OEEF

OHIO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FUND

General Grant Program Guidelines 2012

Program Policies
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Application Review Process

"Environmental education is the learning process whereby people acquire an awareness and scientific understanding of the natural and built environment; attitudes that value the environment; and skills for identifying and addressing environmental issues. When effective, it leads to participation in environmental decision making and actions that result in a sustainable environment, healthier people and livable communities."

OhioEPA

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Environmental Literacy

A healthy environment is critical to the quality of life and economic vitality of our state. Understanding complex environmental issues that affect environmental health requires environmentally literate citizens. Environmental literacy is now becoming a measurable achievement. The purpose of the Ohio Environmental Education Fund is to improve environmental literacy in Ohio.

Environmentally literate citizens are aware of the consequences of their actions. They make informed choices that will protect their health and the environment. Objective environmental education is the key to ensuring this literacy. Goals of environmental education include:

- increasing awareness and understanding of natural and human-made environments;
- fostering attitudes that value the environment;
- developing skills for identifying and addressing issues; and
- cultivating a commitment for personal action.

There is a difference between "information" and "education." Information is a tool that can be used to convey facts and ideas. Education is the process of instruction that helps make learning possible.

People have an abundance of skills, creativity and energy to effect change. Studies indicate that the greater the interaction with a learner, the greater percentage of information the learner retains and uses. Use of quality educational practices results in people acquiring the skills and abilities needed to contribute positively to environmental protection, whether on a personal or professional level.

Some Characteristics of Environmentally Literate Citizens

Citizens who are educated about the environment have a basic understanding of:

→ natural environments;
→ dynamics of the human-made environment;
→ cause-and-effect relationships between human behavior and the environment, and the economics of that relationship;
→ environmental issues;
→ decision –making processes of government, business, and other social, political and economic institutions impinging upon environmental issues; and
→ personal skills in problem solving, risk analysis and integrating diverse perspectives to understand and contribute to decision-making processes.

OVERVIEW

The OEEF was created by the General Assembly in 1990 to enhance Ohio citizens' awareness and understanding of environmental issues. It is administered by the Director of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) and provides approximately $1 million annually in grants to support environmental education efforts within the state of Ohio. The OEEF derives its monies from one-half of the civil penalties collected from violations of Ohio's air and water pollution control regulations.

The OEEF funds education projects that target three audiences: (1) pre-school through university students and teachers; (2) the general public; and (3) the regulated community. This application form may be used for projects targeting any of those audiences, but OEEF reviewers will score proposals using criteria specific to each target audience. Applicants should compare their project proposal with OEEF's *Preferred Characteristics* for projects targeting the appropriate audience. They should also compare their completed application with the appropriate score sheet. For projects that target more than one of these audiences, the applicant should use the preferred characteristics and score sheet most appropriate for the *primary* audience of the project.

OEEF also offers a separate Mini Grant Program for projects costing between $500 and $5,000, with streamlined applications and review. The policies and programs of OEEF are developed through the collaborative efforts of a 12- member Advisory Council, more than 300 volunteer Peer Reviewers, and OEEF's administrative staff. Their knowledge, expertise and shared belief in the critical need for enhancing environmental learning make possible a dynamic program with long-term benefits for Ohio.

OEEF supports innovative projects that increase public awareness and knowledge about environmental issues, and provide the skills to make informed decisions and take responsible actions. Environmental Education (EE) is based on objective and scientifically sound information, and does not advocate a particular viewpoint or course of action. It teaches individuals how to weigh various sides of an issue through critical thinking, and it enhances their problem-solving and decision-making skills. Proposals that simply disseminate information will not be funded. OEEF strongly encourages applicants to use and adapt existing EE materials rather than designing new materials, because experts indicate that a significant amount of quality educational materials have already been developed and are under-utilized. OEEF will consider funding curriculum development or new materials *only* where the applicant demonstrates that existing materials cannot be adapted well to a particular local environmental concern or audience.

Further, OEEF recommends that applicants consider the *Guidelines for Excellence* series developed by the North American Association for Environmental Education with U.S. EPA funding. These materials are available at www.naaee.org. Ohio's *Best Practices for Environmental Education: Guidelines for Success* is also available on the Environmental Education Council of Ohio Web page at www.eeco-online.org/publications/pdfs/beeps.pdf

OEEF EDUCATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR 2012

All proposals must explain how they will help to further one of the following educational priorities:

