



# National Geographic Education Foundation

Teacher Grants

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**2005 Guidelines**



Education Foundation



Education Foundation

Spring 2005

Dear Colleague,

The National Geographic Education Foundation is embarking on a major new phase of its work to promote geographic literacy for all children:

- Advancing federal geography education policy
- Improving public understanding of the importance and relevance of geographic literacy

Specifically, we hope to achieve the following goals:

- New federal funding for state-based professional development and research on what works in geography education
- Development and growth of best practices and model programs
- A supportive public atmosphere

We believe that teachers are critical to achieving these goals. We are offering K-12 teachers an opportunity to partner with us in our efforts to increase and promote geographic literacy, both in and out of schools.

Best wishes!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barbara Chow".

Barbara Chow  
Executive Director and Vice President  
Education and Children's Programs  
National Geographic Society

## **A Word About Geography**

Geography—literally “describing the Earth”—is a powerful perspective for examining and understanding our world. Geographic education includes learning about people and places, understanding human-environment interaction, and exploring connections as well as applying a set of interdisciplinary skills. Geography is a big field—National Geographic’s second president, Alexander Graham Bell, referred to it as “the world and all that’s in it.” Today, the Society places a special emphasis on advancing the knowledge and appreciation of cultures and on the interrelationship between human aspirations and our planet’s natural and cultural resources. For more information on geography, please visit [www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/standards](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/standards).

## **About the Education Foundation**

The National Geographic Education Foundation (NGEF) was established in 1988 to celebrate National Geographic’s centennial and as a direct outgrowth of the Society’s charge to “increase and diffuse geographic knowledge.” Today, the Education Foundation awards approximately five million dollars annually in support of its mission to “motivate and enable each new generation to become geographically literate.” The Foundation is a part of the Society’s Education & Children’s Programs division, which conducts education outreach, hosts the National Geographic Bee and World Championship, and other operates educational programs.

Since its inception, the Education Foundation has worked in programmatic partnership with state governments, university-based “geographic alliances”—state-wide partnerships between academic professors and K-12 teachers to provide professional development, networking, and more—as well as with other nonprofits to amplify the status of geography in national education policy and state education standards, and to restore geography education to the classroom. The National Geographic Society has identified two key barriers that limit more widespread geographic knowledge and literacy among our nation’s youth:

- Lack of governmental prioritization of, and resources for, K–12 geography education—especially teacher professional development
- Insufficient public understanding of, and support for, the relevance of geographic literacy

To address these limiting issues, the Education Foundation has adopted a strategic plan that emphasizes three focal points:

- Public Policy  
NGS will conduct a public policy initiative dedicated to developing support for geography education as a national priority and long-term federal funding to be directed to state geographic alliances and other educational and research institutions.

- Public Engagement  
NGS will launch a public awareness campaign aimed at inspiring parents and educators to expand geographic learning at school, at home and in the community.
- Model Programs  
NGS will conduct both grantmaking and outreach that: prove the power of geographic literacy through model programs; support a grassroots network for local educational improvement; and offer world-class online professional development to educators.

It is our expectation that, together, these programs will lead to several key outcomes:

- Increased amount of geography education offered in schools
- Greater numbers of young people engaged in geography-related courses and activities in school and at home
- Improved parental and community engagement in geography education

Our ultimate objective is to give the next generation the skills and knowledge they will need to navigate and thrive in an interconnected global society.

## **Eligibility**

Teacher grants are given directly to educators to facilitate their work in promoting and increasing geographic literacy in the classroom, school, district, and community. Teacher Grant applications are accepted from any current teacher or administrator in an accredited K-12 school within the United States and Canada. Projects that have outreach to urban areas are particularly encouraged.

## **Deadlines & Awards**

This year, the Foundation plans to make approximately \$100,000 in grants of up to \$5,000 each to help you—or a group of your peers—make an even greater impact in your classroom, school, district, and/or community through innovative geography education projects.

Applications for work conducted during the period between January 2006 – August 2006 must be received by close of business (5:00 PM EST) **September 2, 2005**. Awards will be announced by December 19, 2005.

## Teacher Grant Guidelines

The National Geographic is interested in engaging young people in its national effort to promote and increase geographic literacy. The Teacher Grant program represents one strategy to help achieve our public engagement campaign. Therefore, we are offering grants for up to \$5,000 to a teacher, or group of teachers, to help to facilitate this work in the classroom, school, district, and community.

Project proposals should engage and involve students in the active research and study of a particular geographic issue/problem. As students are learning about the specific geographic issue or problem they should also create a public awareness campaign for sharing their knowledge with a wider audience. Your proposed project should be creative and actively engage students in their learning, allowing them to demonstrate their knowledge by developing a message that highlights the necessity for everyone to understand more about the world and why “Geography Matters.” In essence, students will become expert advocates and activists in their effort to highlight the need for increased geographic literacy in their community.

Teacher grants should focus on two of the six Essential Elements of Geography:

- *“Advancing the Knowledge and Appreciation of Cultures”*  
Essential Element 4—Human Systems: People are central to geography in that human activities help shape Earth’s surface, human settlements and structures are part of Earth’s surface, and humans compete for control of Earth’s surface.
- *“The Interrelationship Between Human Aspirations and our Planet’s Natural and Cultural Resources”*  
Essential Element 5—Environment and Society: The physical environment is modified by human activities, largely as a consequence of the ways in which human societies value and use Earth’s natural resources, and human activities are also influenced by Earth’s physical features and processes.

### **Proposal Cover Sheet and School Profile**

Using the online application form, provide basic contact information, including project title, project summary, the amount of your request from NGEF, and the total project budget. The school profile (450 words or fewer) should include school mission statement, information on students’ needs, school resources, and student and school performance.

