



JCCC FOUNDATION

FOUNDED IN 1991 IN COMMEMORATION OF THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE JAPANESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY OF CHICAGO

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March 2026

To: JCCC Foundation Student Development and Achievement Grant Applicants

From: Tetsuro Mitani, JCCC Foundation Board Secretary & Treasurer

It is our pleasure to send you this Request for Proposals for the *Student Development and Achievement Grants* sponsored by the JCCC Foundation.

In order to facilitate the evaluation process, the Foundation would like each applicant to submit a proposal according to the following Request for Proposals.

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
STUDENT DEVELOPMENT AND ACHIEVEMENT GRANTS

Sponsor: JCCC Foundation, under the auspices of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Chicago] (JCCC)

Contact: JCCC Foundation
c/o Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Chicago (JCCC)
Attn: Miho Hubacek, Administration & PR Coordinator
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OVERVIEW

Education in Chicago and Illinois is in the midst of a significant transformation. Schools and teachers are experimenting with innovative, student-oriented programs that encourage the development of independent, critical thinking, strong personal values and an enhanced understanding of science, math, literature, art, the social sciences and cultural diversity. These are not theoretical initiatives but rather concrete programs that bring into play all of the natural curiosity, creativity, energy, and initiative of young people. In the process, they encourage self-esteem, personal and social well-being, and a deepened understanding of our multicultural world.

To encourage and support these initiatives, the JCCC Foundation is offering Student Development and Achievement Grants for the 2026-2027 school year.

The mission of this grant program is to support projects that work with students to enhance learning and increase learning opportunities both inside and outside of school. Preference will be shown for innovative and collaborative programs and projects that encourage personal initiative, development of adult values, development of higher-order thinking skills, and real-life problem solving.

Program goals and objectives should support the current Illinois Learning Standards¹ for pre-school, elementary and secondary students in one or more of the following subject areas: Computer Science, Early Learning and Development, English Language Arts, English Language Learning / Bilingual Education, Fine Arts, Mathematics, Physical Development and Health, Science, Sexual Health Education, Social and Emotional Learning, Social Science, and World Languages.

The JCCC Foundation's aim is to encourage the broadest range of activities and projects. Any initiative that promises it will have a direct impact on students will be considered.

Organizations may wish to seek grants for these purposes:

- To fund projects that demonstrate the educational and student development value of a specific course of study
- To support demonstration projects that illustrate the value of classroom learning in the context of real-life situations
- To encourage greater family participation in school and community activities
- To expand the use of technology for teaching and learning

With these grants, the Chamber and the JCCC Foundation declare their intention to support innovative programs that convert educational theory to concrete actions that foster student development and achievement.

PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS

Proposals must be for a new or existing project. **The JCCC Foundation will not consider requests for general personnel (salary, fringe and health benefits), operating, or occupancy expenses. These include but are not limited to telephone expenses, rent, utilities, maintenance, background checks, audit or fiscal administration, and custodial services.** Projects may involve one or more teachers, classrooms, grades, schools or districts, affiliated clubs, social service agencies or fine/cultural arts organizations. **Special consideration will be given to innovative projects that involve parents, the community, or a collaboration of one or more schools/organizations.**

Projects may take the form of, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:

- Innovative classroom practices, projects, or demonstrations
- Parent/school partnerships
- Business/school partnerships
- Collaborative educational initiatives between the organization and other service providers.
- Projects may be new or continuing and in need of additional funds

¹ The Illinois Learning Standards have been adopted by the Illinois State Board of Education. For more detailed information on the standards, please go to Illinois Learning Standards. (<https://www.isbe.net/Pages/Standards-Courses.aspx>)

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Eligible Applicants:** Public and private schools and other organizations with non-profit status in the Chicago area (i.e. located in the Illinois counties of Boone, Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kendall, Lake, La Salle, Lee, McHenry, Ogle, Will and Winnebago) that provide educational opportunities for students and families in the pre-kindergarten to college age range. While having adult students registered in the project will not disqualify it for a grant, the project should not be primarily designed for adults. **Schools and organizations that have received a Student Development and Achievement Grant in 2023, 2024 or 2025 are not eligible.**
- Application Deadline:** The proposals must be delivered by mail or personal delivery to the JCCC Foundation by **5:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 18, 2026.** **Applications must be received by June 18.** **We will not accept applications received after this date.**
- Award Notification:** September 2026
- Presentation of Grants:** Wednesday, October 7, 2026
- Amount of Awards:** Up to \$10,000
*JCCC Foundation reserves the right to adjust the amount of the award if needed to fund as many projects as possible.

