$75,000
- Specifications for award amount: This funding opportunity is not intended for projects under \$75,000. All budget requests must be commensurate with the scope of work proposed.
- Award duration: Grants will be awarded to support projects up to 30 months in length. The program/project should be no more than 24 months in length, with up to an additional 6 months for reviewing data and finalizing evaluation.
- Estimated number of awards: Resources made available under this funding opportunity will depend on the proposals received. The Gulf Research Program reserves the right to negotiate, some, one, or none of the proposals received in response to this solicitation.
- Award notification: Summer 2022

## Eligibility

The Gulf Research Program welcomes proposals from all types of U.S. organizations, excluding federal agencies, on behalf of qualified individuals. The applying organization will be referred to as the “applicant” hereafter. The individuals who will lead the proposed project will be referred to as “project directors” hereafter. All eligible applicants must have a valid federal tax ID number in order to apply.

Project directors usually initiate proposals that are officially submitted by their employing organizations (the applicant). When initiating a proposal, the project director typically is responsible for ensuring the proposal meets all the requirements outlined by the Gulf Research Program as well as any requirements set by the employing organizations.

Activities currently under consideration for funding from other sources are not eligible.

Post-Secondary Institutions/Institutions of Higher Education (Universities, Colleges, etc) are ONLY eligible to apply as Key Personnel working under a Project Director who has programmatic experience serving children and youth, such as through a school district or community-based organization.

The Gulf Research Program requires individuals named as project director or key personnel in an application to adhere to the following:

- An individual may be proposed as project director in only one application. If an individual is proposed as project director in any application they may also be proposed as key personnel in up to two additional applications.
- An individual not proposed as a project director in any application may be named as key personnel in up to three applications.
- It is the responsibility of each individual being named as project director or key personnel in any application to ensure that they are not named in more than three total applications.

## Application Submission and Review

Project directors should review the application preparation and submission instructions and submit any questions to [gulfgrants@nas.edu](mailto:gulfgrants@nas.edu) prior to the submission deadlines. The Gulf Research Program strives to respond to applicants' questions within two business days, but cannot guarantee that applicants' questions will be answered before submission deadlines.

Please review the Grant Agreement (see the “[Grant Resources](#)” page) prior to submitting an application to understand the terms under which the grant is offered. If selected, successful applicants are strongly encouraged to sign the Grant Agreement as presented. Per the policy of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, modifications to the Grant Agreement are only made under the most exceptional circumstances.

## Full Proposal Guidelines

Applicants can submit a full proposal for this funding opportunity via the [online application system](#). Full proposals submitted by other means (e.g., mail, fax, or email) will not be considered. Full proposal materials must be submitted in English. All complete proposals will be reviewed by an external review panel and evaluated using the Merit Review Criteria.

The full proposal must provide the following information:

- I. Project Team:**
  - a. Project director
    - i. ORCID (Open Research and Contributor ID)
  - b. Key personnel
  - c. Involvement of project director or key personnel in other applications related to this funding opportunity
- II. Project Details:**
  - a. **Project Title** (maximum 15 words)
  - b. **Project Key words** (maximum 10 words)
  - c. **Project Timeline** (excel upload)
  - d. **Project Description** (maximum 3,000 words).
    - i. Describe the proposed Place-Based Education project or program;
    - ii. Discuss how the proposed Place-Based Education project or program will (1) provide children and youth with opportunities to learn about, explore, and examine their communities; (2) empower children and youth to address local problems and provide potential solutions; and how it will (3) complement formal education standards and learning objectives;
    - iii. Discuss the pedagogical approach to the proposed project or program;
    - iv. Discuss the ways in which the proposed project or program aligns with the mission of the Gulf Research Program.
  - e. **Project Evaluation** (maximum 1250 words).
    - i. Describe your goals and anticipated outputs and outcomes related to (1) providing children and youth an opportunity to learn about, explore, and examine their communities and (2) empowering children and youth to address local problems and provide potential solutions;
    - ii. Describe how you will evaluate your project or program. Briefly describe your data source(s), measurement tool(s), and/or procedures that will be used in the evaluation;
    - iii. Describe the qualifications of the evaluator(s).
- III. Proposed Budget**
  - a. Total Budget Requested
  - b. **Budget Justification:** Please submit a budget justification. A [sample document](#) is provided.
  - c. **Budget Form:** [Download](#) the budget template. Complete this form to provide information on the proposed budget. Budget requests should be developed commensurate with the support needed to achieve the project goals.

