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| Esports Industry Career Exploration25-AG49-G06Program Term Date: May 1, 2025 – June 30, 2026Application Due Date: Thursday, February 13, 2025no later than 4:00 PM. |
| Kevin DehmerActing Commissioner of EducationJorden Schiff, Ed.D.Assistant CommissionerKathleen PaquetteDirectorOffice of Career ReadinessFY 2025CFDA 84.048A: FAIN: V048A240030New Jersey Department of EducationP.O. Box 500 ● Trenton, NJ 08625-0500 |

The following are requirements and instructions for a Notice of Grant Opportunity (NGO) from the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE). Instructions on how to gain access to the application and how to complete the application in the Electronic Web-Enabled Grant (EWEG) system are available in [the Discretionary Grants Manual](https://www.nj.gov/education/grants/discretionary/apps/).

When responding to this NGO, applicants must use [the EWEG online application system](https://njdoe.mtwgms.org/NJDOEGmsWeb/logon.aspx) on the NJDOE’s [Homeroom](http://homeroom.state.nj.us/) webpage. On the EWEG GMS page, scroll down to view “Available” grants to initiate the application. If the application is not available, contact EWEG help to gain access to the application. The responsibility for a timely submission resides with the applicant. The Application Control Center (ACC) must receive the completed application through the online EWEG system through the NJDOE Homeroom webpage by no later than 4:00 PM on the due date of the application. Without exception, the ACC will not accept, and the Office of Grants Management (OGM) cannot evaluate an application submitted after this deadline for funding consideration.

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It is a policy of the New Jersey State Board of Education and the State Department of Education that no person, on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, age, sex, handicap, or marital status, shall be subjected to discrimination in employment or be excluded from or denied benefits of any activity, program or service for which the department has responsibility. The department will comply with all state and federal laws and regulations concerning nondiscrimination.

# Grant Program Information

## Purpose of the NGO

Esports is a rising career industry with exponentially growing opportunities and enthusiastic student following. Esports, short for electronic sports or video games, have become an integrated aspect of students’ lives outside school. While many adults may view esports as simply playing video games, a plethora of career opportunities are proportionally increasing to support the esports industry’s growing popularity. The esports industry supports high-wage, high-skill, and in-demand careers such as;

* Advertising and Promotions Managers 11-2011.00\* (Median NJ wage of $173,380 and job zone four)
* Video Game Designers 15-1255.01\* (Median NJ wage of $80,840, job zone four, and much faster than average growth);
* Computer Programmers 15-1251.00 (Median NJ wage of $97,800, and job zone four), Public Relations Specialist 27-3031.00 (Median NJ wage of $67,440, job zone four, and faster than average growth);
* Meeting, Convention, and Event Planners 13-1121.00 (Median NJ wage of $52,560, job zone four, and faster than average growth) and;
* Media Programming Directors 27-2012.03 (Median NJ wage of $85,320, job zone four, and faster than average growth).

In 2021, the New Jersey Economic Development Authority (NJEDA) invested $200,000 to establish the Esports Innovation Center at Stockton University’s Atlantic City campus, hoping to revitalize Atlantic City’s economy and become a national esport hub. A growing number of universities have adopted competitive esports teams, and new degree offerings now exist in esports pathways at Rutgers University, Rowan University, Camden County College, and Stockton University.

The Office of Career Readiness intends to harness the popularity of esports to combat chronic absenteeism and the high rate of student suspensions, increase middle school student awareness of high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand career pathways within the esports industry, increase equity and access of special population groups to CTE programming and increase the engagement of special population students through the development of The Esport Industry Career Exploration NGO. The Office of Career Readiness will award five districts up to $50,000 each to create new esports programming at the middle grades level. Esports programs must support career exploration activities and be aligned with secondary CTE programs of study in high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand fields in the esports industry. The top five highest-scoring applications will be selected for funding using the eligibility criteria below.

The Esports Industry Career Exploration grant opportunity has the following goals:

* Goal 1: Middle school students will learn about career opportunities in the esports industry aligning with CTE programming at the secondary level.
* Goal 2: Middle school students involved in esports programming will have an increased attendance rate.
* Goal 3: At the middle grades level, students of special populations identified by Perkins V legislation, particularly multilinguistic learners (MLLs), will become more engaged in the school community and develop social and soft skills needed in many career and technical fields.

*\*Careers, career codes, and career information are from the O\*Net database developed under the sponsorship of the U.S. Department of Labor/Employment and Training Administration through a grant to the North Carolina Department of Commerce.*

**Application Type: Limited Competitive\***

**Target Audience:** [x] Local Education Agency (LEA), Grade span: 5-8
[ ]  Community-Based Nonprofit Organization (CBO), or
[ ]  Institutes of Higher Education (IHE)
[ ] Other\*:**[Click to Add Eligible Applicant]**

**To be eligible, the LEA must:**

Act as a sending district to a New Jersey comprehensive school district or County Vocational School District (CVSD) that has one or more approved CTE programs of study from the following identified programs:

* + CIP Code 11.0201\* - Computer Programmer;
	+ CIP Code 50.0411 - Game and Interactive Media Design;
	+ CIP Code 52.1401 - Marketing/Marketing Management, General;
	+ CIP Code 52.0907 - Meeting and Event Planning; and;
	+ CIP Code 10.0202 - Radio and Television Broadcasting.