### **Proposal Plan**

In a brief project proposal of not more than 10 pages describe the following:

1. Which National Geography Standards and local geography standards will be addressed by your project? For the national standards, please visit:  
[www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/standards/](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/standards/)
2. Which geographic skills will be addressed in this project?
  - a) Asking Geographic Questions
  - b) Acquiring Geographic Information
  - c) Organizing Geographic Information
  - d) Analyzing Geographic Information

e) Answering Geographic Questions

3. What are the specific, measurable, educational objectives of the project?
4. What is the plan for accomplishing each of the objectives? For each objective, describe the specific activities that are planned to meet the objective. Include a timeline for accomplishing each objective.
5. What is your plan for creating a Public Awareness campaign based on the outcomes? This plan should give students an opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge gained through this experience and to share reasons why their cultural or environmental issue is important as well as communicate the larger importance of geographic literacy to the public. The campaign should:
  - Be creative
  - Grab the attention of the listener/viewer
  - Make the intended audience aware of the issue/problem
  - Give a clear message as to why “Geography Matters”
  - Give important and accurate information
  - Encourage viewers to take action and provide examples of action steps
  - Include at least 3 of the following components:
    - a. Public Service Announcement – duration: 30 seconds to 2 minutes, multiple PSA’s are acceptable when trying to reach different audiences
    - b. Banners – Web site banners and/or physical banners
    - c. Posters
    - d. Bumper Stickers
    - e. Radio Shorts
    - f. Print Ad – ads for newspapers, magazines, etc.
6. Explain how you will distribute this message to the community (i.e. local cable station, awareness sessions at local community meetings, website distribution, etc.)
7. Identify how many students and teachers will be directly involved in this project.
8. Although not required, evidence of school and/or community support will enhance a proposal’s potential for success. Support should demonstrate community outreach and involvement, and can be in the form of cash, in-kind services, volunteer time, products, and personnel.

**Note:** *The most creative and engaging public service campaigns may be selected for inclusion in National Geographic’s national campaign.*

**Proposed Budget**

Include a budget for the entire project that details and justifies why all expenditures are essential to the project. Your budget should cover each of your proposed activities.

If appropriate, identify additional cash and/or in-kind support for this project you have been able to obtain from your school, a district education fund, business, local foundation, or other organization(s). If none, what organizations do you plan to approach?

**Note:** *Teacher Grants may not be used for administrative overhead; air travel; capital or deficit expenses; computer hardware; or scholarships or travel fellowships. Purchase of classroom materials and equipment must be justified as essential to the project. The purchase of software or other equipment should not exceed 25 percent of the amount requested from NGEF. Awarding teacher stipends is allowed but must not exceed 20 percent of the amount requested from NGEF.*

### **Proposal Supporting Documents**

Central to any funding decision will be our understanding of you, your institution, and the likelihood of managing the grant successfully. We are very interested in your leadership.

Please submit the following supporting documents:

1. Project Leader

A brief summary of the qualifications of the person leading the project (you may also attach a resume). Please indicate if you are a National Geographic Teacher Consultant or a member of your state geographic alliance.

2. Letter of Support (1page)

A signed letter of support for your proposal on school letterhead is required from your principal or superintendent indicating that they understand and endorse your project.

### **Project Reporting and Evaluation**

If awarded funding, you will be required as part of your letter of agreement to submit an initial report on anticipated project goals. Likewise, a final report, including a comparison of budgeted versus actual expenditures, will be required within one month of the completion of your project. Guidelines for both reports will be provided to you.

In addition, we may conduct periodic assessments of your progress during the project. This may include engaging an outside evaluator to assess your success in meeting the outcomes set forward in your proposal.

### **To Submit a Proposal**

All applications must be submitted online.

**Note:** *Signed hard copies of letters of support must be received by the deadline date for those who cannot send a signed copy electronically.*

Go to [www.nationalgeographic.com/foundation](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/foundation) and click on "Apply for a Grant" starting July 15th, 2005. Your proposal narrative must not exceed 10 pages. All proposals must be submitted by 5:00 PM EST, September 2, 2005.

Note the following technical specifications. If you attempt to apply online without meeting these specifications, you will likely encounter technical problems.

- Applicants must have access to the Internet and a Web browser that allows cookies.
- The following browser versions have been certified for use with this application: Internet Explorer 5.5 (for PC and Mac), Internet Explorer 6.0 (for PC), Netscape 7.02 (for PC), Opera 7.11 (for PC), Safari 1.0 (v85) (for Mac).
- Required attachments include several signed documents. Consider how you will accomplish this. Most likely, you will need access to a scanner to scan your signed documents. Once you have created files with any of the accepted extensions as listed below (probably "jpg" or "pdf"), you will be able to attach them to your online application. **Note to those who cannot send a signed letter of support electronically:** *Signed hard copies of letters of support must be received by the deadline date.*
- The total size of all attachments must be no larger than 10 MB. Only files with the following extensions will be accepted as attachments: "doc," "xls," "pdf," "jpg," "tiff," "rtf," "ppt," and "gif."

### **For More Information**

In addition to Teacher Grants, National Geographic Society offers teachers the opportunity to join National Geographic's Education Network (EdNet, [www.ngsednet.org](http://www.ngsednet.org)), an online educators' network. For more information, or to join, please visit [www.ngsednet.org](http://www.ngsednet.org).

For information about the Education Foundation's policy initiative, public engagement campaign, grantmaking programs, sample projects, and application guidelines for any funding category, or to learn how to set up an endowment in your state, please visit [www.nationalgeographic.com/foundation](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/foundation).