(1) **Compliance Assistance**: helping regulated entities, and particularly small business, understand and comply with Ohio's environmental laws and regulations
(2) **Community issues**: designing and implementing model projects to educate the public about technical aspects of environmental issues or environmental health issues in their communities through community-based organizations or through print, film, broadcast, or other media. Issues of current priority to Ohio EPA include storm water management; source water protection; brownfields cleanup and redevelopment; improving air quality in counties not meeting federal Clean Air standards; and education efforts related to endorsed watershed plans. Copies of all state endorsed watershed action plans may be found at the following Ohio DNR ftp site: ftp://ftp.dnr.state.oh.us/Soil_&_Water_Conservation/WatershedActionPlans/EndorsedPlans/
(3) **Environmental Public Health**: education about human health threats from environmental pollution, and how to minimize human exposure to preserve good health. Issues of current priority to Ohio EPA include reduction of ozone precursors, airborne particulates, and toxic chemicals such as mercury in the environment. The OEEF prefers not to fund projects that focus primarily on human health without a strong environmental component. Anti-smoking and tobacco education programs are not appropriate for this grant program.
(4) **Standards-Based Education**: utilizing environmental education to improve K-12 student academic achievement, specifically through projects that are aligned with the Ohio Department of Education's Academic Content Standards, published at http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=1696&ContentID=72&Content=72519 , and projects to educate teachers and non-formal educators about ways to effectively present environmental subjects**.** Note that new revisions to Ohio's Academic Content Standards for Science were issued in June 2010 by the Ohio Department of Education.
(5) **Career Development**: educating students in formal or non-formal settings about what environmental professionals do, to encourage them to enter careers in environmental science and engineering, or related fields.
(6) **Environmental Sustainability**: education about energy efficiency and conservation, alternative fuels and energy sources, green building principles, sustainable and community-supported agriculture. OEEF is not able to fund actual energy saving infrastructure, though, for example, interpretive exhibits or signage with real-time display of a building's energy use would be eligible for funding.

Proposals may address more than one educational priority. However, OEEF cautions against losing focus. OEEF prefers to fund projects with a clearly defined purpose, rather than projects that attempt to address multiple priorities at the expense of a quality outcome.

OEEF GRANT APPLICATION POLICIES

Deadlines/Review Dates

There are two grant application deadlines each year, on or near January 15 and July 15. (When these fall on a holiday or a weekend, the deadline moves to the next business day.) Awarded projects cannot commence until approximately four months from the deadline date due to the time required for review and fiscal administration of the grants. Applicants must incorporate the schedule below when planning project activities.

Letter-of-Intent Deadline	Completed Application Deadline	Peer Review Period	Council Review Meeting	Ohio EPA Director Decision	Earliest Start Date
January 10, 2012	January 17, 2012	Jan. 31 - Feb. 29	March 28	April 20	May 28, 2012
July 9, 2012	July 16, 2012	July 31 – Aug. 31	Sept. 26	Oct. 19	Nov. 26, 2012

Applicant Eligibility

Any organization based in Ohio (e.g., public or private, tax-exempt or proprietary associations, formal or non-formal educational) that holds a federal tax ID number is eligible. In addition, the organization must certify that it complies with the Federal Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 (41 USC Section 701, et. seq.); state regulations covering non-discrimination in hiring and affirmative action (ORC 125.111); and the Grantee's Authorizing Agent or spouse, as applicable under ORC 3517.13(I) or ORC 3517.13(J), has not made, within the two previous years, one or more contributions totaling in excess of $1,000 to the Governor or his campaign committees. Grant recipients may also be asked to sign a “Declaration Regarding Material Assistance/Non-assistance to a Terrorist Organization” in accordance with Ohio law. Individuals are not eligible to apply.

General Grant Amounts and Project Duration

General grants are awarded for projects costing between $5,000 and $50,000. Please **round off all requests to the nearest dollar amount**. Projects must be completed within **30 months** of the start date.

Multiple or Repeat Proposals

An applicant may not submit more than one application during a grant cycle. **No organization will be awarded more than one grant at a time, or during a twelve-month period.** For example, if you are awarded a grant during the January, 2012 grant cycle, you would not be eligible to apply again for an OEEF grant or mini grant until that project has been completed, or the January 2013 grant cycle. Grant recipients should complete all obligations of their current grant, including submittal of final reports, before applying for another grant. Due to limited resources, OEEF does

not generally sustain projects beyond the initial grant period. OEEF prefers to provide seed money to initiate new projects or to advance existing projects that are expanding in some significant way, such as reaching new audiences or new locations. Applicants who received an OEEF grant in the past may submit a new proposal for a new project, or to significantly expand a previously funded project. Each new proposal will be reviewed based upon the criteria set forth in these guidelines, and in relation to the quality of other proposals received during the same grant cycle.