Priority for funding will be given to districts that serve a high population of students who are MLLs or other special populations, as identified by Perkins V legislation.

*\*CIP Code information is from the National Center for Educational Statistics website, developed by the U.S. Department of Education and updated in 2020.*

## Federal Compliance Requirements - Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) Registrations

In accordance with the Federal Fiscal Accountability Transparency Act (FFATA), all grant recipients must have a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). As part of the government-wide initiative, the NJDOE will join other Federal agencies and transition from using the Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) to the new UEI for all grant recipients and applicant organizations. UEIs are the primary means of entity identification for Federal awards and are required in accordance with 2 CFR Part 25. The UEI number is administered by the Federal Government in the System for Award Management (SAM) through theSAM.gov website

FFATA Executive Compensation Disclosure Criteria:

In the preceding fiscal year, if an applicant:

* Received at least $25,000,000 in annual gross revenues from federal awards; and
* If at least eighty (80) percent of the applicant’s annual gross revenues came from federal awards, the applicant is required to disclose the name and total compensation of the five (5) most highly compensated officers of the applicant as part of the grant application.

This information is to be entered into the Award Management SAM Application in EWEG and updated yearly.

## Award Management SAM Application

Before applying for a grant application, a Local Education Agency (LEA), Community-Based Nonprofit Organization (CBO), or Institute of Higher Education (IHE) must provide the requisite information in the SAM section in the NJDOE’s EWEG system. The entity will need its valid UEI to complete this step.

Key steps/actions:

* + - 1. Create and submit the AWARD Management SAM application in EWEG if your entity has applied for or has received other grants from the NJDOE.
			2. When completing the AWARD Management SAM application, entities must enter an active SAM UEI and upload a copy of its SAM Entity Overview page. Applicants must ensure their address has the correct hyphenated nine-digit zip code in their address. Information provided in the LEA Central Contacts must match information from SAM.gov to be compliant with FFATA reporting.
			3. To renew an existing SAM UEI or to apply for a SAM UEI, entities must go through [www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov/).

Failure to complete or update the AWARD Management SAM application in EWEG will prevent the applicant from viewing, creating, and submitting applications in the EWEG system.

**No award will be made to an applicant not in compliance with FFATA.**

## Dissemination of This Notice

The Office of Career Readiness will make this notice available to eligible applicants listed in Section I.1. based upon the eligibility statement, to the Office of Comprehensive Support Team Leaders, and to the county superintendents of the counties where the eligible agencies are located.

Additional copies of the NGO are also available on the NJDOE’s [Discretionary Grant](http://www.nj.gov/njded/grants/discretionary/) website or by contacting the Office of Career Readiness at the New Jersey Department of Education, 100 River View Plaza, Route 29, P.O. Box 500, Trenton, NJ 08625-0500; telephone (609) 376-9067,
Email Contact - IT.careercluster@doe.nj.gov.

## Access to the EWEG Application

To initiate the application, the applicant must have EWEG system login credentials. Once you log on, go to the GMS Access Select page and scroll down to view “Available” applications. If an application is not visible in the EWEG system, contact your district’s Web (Homeroom) Administrator to request access to the application via EWEG help. LEA applicants without login credentials must contact their district’s Web (Homeroom) Administrator to request access to the EWEG system. Non-LEA applicants must request access by sending an email to eweghelp@doe.nj.gov. Please allow up to 24-48 hours for the registration to be completed in the EWEG system.

The NJDOE advises applicants to plan appropriately and to allow for time to address any technical challenges that may occur. Additionally, applicants should run a consistency check at least 48 hours before the due date to determine any errors that might prevent the application submission. Applicants are advised not to wait until the due date to submit the application online, as the EWEG system may be slower than normal due to increased usage. Running the consistency check does not submit the application. A “Submit” button will appear when the consistency check runs successfully. Once the application is complete and has passed the consistency check with no error messages, the applicant may submit the application by clicking the “Submit” button. The applicant should wait for a message from the EWEG system indicating that the application was submitted. The application status will update in the Grants Management System (GMS) on the GMS Select page as “Submitted for Review” along with the application submission date.

**IMPORTANT:** Once the application has been submitted via EWEG, the application will not be returned to the applicant for editing, nor can additional information or missing documentation be submitted to the department for application review consideration. **Please Note: The submit button in the EWEG system will disappear as of 4:00 PM on the due date**. Please refer to the [Discretionary Grants Manual](https://www.nj.gov/education/grants/discretionary/apps/) for instructions on how to work in EWEG.

