

NTC MINIGRANT PROGRAM

AWARDS OF \$25 to \$500

Dates to Remember!

The due date for Mini-Grant proposals is **the third Friday in May** of the year preceding funding.

If there is a second funding round, the due date will be **the third Friday in October** of the funding year.

Final reports must be submitted by **the last Friday in May** of the funding year.

What is the purpose of the program?

The MiniGrant program is designed to help staff members meet their own professional goals by developing unique projects that enhance student learning and teacher practice.

What kinds of projects are developed in the program?

There are two types of projects:

Category I - Curriculum & Instruction MiniGrants support student-focused projects, including:

- creating innovative curriculum resource materials;
- planning a new or innovative program for a class or group of students;
- arranging for speakers or field trips to complement instruction for students;
- planning a new or innovative school-wide program.

A wide variety of projects have received *Category I* awards, including:

- a water-study project
- an after-school enrichment program for "at-risk" students
- a weather station
- an early learning school/home program
- a sculpture project with an artist-in-residence
- a local history research project
- a multi-lingual student anthology

Category II - Professional Development MiniGrants support staff members in the individual or group pursuit of a professional goal. Recipients might use the funds in a variety of ways, including to:

- purchase copies of professional books or journals for a study group;
- hire a consultant to work with an individual or group of teachers;
- hire substitutes to release teachers to visit an exemplary program;
- hire substitutes to release teachers to engage in peer coaching;
- cover part or all of the cost of attendance at a conference (usual district approval process still applies)

Category II awards have included:

- a study group on reading strategies
- a teacher-training program on substance abuse
- a research project on portfolio development
- a cross grade-level peer-coaching project

Who evaluates the applications?

Proposals are reviewed by a committee composed of former grant recipients and Policy Board members. The scoring rubric they use can be found in this packet. Note that the grant proposals are read anonymously, so remember not to include references to individual schools or name any people specifically in the body of your proposal.

Who is eligible to apply for a MiniGrant?

All staff members employed by the Nyack Public Schools and St. Paul School in Valley Cottage are eligible to apply. At least one teacher must be involved in each proposal.

Where do I get an application form?

Application forms are available from NTC Policy Board members in each building or by going online to www.nyackteachercenter.org

How can I find out more?

Call/email the teacher center with your questions, and/or attend a MiniGrant workshop that explains the application process and gives attendees an opportunity to rethink and refine project plans.

Guidelines for Submitting an Application

What should be included?

- 1) **Title** – One that reflects the content of the project.
- 2) **Category** – Is this a Category I or Category II project?
- 3) **Brief Summary** of the project (50 words or less)
- 4) **Needs & Rationale** – Focus on why the project should be undertaken. How have you determined this need? What are the educational benefits? How will this project increase student learning / improve teacher practice?
- 5) **Objectives** – What will the learners - whether students or teachers - be able to do as a result of this project? What will be your criteria for judging success?
- 6) **Activities** – How will you carry out your plan to achieve the objectives? Be as specific as you can.
- 7) **Timeline** - Estimate the dates by which various tasks will be completed.
- 8) **Sharing with Colleagues** – How will you share the results of this MiniGrant with colleagues?
- 9) **Itemized Budget** - What will you purchase? How much of each item? If the project will cost more than \$500, indicate how the rest will be financed.
- 10) **Assessment** – What evidence will be gathered to measure the success of the project? What will be the criteria for success?

IMPORTANT

If your project involves released-time, you must get your principal's approval before submitting the proposal.

Remember:

*These proposals are judged anonymously. **DO NOT** include any references that would make it possible for a reader to identify you.*

Format

DO NOT include any identifying references to people or schools in the body of your proposal. Say "our school" or, if you must, "elementary school", NOT "Upper Nyack School." Say "our library media specialist", NOT "Ms. Quinn, our library media specialist." Using names or specific references will disqualify your proposal.

We suggest that you have someone who is not familiar with the project review the grant to look for unintended identifying references and ensure that the proposal is easily understood.

The proposal must be typed, double-spaced, using 12 point Times New Roman or equivalent font, and should be no longer than four pages.

Application Process

Grant proposals are due on or before the third Friday in May of the year preceding funding (i.e., May 2008 for a 2008/2009 grant). If there is still money in the budget after the first round has been funded, a second round will be announced and proposals will be due the third Friday in October.

Submit the cover page, with original signatures, and four copies of the proposal. Proposals may be submitted to the Teacher Center in person or by mail.

Review

The proposals are reviewed by the Grant Review Committee, which is composed of former grant recipients and Policy Board representatives. The committee forwards its recommendations to the entire Policy Board, which then acts upon those recommendations.

If your grant is funded, you will be responsible for several reports:

- A mid-year report, due in February, briefly outlining progress to date.
- An end-of-year report, due on or before the last Friday in May. Directions for this report will be sent to grant recipients.
- A brief (3 - 4 minute) report to the School Board, at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board in June or the following fall - date TBA.
- A report to colleagues - at a faculty meeting, a department meeting, or a grade level meeting.



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13A DICKINSON AVENUE
NYACK, NY 10960
(845) 353-7060
ntc@nyackteachercenter.org

MiniGrant Application Cover Page

Please fill in the personal data required and submit this cover sheet and four copies of the completed application form. If more than one person is applying, select one person to be the contact person for the project.

The NTC reserves the right to award less than the amount requested. We recognize that it may be necessary to arrange an adjustment of the scope of your project if the award is reduced.

Remember: The people reading this proposal may not know anything about your program or the needs of the children you teach. Be very clear so they can judge the project fairly.

Judging is anonymous. This cover page will be removed before the proposal is given to the MiniGrant Review Committee, but you must review your proposal carefully to insure that that you have not provided any information that would make it clear who was applying for the grant.

I/We have discussed the implications of this proposal with any staff members who may be impacted by it, including the principal, department head and colleagues.

I/We assure that the activities can be accomplished by May of the project year and understand that a copy of the final report of the project must be submitted by the last Friday in May and that I/we must do a presentation to the School Board in June of the project year or fall of next year as well.

Signature(s) of applicant(s)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Contact Person: _____ Home Phone: _____

Address: _____

School: _____ Phone: _____

Project Title: _____ Grade(s): _____

This page will be removed when the proposal is submitted to the Grant Review Committee.

SAMPLE MINIGRANT READERS' RATING SHEET

Please rate each of the following on a scale of 1 to 10 (10 being the highest). Use the attached guidelines and the questions after each section title as a guide for scoring. Each proposal will be individually rated by three readers. Only those receiving an aggregate total of 110 points or more from the three readers will be considered for funding.

Proposal Title: _____

Needs & Rationale: (10 points) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Is the importance of the proposed work made clear? Are there important educational benefits?

Objectives: (10 points) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Do the objectives fit the project? Are they clear? measurable? observable?

Activities & Timeline: (10 points) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Are the activities and timeline thorough and well thought out? Will they accomplish the objectives?

Sharing: (10 points) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Does the plan provide for effective sharing of the project? Will the project be of value to other educators and/or students?

Budget: (10 points) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Is the budget reasonable & appropriate?

Assessment: (10 points) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Will the evaluation plan demonstrate the extent to which the goals have been attained?

Please record your comments and questions on the back of this sheet.

Rater: _____ Total Score: _____