ELIGIBLE AND INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

OEEF Does Not Fund:

- basic research such as data collection, surveys, and stipends for researchers
- beautification projects or landscaping
- fund raising or membership drives
- food or beverages
- grants, scholarships, or fellowships to be given by the OEEF grant recipient to a third party, other than teacher stipends/substitutes to enable participation in funded programs.
- indirect costs, general operations, or overhead charges: e.g., rent, utilities, monthly phone charges. Individual long distance phone calls related to the project are eligible.
- political advocacy, campaigning, legislative lobbying, or litigation programs
- real estate acquisitions or due diligence research related to such acquisitions
- construction activities including building construction, improvements to existing structures, wetlands construction
- reimbursement for the expense of any time, supplies or equipment purchased prior to the effective start date of the signed grant agreement
- staff salaries beyond direct project costs
- applications from entities who have defaulted on the performance of grant commitments on prior OEEF-funded projects
- OEEF discourages the use of grant funds for travel outside the state of Ohio. OEEF will consider funding the cost of bringing expertise to Ohio from another state.
- OEEF strongly discourages proposals with more than 50% of the grant funds allocated to salary and benefits. Personnel costs that are included in the contractual portion of the budget will be regarded by OEEF staff and Advisory Council members as salary, and included in calculating 50% of the grant funds. Applicants who feel they must request more than 50% of the grant funds for salary and benefits should provide extraordinary justification, and should understand that their proposal may be disqualified. Daily stipends and substitutes for teachers will not be calculated against the 50%.
- OEEF also strongly discourages general grant proposals that request more than 50% of the grant funds for expensive equipment such as computer hardware. Applicants with questions should consult with the OEEF staff.
- OEEF prefers not to fund routine recertification classes for professionals, for example to maintain certification or licensure as wastewater treatment plant operators. However, OEEF is very interested in funding training opportunities to help citizens and

regulated entities understand and comply with environmental regulations or take actions to voluntarily protect the environment. OEEF is also interested in funding professional development opportunities to enable teachers to help students meet the benchmarks and grade level indicators of Ohio's Academic Content Standards.

- OEEF prefers not to fund disposable or promotional items such as pins and refrigerator magnets.
- OEEF prefers not to fund t-shirts as giveaways for students unless a clear case can be made that the shirts are needed for safety or identification purposes during student activities.

OEEF Prefers Projects That:

- meet OEEF's *educational priorities for 2012*, listed above.
- address OEEF's goals of instilling awareness, knowledge and skills, and fostering informed decision making
- incorporate ***OEEF's Preferred Characteristics*** for projects targeting the appropriate audience, posted on the OEEF Web page at www.epa.ohio.gov/oeef/grantee_resources.aspx
- are scientifically and educationally valid
- improve the grantee organization's ability to achieve its mission
- identify and document the audience need
- make use of excellent existing environmental education curriculum and materials already available, such as Project WET, Project WILD and Project Learning Tree, rather than creating new ones unnecessarily
- demonstrate collaborative efforts with other organizations, to avoid duplication of effort
- have an evaluation plan tied to clear and measurable environmental education outcomes
- can stand up to critical peer review
- show definitive strategies for use, dissemination or replication of project outcomes and products
- have the ability to meet OEEF's accounting requirements
- are innovative

OEEF APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

Applications will undergo four levels of review: by the OEEF staff for eligibility, by the peer reviewers for substantive content, and by the OEEF Advisory Council and Ohio EPA director, who consider the application in light of the OEEF's overall funding priorities. Applicants should consult the following guidance documents and score sheets that will be used by OEEF to review proposals:

OEEF General Grant Program Guidelines for 2012
OEEF Preferred Characteristics for Projects Targeting Pre-School to University Audiences
OEEF Peer Reviewer Score Sheet for Projects Targeting Pre-School to University Audiences
OEEF Preferred Characteristics for Projects Targeting Adult Learners (General Public and Regulated Community Audiences)
OEEF Peer Reviewer Score Sheet for Projects Targeting General Public Audiences
OEEF Preferred Characteristics for Projects Targeting the Regulated Community
OEEF Peer Reviewer Score Sheet for Projects Targeting the Regulated Community Audience
OEEF Staff Review Checklist

OEEF Staff Review

Applications will be reviewed for completeness by the OEEF staff, using the "OEEF Staff Review Checklist". The OEEF staff has also been directed by the OEEF Advisory Council to assign extra points to proposals that provide a stronger match than the required 10%; proposals that demonstrate strong collaboration; and proposals for projects targeting an audience OEEF has defined as "under-served." For 2012, OEEF's under-served audiences are defined as the regulated community, and proposals for projects in counties where fewer than two OEEF grants have been awarded.