## Application Submission

The Office of Grants Management’s Application Control Center (ACC) must receive the completed application through the EWEG system accessible through the NJDOE’s Homeroom webpage **no later than 4:00 PM on Thursday, February 13, 2025.** Without exception, the ACC will not accept nor evaluate an application after this deadline for funding consideration.

The NJDOE administers discretionary grant programs in strict conformance with procedures designed to ensure accountability and integrity in the use of public funds and, therefore, will not accept late applications. The responsibility for a timely submission resides with the applicant.

Completed applications are those that include all elements listed in [Section II.5.](#_Application_Component_Required), Application Component Required Uploads checklist. Applications received by the due date and specified time will be screened to determine whether they are, in fact, eligible for consideration. The NJDOE reserves the right to reject any application that does not conform with this NGO’s requirements.

**Paper copies of the grant application will not be accepted in lieu of the EWEG application. Applications submitted via FAX will not be accepted under any circumstances.**

## Application Review Criteria

To be considered for funding, all grant applications complete a two-tiered review. First, the application will be reviewed and scored by a panel of three evaluators. The evaluators will only use the information provided in the EWEG grant application under the Narrative Tabs, which include the Need, Project Description, Project Activity Plan, Goals/Objectives – Indicators and Activity Plan, Commitment and Capacity, the Budget Tabs, and all required documentation uploaded as noted in [Section II.5](#_Application_Component_Required). In addition to how well the content addresses [Section II.4.](#_Project_Design_Considerations_1), the evaluators will also review the NGO application for completeness and accuracy.

The second review is done by the Program Office responsible for administering the program. The Program office reviews the application as noted in Section I.1 (Purpose of the NGO) and Section II.4. (Project Design Components). The NJDOE reserves the right to reject any application that is not in conformance with the requirements and intent of this NGO. The total point value for the NGO is 100 points. If noted in the NGO, bonus points will only be added if the grant application scores 70 points or greater and meets the intent of the Notice of Grant Opportunity (NGO).

Once scored, applications will be awarded based on rank order from highest to lowest score until grant-allocated funds are exhausted.

## Grantee Award Notifications

The EWEG system notifies applicants of awards through emails to individuals listed in the Contacts Tab. A list will also be posted on the NJDOE’s website under the Office of Grants Management> YYYY NGOs> Grant Title> Awardee List.

In addition to the notifications mentioned above, the status in EWEG will change on the GMS page from “Submitted for Review” to one of the following:

* Preliminary Approved – For applicants awarded the grant funds by scoring 70 points or greater and meeting the eligibility criteria, where funds are available. Approved Applications will be notified via EWEG with instructions on how to proceed with the Pre-Award process. In addition, instructions on initiating the Pre-Award process can be found in the [Discretionary Grants Manual](https://www.nj.gov/education/grants/discretionary/apps/).
* No Award – No award is made for applicants that fall into one of two categories: applicants who do not meet the 70-point score and/or the intent of the NGO listed in II.4 (Program Design Consideration); and applicants who score 70 points or greater and meet the eligibility criteria, but funds are exhausted.

## Open Public Records

In accordance with the Open Public Records Act P.L. 2001, c. 404, applications, evaluation results, and other competitive grant information for discretionary grant funds received September 1, 2003, or later will become matters of public record and will be available to members of the public upon request at the completion of the evaluation process.

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#  Completing the Application

This section intends to provide the framework within which the applicant will plan, design, and develop its proposed Project to meet the purpose of this NGO. Before preparing applications, potential applicants are advised to review Section I, Grant Program Information, of this NGO to fully understand the State’s vision and purpose for offering the program. Additionally, the information in Section III, Grantee Agreement Requirements, will complete the applicant’s understanding of the specific considerations and requirements to be considered and/or addressed in the Project.

## General Instructions for Applying

Applicants must prepare and submit a complete application by the deadline to apply for a grant under this NGO. The following sections in the EWEG application are required to be completed:

Admin Tab – Contacts, Allocation, Assurance, Board Resolution
Narrative Tab – Abstract, Project Description, Need, Goals & Objectives, Project Activity Plan, Organizational Commitment & Capacity

Budget Tab – All related subtabs.

Upload Tab – The required documents to be included in the application as stated in the NGO.

The application must respond to the State’s vision articulated in Section I, Grant Program Information, of this NGO. It must be planned, designed, and developed in accordance with the program framework articulated in Section II, Completing the Application. The applicant may seek additional guidance in the [[Discretionary Grants Manual](https://www.nj.gov/education/grants/discretionary/apps/)](https://www.nj.gov/education/grants/discretionary/apps/docs/PreAwardManual.pdf).

## Application Technical Assistance Session

**Tuesday, January 14, 2025**

[x]  **Teams Virtual Meeting:** [**Click here to register.**](https://homeroom5.doe.state.nj.us/events/) Preregistration is required by **Friday, January 10, 2025**.

[ ]  **In-person Meeting:** Please register [online](https://homeroom5.doe.state.nj.us/events/) here. Registrants requiring special accommodation for the Technical Assistance Workshop should identify their needs at the time of registration.

