STEM Learning Grant

Invitation to schools

# Introduction

STEM learning activities can enhance skills that will, in turn, enable learners to develop their broader learning dispositions and knowledge base. These activities can foster interests, abilities and dispositions in learners that they may otherwise not have the opportunity to develop.

The STEM Education Implementation Plan to 2026, commits to the development of a scheme which includes the provision of funding, to enhance, develop or re-establish STEM education projects that engage learners in STEM in primary and/or post­-primary schools. There is a total of €1.5 Million available in 2023, with individual schools able to apply for a grant of up to a maximum of €10,000 each. While €1.5m is available in funding in 2023 this is no guarantee of similar level of funding being available in subsequent years.

## Objectives of the Project

* To allow schools to assess the current STEM/ STEM and the Arts programmes/resources available in their schools;
* to enhance their current STEM/ STEM and the Arts learning opportunities;
* to re-establish STEM/ STEM and the Arts activities
* to begin STEM/STEM and the Arts activity/learning opportunity not previously available

## Outcomes for learners and schools

1. Enhance and reinforce the learning of the curriculum
2. Encouraging the development of a wide range of skills in learners
3. Schools can develop their STEM/STEM and the Arts offering
4. Pupils/Students have the opportunity to engage in STEM/STEM and the Arts learning opportunities and/or access to STEM/STEM and the Arts resources in school without incurring additional costs
5. Greater engagement for schools with the STEM/STEM and the Arts community

## Considerations for schools

1. Schools should in the first instance identify the STEM/STEM and the Arts resources/ learning opportunities already available in the school;
2. Schools should then consider for example: Does this need to be enhanced? Are the resources sufficient? Is there something that used to be available but now is not? Is there a gap in the STEM learning opportunities offered? Is there a demand amongst the pupil/student population for a STEM/STEM and the Arts club or group that is not currently catered for within the school?
3. Consider the diversity of learners in the school – is there something that can celebrate this diversity through a STEM/STEM and the Arts learning opportunity that is not currently available within the school?
4. Consider [Circular 43/2018](https://circulars.gov.ie/pdf/circular/education/2018/43.pdf) in relation to external facilitators in schools.
5. A project plan must be developed which includes clear objectives for how their STEM/STEM and the Arts programme will work, meeting the criteria determined by the Department.
6. Evaluation of the scheme will commence in the summer term 2024.

## Identification of Grant recipients:

1. Deadline for submission of expressions of interest 27 November 2023.
2. The Department will establish a panel to evaluate applications based on the following criteria:
   * Applications will be considered from any recognised primary, post-primary or special school within the free education scheme. Schools may also apply on behalf of learner led clubs or groups operating within the school.
   * Schools must submit a project plan outlining theinitiative including the amount required and how it will be spent.
   * Grants can be used to purchase equipment and tuition by external facilitators if required but grants are not intended for use on capital expenditure such as structural or building costs.
   * Schools must have a nominated person or persons to manage the programme
   * Schools must outline their expectations for the project, and give an idea of its potential impact in the longer term
   * Schools which have previously received STEM related funding will be considered for this grant, only if all reporting requirements in relation to that funding has been received by the Department

Our selection of proposals will also be informed by:

* geographic national spread
* a broad range of activities
* a broad range of school types

Ineligible schools:

* Schools outside the Free Education scheme

Participation will be confirmed with schools by December 2023.

# How will the programme be evaluated?

To establish the extent to which the programme’s objectives were realised, participating schools will be expected to provide feedback on the learner’s experiences and the views of the principals, teachers and/or external facilitators involved. Feedback from the learners will also be required as part of the reporting process. Further information will be provided at the time of evaluation.

# How to Apply

Interested schools should complete the Application Form below and return it by email to [stem@education.gov.ie](mailto:stem@education.gov.ie) no later than close of business on **27 November 2023.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. Name of School |  | | |
| 1. Address of School |  | | |
| 1. Roll number |  | | |
| 1. Name of school principal |  | | |
| 1. Contact details of liaison person in the school: | Name: |  | |
| Email: |  | |
| Phone number: |  | |
| 1. School Context: | Total enrolment: |  | |
| DEIS status (Y/N): |  | |
| Special school (Y/N): |  | |
| Special classes (Y/N): |  | |
| Co-Educational or single sex (please specify) |  | |
| Medium of Instruction | Choose an item. | |
|
| 1. What are the existing STEM/STEM and the Arts learning opportunites available in the school? | |  | |
| 1. What is the proposed initiative/project? Please include any resources that will be required. | |  | |
| 1. Why has this initiative/project been chosen? | |  | |
| 1. Who will manage the project? Please provide details of project manager and deputy. | |  | |
| 1. Please confirm that participation has been discussed and agreed with school management and relevant staff | | Yes / No | |
| 1. Has your school previously engaged with a similar initiative? If ‘Yes’, please give details. | | Yes / No | |
| 1. Please provide details on the cost of your porposed project to include an outline as to how you intend to spend the grant. | | | |
| 1. Briefly outline **in less than 500 words** why you think it is important for your school to be granted this STEM learning grant and how it will enhance the learning experience of the pupils/students in your school and wider school community | | | |
| Signed (Principal): | | | Date: |
| Signed (Liaison person for the school): | | | Date: |