Once the application deadline has passed, OEEF staff do not review grant proposals for concepts, ideas, or educational opportunities; this is the function of the peer reviewers and the Advisory Council. Applications with good ideas can be rejected at the staff review level due to noncompliance with grant guidelines. Staff decisions on compliance with these criteria are final. Once the formal staff review has been completed, notification will be sent to applicants whose proposals were not forwarded to the peer reviewers, explaining the deficiencies and urging the applicant to resubmit the application in another grant cycle.

Peer Reviewers

OEEF's volunteer peer reviewers perform the initial substantive review of the applications, using the OEEF Peer Review Score Sheet for the appropriate audience. Peer reviewers are assigned applications proposing projects having characteristics that coincide with the professional and educational background and expertise of the reviewers. For example, a project on wetlands will be reviewed by someone with wetlands expertise. A project targeting schoolchildren will be reviewed by classroom teachers for age appropriateness, and so on. The reviewers numerically score the applications based on the criteria set forth

in these grant guidelines. All applications will be scored by several reviewers, and the reviewer scores and comments are forwarded to the OEEF Advisory Council along with a ranking of all eligible proposals. Applicants will also receive the anonymous peer reviewer scores and comments.

OEEF Advisory Council

The OEEF Council consists of 12 members, assigned by statute and appointed by elected officials to represent various constituencies. The Council members advise and assist the director of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency in grant funding decisions. Members of the Council review the application, along with the peer reviewers' numerical scores, comments, and a list of all eligible proposals ranked according to their median peer review scores. Council members choose the applications they would like to discuss at a public meeting in Columbus that applicants are invited to attend. Applicants may be allotted two minutes at the conclusion of discussion of their application to answer questions or clarify any areas of concern. Addressing the Council is not mandatory, but applicant attendance at the Council meeting is strongly encouraged. Proposals the Council recommends for funding are forwarded to the director of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency. Applications not recommended by the Council are not given further consideration during the grant cycle.

Director of Ohio Environmental Protection Agency

The director of the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency provides the final review of grant applications. Council meeting minutes are forwarded with the applications that are recommended for funding. All decisions of the director are final.

FILLING OUT THE ONLINE APPLICATION

Applications must be submitted electronically through OEEF's online Grant Management System (GMS). OEEF no longer accepts paper applications. Applicants will find information on the OEEF and previously funded grant projects on Ohio EPA's website, at www.epa.ohio.gov/oee/. The online software for applying for a grant is located at https://ebiz.epa.ohio.gov

Applications are submitted to the OEEF through a two-step process. First, the applicant Creates an account in the eBusiness center, located at: https://ebiz.epa.ohio.gov. The applicant then fills out an electronic **letter of intent** (LOI) to apply for a grant. This letter is a short form requesting contact information, the amount of funds requested, and a few questions about the target audience, location, and content of the proposed project. Once the LOI is submitted, the applicant will receive an e-mail saying whether or not it is approved. If it is approved, the applicant can begin the second step, filling in the sections of the **application**. The applicant can use the "save" buttons, log out of the system, and return to work on the application when convenient. The draft application will remain open for edits until the applicant uses the "submit" buttons to submit the various sections of the final proposal. Once an applicant has hit the "submit" button in any section of the application, that section is locked against further edits. Prior to the application deadline, the applicant may call or email the the Office of Environmental Education to request that their application be "unlocked", but please understand that this may take several hours or overnight.

General grant application settings limit the number of characters that can be entered in the project description. *All* parts of the proposal must be entered into the appropriate section of the online application form. It is possible to "cut and paste" text from other software into some of the application sections, but other sections such as the budget and activities timeline must be entered directly. No attachments to the application should be uploaded except for a single electronic file containing all the signed letters of support and collaboration for the project, described below.

Please direct all inquiries regarding OEEF's grant program policies and procedures, or the status of a grant application, to the OEEF staff at (614) 644-2873 or oeef@epa.state.oh.us . Please contact the eBusiness Center help desk if you need assistance with your user ID or password at 1-877-372-2499.

PRE-REVIEW OF DRAFT APPLICATIONS

Applicants are encouraged to call the OEEF office to discuss project ideas early in the application process. OEEF staff members are happy to provide a formal pre-review of applications, to ensure that the application meets the guidelines, and to offer suggestions. Please complete the draft in the OEEF Grant Management System well ahead of the deadline, the earlier the better, in order to allow yourself adequate time to respond to staff suggestions and make changes. *Use the "save" buttons rather than the "submit" buttons if you wish to request a pre-review, so that you will still be able to make changes in response to suggestions.* OEEF staff members are only able to pre-review a proposal once, so please complete and "save" as much of the draft as possible before calling or e-mailing a request for a pre-review to the OEEF office.