## Grant Deliverables

Applying districts should plan to meet the following deliverables within the grant project period:

* Develop curriculum for career exploration in esports industry career pathways, including marketing, game design, animation, event planning, and broadcasting.
* Create career plans for middle school students that outline specific steps to help them enter approved CTE programs of study and the workforce. These plans should guide students towards career pathways that are high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand (meeting at least two of these criteria)

## Project Design Considerations

This project design should consider how the Grantee will be able to best create in-person opportunities for students to participate in esports programs at the middle grades level. The esports program should be accessible to all students and structured to encourage student attendance in school, socialization amongst peers, and developing soft skills such as teamwork, leadership, and communication. Grant applications should address the school district’s enrollment data of Perkins V special population students and how the proposed plan will act to eliminate barriers for students who want to pursue esport career pathways. This grant has up to nine available bonus points for districts that have higher than state average student enrollment for students who are multilinguistic learners or other special populations as identified by Perkins V legislation.

The grant application should address the existing esports-identified career pathways and approved CTE programs of study available for students in the district or in sending districts, as well as how the program plan will make students aware of the CTE programming.

**The following point values apply to the evaluation of applications received in response to this NGO:**

**Project Abstract *(250-300 words)*** The Project Abstract summarizes the proposed Project’s need, purpose, and projected outcomes. The proposed Project and outcomes must cover the full multi-year/single-year grant period. Do not include information in the abstract that is not supported elsewhere in the application.

**Needs [15]** - The Statement of Need identifies the local conditions and/or needs that justify the Project proposed in the application. A “need” in this context is defined as the difference between the current status and the outcomes and/or standard(s) that the school would like to achieve.

* Describe the target population to be served, including the grade levels and ages of the children to be served.
* Describe the programming that will take place to enable all students to meet the New Jersey student achievement standards and address student learning needs.
* Provide documentation to substantiate the stated conditions and/or needs. Documentation may include, but is not limited to, demographics, test data, descriptions of target population(s), student data, personnel data, attendance data, and research.
* Do not attempt to address problems beyond the grant program’s scope.

**Project Description [30]** – Describe the complete single-year project design and plan for implementing the Project in a detailed narrative. Provide evidence that the Project is appropriate for and will successfully address the school’s identified needs. Describe the effect the Project will have on the school upon completion. When possible, cite examples of how the approach or different strategies have led to success for other schools.

* Include specific examples of systems, curriculum, or design approaches that will be incorporated.
* Include justification for identifying this as an area to improve and the plan to make this transition.
* Include benchmarks for the process’s early, middle, and final stages and how progress will be measured toward these benchmarks.
* Identify who will be responsible for what stages and the level of support they will receive.
* Write clearly and succinctly, focusing on quality and not quantity.
* Ensure that the steps of the Project Activity Plan are well-articulated and logically sequenced in the narrative.

When applying for the Esports Industries Career Exploration grant, eligible districts will need to also include the following aspects in the project description:

* Provide the school’s demographics, including the percentage of students classified as MLLs, nontraditional, or a special population under Perkins V legislation. Districts should also provide information on student absenteeism and rates of exclusionary discipline;
* Identify which eligible esports industry CTE programs of study are available at the comprehensive and/or county vocational district;
* Identify how specific games, esports leagues, and other media utilized in the esports program will be reviewed locally to ensure the program adheres to the school and community’s values.
* Develop a plan for the creation of engaging instructional activities (to be infused during after-school esport practices) that will teach students about the high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand career pathways in the esports industry;
* Identify what steps will be taken to eliminate barriers for MLL, nontraditional, and other special populations students to participate in the esports program;
* Develop a plan for how to utilize research-based practices in developing language acquisition and soft skills during esport practices and matches; and;
* Provide the vision for the new esports program, including an overview of what eligible pathways will be an instructional focus and articulated pathways for how students will be able to continue with the identified CTE focus after entering high school. If applicable, provide information on the district’s need to create new secondary CTE programs of study in esport pathways.

**Goals/Objectives/Indicators [10]** – The Esports Industry Career Exploration grant opportunity has the following goals and objectives:

* Goal 1: Middle school students will learn about careers in the esports industry that align with CTE programming at the secondary level.
	+ - Objective 1.1: Students will be able to identify careers of interest in the esports industry that are at least two of three of the following: high-skill, high-wage, and in-demand.
		- Objective 1.2: Students will be able to create a career plan of actionable steps that would allow them to enter the workforce in a career pathway that meets at least two out of three of the following: high-skill, high-wage, or in-demand.
		- Objective 1.3: Students will be able to identify the process for applying and enrolling in secondary CTE programs that are available in the local comprehensive or county vocational schools.
* Goal 2: Middle school students involved in esports programming will have an increased attendance rate.
	+ - Objective 2.1: Students involved in esports programming will have an increased school day attendance rate compared to previous years.
		- Objective 2.2: Students involved in esports programming will have a lower rate of exclusionary discipline compared to previous years.
* Goal 3: At the middle grades level, students of special populations identified by Perkins V legislation, particularly students who are Multilinguistic learners, will become more engaged in the school community and develop social and soft skills needed in many career and technical fields.
	+ - Objective 3.1: Students will develop career and technical academic vocabulary skills and knowledge aligning with esport career pathways.
		- Objective 3.2: Students will have opportunities for additional socialization amongst peers beyond the school day.
		- Objective 3.3: Students will have a structured and safe environment to practice soft skills that are utilized in many career and technical fields, such as teamwork, leadership, and communication.