PROPOSAL FORMAT

In order to be eligible for consideration, please submit **one original and three copies (a total of four sets)** of the following materials by mail or personal delivery by Thursday, June 18. **All these materials must be single-sided. Cover letters, appendices, photographs, and additional attachments are neither requested nor encouraged, and if received, will not be evaluated.** Please note that the JCCC Foundation **does not** accept faxed or e-mailed proposals. Failure to comply with our requirements will result in disqualification.

Failure to submit the following information according to the format described may result in the disqualification of your proposal.

- A. Cover page** (Please use organization letterhead, if applicable. A cover letter **will not** be accepted as a cover page. The cover page must provide all the requested information below.)
1. Project title (**maximum: 10 words**)
 2. Project Category (Please indicate your project category from the following. Multiple categories are allowed. 1. STEM / STEAM 2. Fine Arts / Arts Education 3. Social Sciences 4. Cultural/Linguistic Diversity 5. Mentoring 6. Literacy 7. Social Emotional Learning / Development 8. Other (Please describe in a few words))
 3. Name of school or district/Name of organization
 4. Address, telephone number, e-mail address and website address
 5. **Name of contact person and e-mail address (indicate Mr./Ms./Dr./Other)**
 6. Position title of contact person (with whom JCCC Foundation will conduct all pre- and post-grant oral and written communication)
 7. How your organization learned of the JCCC Foundation Grant Program
 8. If applicable, date (year) of previous proposal submission to the JCCC Foundation and date (year) of previous JCCC Foundation grant awarded
 9. Amount requested (up to \$10,000)
 10. Original or electronic signature of the Superintendent or other individual authorized to submit

the proposal (if the submitting organization is a school or school district, the proposal must be signed by either the Superintendent or Principal)

11. Employer Identification Number (EIN) *Please note: EIN is not a sales tax exemption number.
12. Internal Revenue Code (IRC)/Tax Exempt Status (ex. 501(c)(3), 501(c)(6))
13. Date of submission

B. Abstract A summary of the project (maximum 100 words) *This may be a separate page from the Narrative. The abstract must identify the program's objectives, target group, and activities.

C. Narrative **No more than six pages single-sided which must include:**

1. Background and overview of submitting school/organization
2. Need for the project
3. Project description including what will be achieved and how students will benefit
4. Activities which will support the goals of the project
5. Explanation of the Illinois Learning Standards that will be met by the project. College projects may be exempt from this requirement.
6. Explanation of the personnel involved in the project, including background and qualifications (do not attach résumé)
7. Description of how JCCC Foundation grant monies will be allocated
8. Strategy for evaluation of the project
9. If applicable, participation of any collaborating partners or outside agencies/organizations
10. Strategy for sustaining project initiative after JCCC Foundation support ends

D. Project Budget (Must be separate from narrative) – Single-sided

The budget must provide **total anticipated revenue** (including up to \$10,000 from the JCCC Foundation and other specific sources of funding) and **total expense** for the proposed project.

Please note: The JCCC Foundation is requesting **a detailed project budget as opposed to the organization's overall operating budget**. Supply detailed information, such as kinds of materials and equipment required, sources of supply and costs, and where specifically JCCC Foundation grant money will be used. Budget categories may include consultant costs, materials, travel, equipment, supplies, printing, postage, event expenses (e.g. room rental, food, security), or other costs related to the project. Personnel costs are allowed only if directly related to the requested project. If applying to other funders for project support, please indicate which grants are still pending and which have been awarded.

E. Evidence of Non-Profit Status Attach **one of** the following:

1. A letter issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) confirming non-profit status of your organization. The letter must include Employer Identification Number (EIN) and Internal Revenue Code (IRC). Please note that EIN is not a sales tax exemption number.
2. If your organization is unable to obtain a letter from the IRS, a sales tax exemption letter will be accepted. Please attach IRS Form W-9 along with the tax exemption letter. The W-9 Form must include both EIN and IRC for your organization.

Cover letters, appendices and additional attachments are neither requested nor encouraged, and if received, will not be evaluated.

SUBMISSION OF PROPOSAL

Please submit **one original and three copies (a total of four sets)** by mail or personal delivery to:

JCCC Foundation
Student Development and Achievement Grants
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