Application Components

- Application Cover Sheet, with Audience Categories and Project Issues (This will initially be generated from your Letter of Intent, but you may make edits to change some of the information after you are issued a user ID and password)
- Executive Summary (write this *after* the rest of the application is complete)
- Project Description
    - Audience Need
    - Qualifications of Organization and Key Personnel
    - Continuation and Replication Plan for after the grant ends
    - Budget Narrative, providing explanatory details for items in the budget spreadsheet
- Budget
- Project Description
    - Objectives
    - Activities
    - Timeline for activities
    - Outcome Measurements
- Applicant Contact Information (also generated from your Letter of Intent, but you will need to add additional contacts such as the fiscal agent for the grant)
- Uploaded pdf file with signed letters of collaboration and support (scanned from

author's letterhead)

APPLICATION COVER SHEET

(Note to applicants: The information in this section will initially be filled in automatically from what you provided in your Letter of Intent, but you may edit some of the information as you work on your draft application.)

Application Number: (this number will be assigned by the OEEF when your Letter of Intent is approved, and may not be modified)

Project Title: _____

Applicant Organization:_____
(This is the legal name of your organization. A school should supply the name of the school district first, followed by the school applying for the grant. A college or university should supply the name of the institution followed by the department that will be responsible for performing the grant project.)

OEEF Educational Priority: _____

Anticipated List of Collaborators: _____

Which Ohio counties will the activities take place in?_____
(You may also select "statewide")

Brief Project Description (two or three sentences only): _____

_____

Which group best describes the <u>primary</u> target audience for the project?
____ Pre-school to university students and/or teachers
____ Ohio adults (general public)
____ Regulated community (public and private sector entities who much comply with state and/or federal environmental regulations; and agricultural producers)
(If your project targets more than one audience, please indicate which is primary and which is secondary)

If this is a revision of a previous application to OEEF, please give the previous application number: _____

If you have previously RECEIVED a grant from the OEEF, please give that grant number: _____

Amount of grant funds requested: $_____

Proposed Start Date: _____

Proposed Completion Date: _____

Have you ever attended an OEEF grant-writing workshop? ____ yes ____ no

Will this project have statewide impact?

Audience Categories:

(This information from your Letter of Intent will be used to match your application with appropriate peer reviewers. Contact the OEEF staff if you have questions about which categories your project fits.)

Project Issues:
(This information from your Letter of Intent will be used to match your proposal with appropriate OEEF peer reviewers. Contact the OEEF staff if you have questions about which issues your project fits.)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In this Section, please provide an executive summary to provide an overview of the project being proposed. We strongly suggest that you prepare this section *after* finishing the rest of the application. Write in plain language such as you might use to describe your project to a family member. Be as concise as possible, and avoid professional jargon. After reading the executive summary, the reader should be able to clearly answer who will learn what, where, when, why, and how about this project. Don't forget to mention how many students or people are expected to participate. The Executive Summary should include at least a sentence or two on each of the following:

Audience Need. Provide a sentence or two about why the target audience needs this particular education project and how your organization is prepared to address this need.

Key Personnel. Provide a sentence or two explaining what type of organization you represent, and why you are qualified to carry out the proposed project.

Overall Project Objectives. Briefly describe what the project will accomplish in the proposed grant timeline. Define who and how many will benefit, what they will learn, and how this knowledge will benefit the community and the environment.

Major Activities. Briefly outline the types of activities that will carry out the above objectives.

Overall Cost. Give the total project cost, the amount to be funded from OEEF, and the amount of match provided from the applicant organization and from other sources.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION PART I

Audience Need

Provide documentation to show why the project is needed by the specific audience being targeted. State the need in terms of audience's need, NOT the applicant organization's. (A teacher may attest to the needs of a particular age cohort of students, and a trade association can attest to the needs of their members.) Describe how the need for the project was determined, and how meeting the need will meet the applicant organization's goals. Explain what benefits will result from meeting the need, and for whom. Demonstrate that the project will not duplicate other educational programs. The need statement should be expressed quantitatively whenever possible.

Example of a Need Statement for a Pre-school – University project: "No convenient outdoor learning site is currently available to students at Adams Middle School. Ohio research has documented that outdoor, hands-on learning opportunities can help students meet learning objectives and improve performance in all curricular areas (*Habitats for Learning,* 1995). A 2005 survey of Adams faculty found that 73% of the teachers at the school would like to incorporate outdoor learning activities into their lesson plans. Four teachers are certified in nationally recognized environmental curricula (Project WET, Project WILD, and NASA/NOAA's GLOBE program), but their efforts to visit nearby parks with their classes have been hampered by a lack of funding for bus transportation."