Applications must include a plan to evaluate the Project’s success in achieving its goals and objectives. Indicators of success must be established for each project objective. In constructing the indicators, describe the methods that will be used to evaluate the progress toward achievement of the goal and objectives, as well as the overall grant project outcomes. Also, describe in the indicators the measures and instruments to be used, the individuals responsible for developing and conducting the evaluation, and how results will be used to improve project outcomes. Well-constructed indicators of success will help establish a clear understanding of responsibilities and a system of accountability for the Project. Indicators will also help to determine whether or not to refine an aspect of the Project to ensure overall success. Indicators will include the following considerations:

* Identify the Project’s anticipated outcomes in measurable terms and in relation to the stated needs.
* Define the population to be served.
* Identify the timeline for implementing and completing each objective.
* Identify the expected performance level to indicate the successful achievement of the objective.
* Make certain to construct measurable indicators of success that directly link to and support project objectives.

**Project Activity Plan [10]** The Project Activity Plan follows the goal(s) and objectives that were listed in the previous section. The Activity Plan is for the current grant period. Activities represent the steps that will be taken to achieve each identified objective. Also, the activities that are identified in this section serve as the basis for the individual expenditures that are proposed in the budget. Review the Goals and the Objectives when constructing the Project Activity Plan to ensure that appropriate links have been established between the goals and objectives and the activities.

* State the relevant objective in full in the space provided. Number the Goal 1 and each objective 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, etc.
* Describe all of the tasks and activities planned for the accomplishment of each goal and objective.
* List all the activities in chronological order.
Space the activities appropriately across all report periods of the grant project.
* Identify the staff directly responsible for the implementation of the activity. If the individual conducting the activity is not referenced appropriately on the Project Activity Plan, it may not be possible to determine an allocation of the requested cost, and costs may be disallowed.
* List the documentation that tracks the progress and confirms the completion of each activity, such as agenda, minutes, curriculum, etc.
* In the Report Period Column on the Project Activity Plan, indicate with a checkmark the period in which the activity will be implemented. If the activity is ongoing or recurring, place a checkmark in the boxes under each period in which the activity will take place.
* Do not list the project director or other person with general oversight authority for the Project as the “person responsible” for carrying out all activities.

**Commitment and Capacity [30]** After identifying the conditions and/or needs and the plan to address them, next describe the charter organization and its capacity to take on the Project. First, explain why the Project being proposed is important to the school. Describe the commitment to addressing the conditions and/or needs identified, including the organizational support that exists for implementing the proposed Project.

Explain any experience the organization has had in implementing similar types of projects, as well as the outcomes of those projects. What worked, what did not, and why? Explain how previous experiences will ensure successful implementation of the proposed Project. If the organization or members of the staff have not implemented similar projects, explain why the proposed Project will be successful. Describe all organizational resources (staff, facilities, equipment, funds, etc.) that will support successful project implementation. Identify existing programs that exist at the middle grades level in career exploration, esports, and CTE. Describe the community, board of education, staff, and student support for this proposed program or similar programming. Explain any competitive esports programming or approved secondary programs of study that exist (or are planned) in any of the following esports industries that support the organization’s commitment to the Project;

* 1. CIP Code 11.0201 - Computer Programmer;
	2. CIP Code 50.0411 - Game and Interactive Media Design;
	3. CIP Code 52.1401 - Marketing/Marketing Management, General;
	4. CIP Code 52.0907 - Meeting and Event Planning; and;
	5. CIP Code 10.0202 - Radio and Television Broadcasting.

Describe the organization’s future capacity to sustain the program beyond the single-year grant period.

**Budget [5]** – Once the objectives that will guide the work in the implementation phase of the grant have been prioritized, the budget details necessary to carry out each activity will be developed.
The applicant’s budget must be well-considered, necessary for the implementation of the Project, remain within the funding parameters contained in this handout, and demonstrate prudent use of resources. The NJDOE will review the budget to ensure that costs are customary and reasonable for implementing each project activity.

The applicant must provide a direct link for each cost to the goal, objectives, and activities in the Project Activity Plan that provides programmatic support for the proposed cost. In addition, the applicant must provide documentation and details sufficient to support each proposed cost.
Guidance on constructing a grant budget may be found in the Pre-award Manual for Discretionary Grants.

The budget submitted as part of the application is for the current grant period only.