#### IV. Other Attachments

- a. **Resume(s):** Resumes are required for the Project Director and every individual identified as a Project Team member. A resume may be included for the evaluator. Resumes may not exceed two pages per person. See [resume specifications](#) for additional guidance. All resumes should be combined and uploaded as a single PDF document. Do not include resumes for individuals not named as a Project Director or Project Team member.
- b. **Collaborators and Other Affiliations Form:** The purpose of this form is to help the GRP eliminate potential conflicts of interest during reviewer recruitment. [Download](#) the form and complete it to provide information on the following:
  - i. All persons (including their current organizational affiliations) who are currently, or who have been collaborators (i.e. an individual with whom you work closely to co-design or conduct a project) or co-authors with the individual on a project, book, article, report, abstract, or paper during the 48 months preceding the submission of the application.
  - ii. The individual's own graduate and postdoctoral advisor(s) and their current organizational affiliations.
  - iii. A list of your past and current advisees (including their current organizational affiliations)
- c. **Current and Pending Support from Other Sources Form:** [Download](#) the form. Applicants must provide information on the current and pending support of the project director, and other Project Team members, if applicable, and upload it to the online application system. The form calls for required information on current and pending support for ongoing projects and proposals. All current project support from whatever source (e.g., federal, state, local or foreign government agencies, public or private foundations, industrial or other commercial organizations) must be listed. The proposed project and all other projects or activities requiring a portion of time of the project personnel and other senior personnel must be included, even if they receive no salary support from the project(s). The total award amount for the entire award period covered (including indirect costs) must be shown as well as the number of person-months per year to be devoted to the project, regardless of source of support.

#### Review Criteria

All complete full proposals will be evaluated on the basis of six review criteria. Applicants should consider the Full Proposal Guidelines and Merit Review Criteria in the development of their full proposal. Reviewers may raise additional issues that are not covered by the criteria.

#### Place-Based Education (35%)

- To what extent does the proposed project or program have the potential to increase students' scientific and environmental literacy?

- To what extent does the proposed project or program provide opportunities for students to explore their place and communities with an interdisciplinary approach?

### **Student Empowerment (20%)**

- To what extent does the proposed project or program use the community as a classroom?
- To what extent does the proposed project or program empower students to address local issues and/or solve local problems?

### **Student Engagement (20%)**

- To what extent does the proposed project or program employ a learner-centric, inquiry-based, hands-on approach to learning?
- To what extent does the proposed project or program engage students in design thinking?
- To what extent do the proposed project or program activities align with formal education standards and learning objectives?

### **Alignment with GRP Mission (10%)**

- To what extent does the proposed project or program align with the mission of the Gulf Research Program, namely to enhance offshore energy safety, environmental protection and stewardship, and human health and community resilience in the Gulf region in ways that empower its citizens?

### **Project Team (10%)**

- To what extent are project team members well-qualified in their experience, knowledge, and skills to ensure the completion of a successful project?

### **Budget (5%)**

To what extent is the budget commensurate with the proposed activities?

### **Program Evaluation (Unweighted)**

- To what extent are the anticipated outputs and outcomes clearly described and appropriately aligned to the goals of the proposed project or program?
- To what extent is the evaluation design (data collection, measurement, and/or procedures) robust and commensurate with the scope of work?
- To what extent are the evaluator(s) well-qualified in their experience, knowledge, and skills to ensure the completion of a successful evaluation?

### **Research Involving Human Subjects**

The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (NASEM) require that all participants in funded research projects are treated respectfully and ethically, and that their privacy is protected. If your project is selected for funding, the GRP will assess whether or not the project involves research on humans. If human research is involved, then the GRP will work with you to submit the appropriate documentation about your project to the NASEM Institutional Review Board (IRB) for review and approval before an

award can be made. Visit our website for more [information about human subjects regulations](#).

### Data Management

The GRP follows the federal government's definition of data in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Section 200.315: "...the recorded factual material commonly accepted in the scientific community as necessary to validate research findings." If your proposal is selected for funding, the GRP will assess if your proposed project involves research that requires a data management plan. If research data is involved, then the GRP will work with you to submit the appropriate documentation, including a data management plan, before an award can be made. Visit our website for [more information about the GRP's data management policy](#).

### Making the Award

#### *Selection Notice*

The GRP reserves the right to select all, some, one, or none of the proposals received in response to this solicitation.

When the evaluation of a proposal is complete, the project director will be notified that (1) the proposal has been selected for funding pending contract negotiations, or (2) the proposal has not been selected. These official notifications will be sent via email to the project director identified on the application. If a proposal is selected for award, the GRP reserves the right to request additional or clarifying information for any reason deemed necessary, including, but not limited to, indirect cost information or other budget information.