Example of a Need Statement for a General Public project: "The role of soil in storm water storage, erosion, septic system operation, stream sedimentation and flooding is often poorly understood by residents. The Franklin Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) recently conducted a survey of soil knowledge among 485 local landowners at two community events. 61% reported that they did not know what type of soil they have on their property, yet 89% thought this knowledge would be important. This survey also reported that 80% of Franklin County landowners feel that increased information about soil properties would be helpful to them in making land use decisions that impact water quality in local streams. By providing information specifically on soils, the SWCD is fulfilling its own mission and supporting the efforts of multiple local jurisdictions in Franklin County to educate their residents about storm water management. These communities do not currently include soil-specific information in their public awareness materials."

Example of a Need Statement for a Regulated Community project: "In a 2001 survey of our membership, 65% of the respondents admitted to having difficulty understanding which new storm water control regulations apply to them. Fifty percent said they would not be comfortable calling a regulatory agency to ask that question. By providing an easy-to-use toolkit to help industry managers determine their regulatory status, we will be fulfilling our mission of service to the members of our trade association, and helping them achieve regulatory compliance. Because our seminars will include hands-on troubleshooting tips from companies experienced with these rules, this program will augment the guidance documents available from state and federal regulatory agencies."

Qualifications establish the credibility of the organization, its partners, and persons directly involved in the proposed project. Describe your organization and how this project fits into your organization's long-range plan. Provide qualifications of key personnel by including brief biographical sketches within the narrative. Biographical sketches should include education, abilities, relevant experience working with the target audience, and relevant expertise in the environmental subject matter. Include experience on projects previously funded by the OEEF. Please provide a position description for staff not yet hired.

Continuation and Replication Plan

Describe what will happen to the project when the grant ends. Describe if and how your project could serve as a model that could be replicated by others for similar audiences. Discuss how you intend to share the results of your project with others, for example in newsletter articles, on the Web, or through presentations at professional meetings. Indicate careful consideration of the need for the project to continue, and whether continued reliance on future grant support will be needed.

Budget Narrative

Fill in this section AFTER you have completed the budget tab, providing any needed details to explain how the amounts listed in the line items of your application budget were calculated. Provide justifications to help reviewers understand the need for higher-cost equipment or other items.

BUDGET TAB

You may want to complete this section after you have completed the objectives and activities on the Activities Tab. Prepare your project budget using the format provided in the OEEF Grant Management System. Be sure the budget is realistic and appropriate to your objectives. **A 10% match in cash or in-kind contributions from the applicant and/or other funding sources is required for all proposals.** Larger matches are encouraged to demonstrate the applicant organization's commitment to the project. Indicate the contributed amount on the lines provided. Double check to be sure the budget is accurate and consistent with the budget narrative. ***Please round all amounts to the nearest dollar.***

Personnel:

- *Salary/Wages:* Provide position title, number of hours, and hourly wage (or annual salary) for each person. OEEF will not provide 100% of any employee's salary/wage costs for any period. OEEF strongly discourages proposals with more than 50% of the grant funds allocated to salary and benefits. Personnel costs that are included in the contractual portion of the budget will be regarded by OEEF staff and Advisory Council members as salary, and included in calculating 50% of the grant funds. Applicants who feel they must request more than 50% of the grant funds for salary and benefits should provide extraordinary justification, and should understand that their proposal may be disqualified. Daily stipends and

substitutes for teachers will not be calculated against the 50%.

Benefits: Explain in the budget narrative how the benefit rate is calculated by your organization, and provide percentages of any salaries/wages being devoted to the proposed project. For example, if OEEF is being asked to provide 20% of a staff person's salary over the project period, OEEF will also be willing to provide 20% of that staff person's benefit costs for the same period. (It is permissible instead to use the percentage of employee benefits paid by the applicant organization as a match for OEEF grant funds, but this may not exceed the proportion of the employee's time to be devoted to the grant project.)

Stipends and Substitutes: Provide unit cost for stipends and substitutes. (OEEF will cover costs for a stipend or for a substitute to enable a teacher to participate in the project. However, OEEF will not cover both a stipend and a substitute for the same teacher on the same day.)

Non-Personnel:

You may use the definitions traditionally used by your organization when identifying expenditures under the supplies and equipment. OEEF generally regards supplies as consumables, and equipment as hardware.

Supplies: Itemize large quantity or higher priced items and provide unit price (e.g., rewritable CDs, 10 pkg. of 50 @$122/ea). Some items may be grouped together and given a total price, but be sure to identify the items or give a title to the group of items (e.g., postage/envelopes; safety goggles/latex gloves). Vague entries such as "office supplies - $500" will not be funded.