The NJDOE will remove from consideration all ineligible costs and costs not supported by the Project Activity Plan. The actual amount awarded will be contingent upon the applicant’s ability to provide support for its proposed budget upon application. The NJDOE will ultimately determine it through the pre-award revision process. The applicant’s opportunity to make pre-award revisions will be limited by the NJDOE, which is not responsible for providing repeated opportunities for revisions or permitting the reallocation of the funds previously requested for costs that have not been approved or disallowed.

Budget requests should be linked to specific project activities and objectives of the Sports Industry Career Exploration grant.

**Bonus [9]** – Bonus points will be provided to applicants who serve high populations of special population students as defined by Perkins V legislation. A grantee will be considered to serve high populations if the percentage of special population students in the target audience exceeds the state average using the 2023-2024 Enrollment District Report Data.

## Application Component Required Uploads

District enrollment data showing Perkins V special population subgroups should be uploaded for this grant application. Failure to upload any required forms and/or documentation may result in an adverse funding decision.

## Allowable Uses and Eligible Activities

Grant funds may be used to accomplish the following:

* Writing curriculum for middle grades career exploration aligned directly to esports pathways;
* Equipment and supplies necessary to run the program, such as computers, peripherals, and furniture required for equipment utilization;
* Salaries for stipends and associated benefits for district staff to lead project activities outside of contractually obligated hours; and;
* Travel/Transportation costs related to district staff or students traveling to grant-related activities.

## Sub-granting Funds

Unallowable

## **Nonpublic Participation**

Not Applicable

## Apportionment of Grant Funds

The applicant’s Project must be designed and implemented in conformance with all applicable state and federal regulations. Final awards are subject to the availability offunds. The total funds available are $250,000.00. This is 100% percent funded by Perkins [Reserve] Innovation Funds CFDA 84.048A: FAIN: V048A240030. The project period is May 1, 2025-June 30, 2026.

All grant funds are subject to a 60-day liquidation period at the end of the grant term. At this time, a final expenditure report will be due to close out the grant award.

Grant funds are to be used solely for the costs associated with implementing the grant program. Click on the links below to view the current rates:

[Max Administrative Cap](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-II/part-200/subpart-E/subject-group-ECFRd41a10959e1acab/section-200.417): [Max 10%]
[NJ Travel Reimbursement Rate](https://www.nj.gov/infobank/circular/cir23-02-OMB.pdf): $0.47 per mile

[Max Employee Benefit Reimbursement Composite Rate](https://nj.gov/infobank/circular/)s (OMB Circular) including FICA: 77.15%

Please refer to Sections II.10 and II. 11 of the NGO for information regarding the allowability, inclusion, and/or restriction(s) of indirect costs in a grant budget.

Additional guidance for indirect costs can be found in the [glossary page of the Discretionary Grants Manual.](https://www.nj.gov/education/grants/discretionary/apps/)

The NJDOE will remove all ineligible costs and costs not supported by the Project Activity Plan from budget consideration. Through the pre-award revision process (PAR), the applicant will be given the opportunity to revise their budget. Providing opportunities for revisions or permitting the reallocation of the budgeted funds is at the discretion of the NJDOE. The final funding award will be contingent upon the applicant’s ability to justify its proposed budget.

## Eligible Costs

Use the [Quick Reference for Commonly Requested Costs](https://www.nj.gov/education/grants/discretionary/apps/docs/common_costs.pdf) or the [Uniform Minimum Chart of Accounts](http://www.nj.gov/education/finance/fp/af/coa/coa1718.pdf) to locate the appropriate budget cost codes.

Please note that the passage of N.J.A.C 6A:23A-7 places additional administrative requirements on the travel of school district personnel. The applicant is urged to be mindful of these requirements as they may impact the ability of school district personnel to participate in activities sponsored by the grant program.

* **Supplies** – cost for supplies needed to administer grant-related activities
* **Salaries** – cost for stipends and associated benefits for district staff to lead project activities outside of contractually obligated hours
* **Equipment** **–** cost for equipment that is required for Grantee to achieve grant goals and is approved in the grant application
* **Curriculum unit development and materials** – costs associated with curriculum development, writing, and publishing.
* **Administrative Costs** – Administrative costs up to 10% may be used when costs are directly related to administering the grant program.
* **Travel/Transportation**—costs for district staff or students traveling to grant-related activities, competitions, or conferences. Commutation travel mileage is capped at $.47 a mile.

##  Ineligible Costs

The NJDOE will not reimburse grantees or sub-grantees for ineligible costs. Ineligible costs include:

* Outside of grant term: Costs incurred outside of the grant term.
* Existing staff: Salaries and/or benefits for existing staff are not eligible unless they are assigned program responsibilities depicted in the staffing chart (see Section II.10.).
* Routine operating/admin costs: Costs for the routine operation of or administration of the organization are not eligible except when part of the approved budget (see section b of the grant/loan agreement).
* No benefit: Costs incurred for salaries, services, or media that do not benefit the end user of the grant program.
* Not reasonable or necessary: Costs that are not reasonable or necessary to carry out the grant.
* Poorly Documented/Undocumented: Costs that are not supported by adequate documentation.
* Off Message: Costs for media that are prohibited or off message.
* Curriculum Development or Expansion of Curriculum unless specified by the grant program as an eligible activity.
* Supplanting: Costs for salaries, services, or media that are covered under other local, federal, or state funding.