#### *Award Notice*

The GRP transmits award notices to organizations via e-mail. The award is not finalized and the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine is not obligated to provide any funding until a signed copy of the award agreement has been received by the Academies.

#### *Grant Periods*

Upon receipt of the award notice, the awardee should note the effective date and the expiration date. The effective date is the date specified in the grant notice on or after which expenditures may be charged to the grant. Charging expenditures to the grant prior to the effective date is prohibited. The expiration date is the date specified in the grant notice after which expenditures may not be charged against the grant except to satisfy obligations to pay allowable project costs committed on or before that date. Once an award is made, the effective date cannot be changed. The expiration date may be changed as a result of approval of a request for a no-cost extension. If approved, the GRP will issue an amendment to the grant.

If additional time beyond the performance period and the established expiration date is required to assure adequate completion of the original scope of work with the funds already made available, the awardee may apply for a one-time, no-cost extension of up to six months. A formal request must be submitted to the GRP at least 45 days prior to the

expiration date of the grant. The request must explain the need for the extension and include an estimate of the unobligated funds remaining and a plan for their use. This one-time extension will not be approved solely for the purpose of using the unliquidated balances.

#### Post-award Management

**Coordination with GRP:** After the award is conferred, grantees shall coordinate with the GRP to formally initiate the project. GRP staff will periodically request status meetings during the project implementation phase to discuss progress and any unanticipated developments that may affect the project outcomes as specified in the grant agreement. These interactions will help ensure successful management of the grant.

**Reporting Requirements:** After an award is conferred, the grantee shall provide a semi-annual financial report to the GRP to report on grant expenditures to date under the grant. The grantee shall provide a semi-annual written report to the GRP to report on activities being carried out under the grant, including but not limited to project accomplishments to date and grant expenditures. No later than 60 days after the expiration of the award, the grantee shall provide in writing a final grant report. The final grant report shall address the original objectives of the project as identified in the grant proposal, describe any changes in objectives, describe the final project accomplishments, and include a final project accounting of all grant funds.

If awarded, Project Directors and Evaluators will participate in a Grantee Peer Learning Meeting at the close of the period of performance to present their evaluation results, grant highlights, success stories, and lessons learned with their fellow grantees and GRP staff.

**Data Management:** Implementation of a data management plan will be monitored through the annual and final report process. Even when no data or any other information products will be produced, a plan must be submitted that states “No data or information products are expected to be produced from this project.” Please see the GRP’s [Data Management Policy and Data Management](#) web page for information on this requirement.

#### Scientific Integrity

A fundamental purpose of the GRP is to facilitate the advancement of knowledge and the application of science to address challenges relevant to the GRP’s mission. All activities of the GRP will be conducted to meet the highest standards of scientific integrity. All grantees have a responsibility to use the funds wisely.

#### Grant Terms and Conditions

Please review the Grant Agreement prior to submitting an application. It is the policy of National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine to entertain potential modifications to the Grant Agreement only under the most exceptional circumstances. Rather, successful applicants are strongly encouraged to sign the Grant Agreement as presented.

- [View a sample grant agreement if the applicant is a public institution.](#)
- [View a sample agreement if the applicant is a private institution.](#)

## Background

### About the Gulf Research Program

The GRP is a division of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine—a private, nonprofit organization with a 150-year history as an independent advisor to the Nation on issues of science, engineering, and medicine. The GRP was founded in 2013 as part of legal settlements with the companies involved in the 2010 Deepwater Horizon disaster, and received an endowment to carry out studies, projects, and other activities in the areas of research and development, education and training, and monitoring and synthesis.

The GRP seeks to enhance offshore energy safety, environmental protection and stewardship, and human health and community resilience in the Gulf of Mexico and beyond. It focuses its work on the Gulf of Mexico and other outer continental shelves of the United States where there is hydrocarbon production, and on their coastal zones; specifically, this includes the areas of the Southcentral region of Alaska that are or could be impacted by activities (e.g., drilling, production, and transportation) associated with hydrocarbon production in the offshore. Where appropriate, the GRP’s work may extend farther inland or into adjacent seas.

The GRP uses four strategic approaches to “catalyze, implement, and track positive impact in the Gulf of Mexico and beyond”<sup>5</sup>:

1. Advance science and understanding
2. Bridge knowledge to action
3. Build partnerships and engage networks
4. Monitor for progress and change

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<sup>5</sup> National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine. 2020. *Gulf Research Program: 2020-2024 Strategic Plan*, pp. 3-4. Available at <https://www.nationalacademies.org/cache/0f9e/content/4885770000227383.pdf>. Retrieved April 24, 2021.