- *Equipment:* Itemize and provide unit price (e.g., YSI model #55 handheld dissolved oxygen meters, 3 @ $699/ea). Please note that the reviewers and Council will look closely at equipment costs that look unreasonable or are not well-justified and itemized. OEEF also strongly discourages general grant proposals that request more than 50% of the grant funds for expensive equipment such as computer hardware. The applicant must provide extraordinary justification in the budget narrative for exceeding 50% of the total budget for equipment.

Printing: Itemize, provide number of copies & unit price (e.g., 1000 @ 50 cents/page = $50.00).

Other: Provide line items that do not fit under Supplies, Equipment or Printing expenditures. List each item separately (e.g., Travel, Phone Calls, Resource Guides) and provide unit price. Do not title an entry "Miscellaneous" or "Contingencies". NOTE: Mileage and hotel costs can only be reimbursed at the current State of Ohio rate. Mileage is currently 45 cents per mile. Applicants should consult with OEEF staff on the allowable hotel rates for specific locations.

Contractual:

Identify the service being provided, the name of the organization or individual

providing the service, number of hours and hourly wage. Monies from the OEEF grant cannot be used to cover indirect costs for contractual services. As noted above, OEEF prefers not to fund proposals with more than half the project budget devoted to salary costs. Proposals with extensive salary costs in the contractual section require extra justification and will receive extra scrutiny. Any contractual services related to the grant shall not relieve the Grantee of any of its responsibility under the terms and conditions of the Grant Agreement.

Indicate income to be generated from the proposed project, if any.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION PART II (ACTIVITIES TAB)

This section of the online application requires you to first name and enter a specific objective, then attach appropriate associated activities to that objective, filling in the expected start and end date for each activity, and the percentage of the overall project budget associated with each activity. You will also be asked to provide a short-term and long-term outcome measurement for the results of the objective. Your project may have more than one objective, depending upon which audiences are learning what. There may be more than one activity for each objective. In general, however, you should try to limit the number of objectives to keep the project focused and workable.

Objectives

Define what the project will accomplish specifically in terms of who will learn what. Define how the project will carry over to benefit the community and the environment. Explain how the project will meet one or more of OEEF's educational priorities. The NAAEE *Guidelines for Excellence* recommend **SMART** objectives that are:

- **S**pecific,
- **M**easurable,
- **A**ppropriate to the audience,
- **R**elevant to the audience's needs, and
- **T**ime-bound.

Sample Objectives

Weak: Our after-school program will help children read better.

Better: Our after-school remedial education program will assist 50 children in improving their reading scores by one grade level as demonstrated on standardized reading tests administered after participating in the program for 6 months.

Example of an Objective for a Pre-school – University project: "Over a two-year period, we will develop a half-acre outdoor classroom on school grounds, and adapt site-specific curriculum materials from Project Learning Tree and Project WET in four subjects for grades 6-8. Students, parents and neighbors will help design and construct the facility, which will include (at least) a butterfly habitat area, "Three Sisters" garden, composting demonstration area, and wetland/pond area. By the end of the project, 600 students in seven classes will be participating at least once a month in hands-on, inquiry-based outdoor learning activities, such as collecting macro-invertebrates in the pond, or identifying the plants needed in the habitat for each stage of the butterfly life cycle. This project addresses OEEF's priority of Standards-Based Education.

Example of an Objective for a General Public project: "The project seeks to increase residents' understanding of the relationship between improper land use practices and deteriorating water quality in Alum Creek, Blacklick Creek, and Big Walnut Creek, and the influence individuals can have on both. The proposed public awareness campaign will educate a potential audience of 15,000 county residents on strategies to address flooding, erosion, and dumping. The program will also encourage interaction between 2000 local residents and their streams through activities such as canoe floats, kick-seining, and stream cleanups. This project meets the OEEF education priority of community issues by supporting education related to the endorsed watershed plan for the Middle Scioto River."

Example of an Objective for a Regulated Community project: "This project will develop and disseminate a matrix on the applicability of new storm water control regulatory requirements, to address the OEEF's priority of compliance assistance. After comment by Ohio EPA regulatory staff, the matrix will be field tested by a group of 20 small company environmental compliance managers, to verify that at least 90% can use it to correctly identify the appropriate regulations. Then it will be presented to at least 350 similar managers of small companies in a series of regional workshops; promoted on our association Web site, and offered to at least two industry publications. We will survey workshop attendees after six months about the usefulness of the matrix in maintaining compliance with storm water

Activities

Activities should be specific, sequential, reasonable for accomplishing the objective, and appropriate for the age of the audience. They should also be relevant to real-world issues affecting, or affected by, Ohio citizens and regulated entities. Demonstrate that the project does more than disseminate information: show how learners will engage in hands-on activities, problem-solving, and/or skill-building. Explain how the activities will utilize or adapt already existing environmental education materials. If new materials must be developed, provide a justification. Include what steps will be taken to ensure that the project information is scientifically valid and unbiased, and that more than one point of view is being presented.