#  Grant Agreement and Program Requirements

Once the application for funding is approved in the PAR process, the EWEG grant application will convert to a Grant Agreement between the applicant and the NJDOE ([OMB Circular 07-05-OMB](https://www.nj.gov/infobank/circular/cir0705b.pdf)). The Grantee is expected to complete the goals and objectives laid out in the approved application, the activities established in its grant agreement, and satisfactory progress toward the completion of its approved action plan. Failure to do so may result in the withdrawal by NJDOE of the Grantee’s eligibility for the continuation of grant funding. The NJDOE will remove ineligible, inappropriate, or undocumented costs from funding consideration. To view and download the complete grant agreement documents, including attachments A and B of the grant agreement, click [here](https://www.nj.gov/education/grants/discretionary/management/docs/attacha_b.pdf). To locate the appropriate budget cost codes, go to the [Uniform Minimum Chart of Accounts](https://www.nj.gov/education/finance/fp/af/coa/) webpage.

## Mandatory Orientation and Training

The Grantee will be required to attend a program orientation. The NJDOE staff will provide the Grantee with general program information, the program’s requirements (including grant management, mandated staffing, policies, and procedures), and compliance with applicable state and federal program regulations.

## Reporting Requirements

Grantees will be required to submit reports on activities according to the program report schedule in [Section III.5, Reporting Periods](#_Reporting_Periods). The Grantee will ensure that all reports are uploaded to EWEG by the due dates. Failure to deliver the reports by due dates may result in the Grantee achieving an unsatisfactory rating and may result in the stop of all NJDOE program payments.

## Interim Activity Reports

These reports are to be delivered to NJDOE electronically. Grantees are required to upload within the EWEG system. Reports submitted by other means will not be accepted. Reports will be considered late if not uploaded by the due date listed in [Section III.5, Reporting Periods](#_Reporting_Periods). This report tracks actual progress in meeting benchmarks and documenting measurable outcomes from the program activities listed in the application. Specific instructions for completing each report are found at this [link](https://www.nj.gov/education/grants/discretionary/management/docs/INSTRUCTIONS%20FOR%20SUBMITTING%20PERS-REPORTS.pdf).

## Fiscal Reimbursement and Fiscal Interim Report Requirements

**Reimbursement Request:** The Grantee shall request reimbursement payment from the NJDOE monthly by the 15th of every month. The Grantee will complete a reimbursement request through the EWEG payment system. Reimbursement requests will be shut down 30 days before the end of the grant period. Any payments of remaining grant funds due to the Grantee will be paid in the Final Expenditure Report. Specific instructions for completing this report can be found at this [link](https://njdoe.mtwgms.org/NJDOEGmsWeb/HelpFiles/New_Reimbursement_Request_Instructions.pdf).

Requests may begin once the contract has been fully approved and executed by the NJDOE. All programs are reimbursement-only programs. Grantees will be reimbursed based on the Grantee’s actual expenditures. Grantees must submit payment requests not later than the 15th of the month via the EWEG system to receive a payment the following month. The reimbursements are closed 30 days before the end of the grant term. Funds owed to the Grantee will be captured in the Final Expenditure Report.

In making disbursements to any third party with whom the Grantee may contract to undertake the Project, the Grantee shall ensure that disbursements are made upon delivery of satisfactory work product and in accordance with the NJDOE’s program policies.

**Fiscal Interim Reports:** These reports are due as stated in [Section III.5, Reporting Periods](https://doe365-my.sharepoint.com/personal/lnietos_doe_nj_gov/Documents/Draft%20forms/Draft%20NGO%202023.docx#_Reporting_Periods), with the interim activity report. In this Report, the Grantee will report on actual expenditures incurred during the reporting period. The expenditures reported in the interim report should match what was paid to the district during the reporting period.

**Final Expenditure Reports:** This Report generates a final payment to the Grantee upon selecting the “Final Report” button.

## **Reporting Periods**

Reimbursement requests are due by the 15th of every month.

**The reporting periods are as follows:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Report Number: | Reporting Periods: | Dates Due: |
| Report 1 | May 1, 2025 – August 31, 2025 | 9/30/2025 |
| Report 2 | May 1, 2025 – November 30, 2025 | 12/31/2025 |
| Report 3 | May 1, 2025 – March 31, 2026 | 4/30/2026 |
| Final Report\* | May 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026 | 8/31/2026 |
|  | \*Includes a 60-day liquidation period. |  |

## Monitoring

The NJDOE Program Managers will schedule on-site monitoring visits with the Program Coordinator during the term of the Program contract to review program performance and fiscal documentation. These visits may be a comprehensive program assessment, or they may be oriented toward a review of performance in specific areas. In either case, Program staff shall cooperate with Program Managers and provide them with files and other information as requested.

