REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
NSF STRIVE STEAD Grant Program

NSF STRIVE STEAD (Science and Technology Educational Access to Development Funds Program) is a collaborative initiative supported by Landmark College, Bennington College, the Community College of Vermont and Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation and is funded by the U.S. National Science Foundation (NSF) through the EPSCoR program.

Program Objective

The STEAD Funds Program supports educators and community-based partners in developing curriculum and programming that creates inclusive STEM opportunities for K–12 students—aligned with Vermont's evolving STEM research ecosystem. The term "STEM" as used here is inclusive of science (biology, chemistry, ecology, etc.), technology (computer science, AI, coding, etc.), engineering, and mathematics as well as astronomy, advanced manufacturing, environmental studies, psychology, economics, agriculture, the science of learning and other areas of interest aligned with NSF funding priorities.

STEAD funding is intended to equip historically underfunded institutions with resources needed to design and sustain equitable STEM education programs that contribute meaningfully to advancing STEM education in Vermont. STEAD Funds are intended to:

- Actively engage participants in STEM learning.
- Demonstrate the wonder, excitement, and relevance of STEM in learning and everyday life.
- Expose participants to local STEM research, degree and training programs, or careers.
- Expand or develop STEM curriculum or programs.
- Address local challenges to STEM education in Vermont.

Funded projects should expand Vermont's research ecosystem by equipping students with the skills, awareness, and interest to pursue STEM fields.

Eligibility

Applications are open to K–12 educators, administrators, faculty or staff from institutions or community organizations located in Vermont. Projects must align with VT STEM

education values and goals. Awards will be granted based on need, taking into account organizational capacity, geographic location, and the demographics of the populations served. Applicants may submit one proposal per cycle.

Awards are issued on a reimbursement basis and must be administered through a host institution, financial organization, or 501(c)(3). Awards cannot be made directly to individuals.

Funding Parameters
- **Maximum Award**: $2,500
- **Anticipated Awards**: 3–5 per year
- **Funding Period**: Up to 12 months from start date
- **Allowable Costs**:
  - Curriculum development materials
  - Educational supplies and equipment
  - Student participation support
  - Professional development
  - Community or industry engagement activities

Please note that funds may not be used to support general operating expenses, capital campaigns, or projects that do not explicitly demonstrate a clear connection between proposed student impacts and specific budget line items.

Application Period: Applications are accepted at any time.
Review Cycles: Applications will be reviewed and awarded every six months on the following schedule:

- **Cycle 1**: February 15
- **Cycle 2**: August 15

Project Start Date: No earlier than one month after the award date. Awards will be announced approximately one month after the submission deadline.
Project End Date: No later than 12 months after the corresponding award date.

Proposal Requirements

Applications must be submitted through the STRIVE online form. Each section below corresponds to a question on the form and includes a character limit.

1. Project Title – Descriptive title and the overseeing institution or organization.

2. Project Lead Bio (Max: 75 words)- Project Lead Name, title and description relevant experience and how they are equipped to fulfill the project.

3. Summary (Max: 100 words)- Briefly describe your project's purpose, what you'll do, and who it will serve.

4.Objectives & STEM Focus (Max: 175 words)- List the main goals of your project and explain how it promotes inclusive STEM learning or engagement for students.

5. Activities & Timeline (Max: 250 words)- Describe your planned activities, how they'll be carried out, and key milestones or dates.

6. Target Audience (Max: 150 words)- Who are you hoping to reach (<u>specific number of students impacted</u>, grades, demographics, geography), and how will they benefit?

7. Innovation & Relevance (Max: 200 words)- Highlight connections to workforce development, regionally relevant STEM skills or research-based practices.

8. Collaboration (Optional – Max: 150 words)- List any partners (schools, organizations, etc.) and explain their role in the project.

9. Future Vision (Optional – Max: 150 words)- If your project could grow beyond this grant, describe what that might look like or how it could be sustained.

10. Budget Upload (Attach using provided template)-Use the downloadable STRIVE Budget Template to outline your expenses and rationale.

Submission Instructions

All applications must be submitted through the STRIVE online application form, available on our website. After downloading the budget template and question guidelines from our website, compile your answers so you can copy and paste them into the embedded form.

Please complete each section in accordance with the stated word limits and upload your budget using the provided template.

If you have any questions or encounter any issues while completing the form, please contact us at **admin@strivevt.org**.

Review Process

Proposals will be reviewed by a panel of STRIVE administrators from our partner institutions. Funding decisions will be communicated within one month of each review cycle deadline. Feedback will be provided, and revised submissions are welcome.

Reporting Requirements

All funded projects must submit a brief final report within 60 days of project completion. The report should outline project outcomes and indicate the status of external funding submissions.

Information Sessions

A virtual information session recording is available on our website strivevt.org. Additional support is available by contacting the STRIVE team at **admin@strivevt.org.**