Timeline: Enter a start date and stop date for each activity. Please keep in mind, activities being paid for with OEEF grant money cannot be initiated until the lead organization has a signed grant agreement. It can take up to several weeks from the date a grant award is announced until the agreement is signed.

For each activity, enter an approximate percentage of the proposed project budget that you anticipate will be needed. The more specific the activity, the easier it will be to estimate the amount of budget needed. An activity that is related to the project but not being supported by the OEEF grant can be reflected under the budget column with a 0%."

Sample Showing Objective and Associated Activities

Objective	Activity	Timeline	% of Budget
Representatives of 200 municipalities will learn which new storm water regulations apply to them.	Convene a team of six association members to develop a matrix of regulatory requirements. Offer the matrix to Ohio EPA regulatory staff for comment, and make needed changes.	6/2011 - 7/2012	15%
	Recruit 20 small company managers from association membership for field testing. Administer field test survey to volunteer managers. Make needed changes to matrix and re-administer until at least 90% of volunteers use correctly.	8/2011 – 11/2011	20%
	Present matrix at Association Annual Meeting in December and five regional workshops. Post on Web, offer to two publications.	12/2011 – 6/2012	50 %
	Survey members and workshop attendees on usefulness of matrix and storm water compliance.	6/2012	15%

Outcome Measurements

For each objective, describe the means of measuring the *initial* outcome of the project. Detail the methodology used to determine whether objectives were achieved, and how the project's *long-term* effects will be monitored and measured. What indicators of success will be used, and who will be conducting the evaluation?

CONTACT INFORMATION (CONTACT TAB)

This section of the online application form will initially be filled in automatically from the information you provided in your letter of intent. You may add or remove contacts from this section. Each application should list contact information for three different roles: the Project Director, the Fiscal Agent, and an Authorizing Agent . According to generally accepted accounting procedures, any two of these three roles may be fulfilled by the same person, but not all three, so that there can be two signatures on each fiscal report submitted to the OEEF explaining the expenditure of grant funds.

Project Director: *the person with primary responsibility for carrying out the project*

Fiscal Agent: *This is the person with primary responsibility for managing grant funds, who will assist the project director in preparing all required expenditure reports.*

Authorizing Agent: *This is the individual who will sign the Grant Agreement contract on behalf of the recipient organization.*

LETTERS OF COLLABORATION AND SUPPORT (Uploaded Document tab)

All letters should be secured by the applicant, signed and on letterhead from the writer's organization, prior to submitting the application. These letters should be combined into a single .pdf file and uploaded as an attachment to the online application, using the "Upload File" button on the Summary Tab of the online application. If you are not able to create a single .pdf file, please contact the OEEF staff or Bamboo Solutions help desk for assistance. It is important that the letters be combined into a single uploaded file so that the peer reviewers can easily find all the letters in one place.

Collaboration

Collaboration refers to active involvement of another organization, whose assistance is integral to the project. LETTERS MUST ACCOMPANY THE APPLICATION IF YOUR PROJECT INVOLVES COLLABORATION. For example, if you intend to conduct an event in a local park, and the park district is providing publicity and helping you recruit participants, then the park district is a collaborator on your project and you must include a letter from them. The letter should provide a commitment from the collaborating organization to provide the specific services needed.

Support

OEEF refers to letters from persons who support your organization's efforts or attest to your organization's capabilities as letters of support. Letters of support do not establish participation of the person or organization in the project. Letters of support are <u>optional</u> but encouraged.

It is recommended that applicants make early requests for electronic (.pdf file) letters of collaboration or support on letterhead from their project partners and/or supporters. OEEF will not consider unsigned letters, emails in lieu of letters, or letters received after the application deadline.

If a previous application is being re-submitted, the same letters may be used in the next grant round (provided this is within one calendar year of the date the original letter was written) if the letter writer's commitments have not changed in any way. If the letter writer's involvement has changed, the applicant should secure new letters. OEEF will not consider letters older than one year.

SUBMITTING THE FINAL VERSION OF YOUR APPLICATION

Use the "save" buttons in each section of the online application for as long as you are still

making edits, and if you wish for the OEEF staff to pre-review your draft application. Once you have made all the changes you wish to make to the draft, check “yes” that you have completed that section in each section of the application to submit and lock that portion of the application. Review the checklist on the Application Summary tab of the online application to be sure that you have completed each section of the proposal and uploaded your letters of support and collaboration. Then use the “Submit Application” button on the Application Summary tab of the online application to submit and lock the final version of your application. Once this final version of the application has been submitted, you will receive an email message confirming receipt of your application.