## Acceptable Documentation for Grant Monitoring

Full and detailed documentation for grant expenditures shall be retained at the organization’s level for monitoring purposes. This documentation shall include the expenditures of the Grantee and all sub-grantees.

* + 1. **Activity Reports**

These reports include documentation and/or evidence of educational, outreach events, and program activities. This can be in the form of a properly completed programmatic Activity Report uploaded into EWEG or emailed to the program officer detailing events and activities. Sample documentation includes flyers, attendance sheets, and newspaper clippings. Documentation should be retained with the Grantee for monitoring purposes unless otherwise specified by the program office.

* + 1. **Reimbursements**

**Staffing** – All timesheets and payroll records for any salaries paid using funds must be retained by the Grantee for both monitoring and reimbursement purposes. If staff is assigned part-time to the grant, a cost allocation sheet should accompany the reimbursement request.

**Travel** – Mileage records must include the date of travel, the point of origin and its designation (home/office), the sites visited, the purpose of the travel, and the ending location. Commutation, travel beyond one’s standard commute, must be subtracted from the mileage claimed. The travel reimbursement rate is $0.47 per mile. Receipts for parking and tolls must be retained.

**Mailings** – Receipts for postage and other materials and services associated with photocopying, printing, and distribution of materials. Cost allocation based on agency budget may be acceptable. Please review with the NJDOE Program Manager.

**Training** – Receipts for payment of training providers, course materials, venue, proof of attendance, and copies of any certificates awarded.

**Other costs** – Receipts, invoices, and purchase orders with enough detail to determine that the expenditure is eligible under the grant program.

## Grant Amendments

All requests for amendments must be submitted via the EWEG system at a minimum of 90 days before the end date of the grant agreement.

Amendment modification forms are available [here](https://www.nj.gov/education/grants/discretionary/management/). Amendment modifications are initiated and submitted through the EWEG system using the Upload Tab in the grant application. Instructions on how to initiate the amendment are available in [the Discretionary Grants Manual](https://www.nj.gov/education/grants/discretionary/apps/). Use the [Quick Reference for Commonly Requested Costs](http://www.nj.gov/education/grants/discretionary/apps/common_costs.pdf) or the [Uniform Minimum Chart of Accounts](https://www.nj.gov/education/finance/fp/af/coa/) to locate the appropriate budget cost codes.

Amendments are required if the following situations occur:

* Changes to the program activity and request for no-cost time extension;
* Budget transfers greater than ten percent of the total approved budget into a previously approved line item;
* Changes to 200-320 Purchased Professional Education Services (subgrantee costs) previously approved in the budget;
* Budget transfer to a line not previously approved in the budget;
* Equipment: Grantees are limited to the specific equipment items listed in the final approved grant application budget. To comply with federal requirements, all equipment purchases require prior NJDOE approval. Grantees can pay more or less than the approved amount, but the approved equipment item cannot be changed without permission (i.e., no additions, deletions, or substitutions to the approved equipment list);
* Changes to Indirect Costs.

**IMPORTANT NOTE**: If the Grantee has a subgrantee, the subgrantee is subject to the same terms and conditions as the Grantee. The subgrantee is responsible to the Grantee for the agreed-upon scope of work (approved goals, objectives, and activities) and the expenditure of subgrant funds. Any changes (program or fiscal) requested by a subgrantee must be reviewed by the Grantee. The NJDOE requires approval of sub-grantee amendments for changes the Grantee supports. Grantees are to forward the requested changes to the NJDOE Program Office for review. Grantees do not have the authority to approve any changes in their project activities or any budget variances without prior approval by the NJDOE.

## Suspension/Cancellation of Grant/Loan Agreement and/or Reduction in Funding

The NJDOE reserves the right to suspend and/or cancel this Grant Agreement for nonperformance of any of the Grant/Loan Agreement provisions. Failure by the Grantee to comply with agreement stipulations, standards, or conditions may give the NJDOE cause to suspend this agreement and withhold further payments, prohibit additional obligations or project funds pending corrective action, and disallow all or part of the cost associated with the noncompliance, terminate this agreement, or take other remedies that may be legally available.

Formal written notice of suspension/cancellation of the Grant Agreement and/or reduction in funding will be provided to the Grantee in advance of the adverse action to be taken, together with recommendations to correct deficiencies. Grantees that correct deficiencies in accordance with guidance provided in the written notice shall be reinstated.

## Grant Close Out

The Grantee shall provide all documentation necessary to close out this agreement within 60 days of the grant agreement’s end date. If performance is ahead of schedule, the documentation should be submitted within 60 days of the conclusion of grant activities. Documentation will include the Final Report referenced in paragraph III.5.

## Federal Requirements

Not Applicable

#  Appendices