



GUIDELINES

Ithaca Public Education Initiative (IPEI) grants are intended to support direct experiences for students. In evaluating grant applications, considerations will be given to projects that intend to support one or more of the following:

- Joyful, creative learning opportunities
- Deepening of content knowledge and critical thinking
- Social justice and equity
- Affective growth (ex. empathy, agency, wisdom)
- Innovative, inspiring education

IPEI's Red & Gold Grants provide one-time funds of up to **\$750** during the academic year for classroom and/or school projects that enrich learning for Ithaca City School District (ICSD) students. Red and Gold Grants are **not** meant for long-term funding for ongoing projects or for teacher professional development.

ICSD teachers or staff members may apply for funds to be primarily used for Supplies (ex. books, art materials, etc) or Contract Services (ex. workshop fees, tickets, printing expenses, etc) related to the applicant's project.

Grants will be awarded three times during the **2025-26** school year, using the following deadlines for application submissions:

- **Mon. Oct. 6, 2025**
Applicants and school principals are notified about funding decisions by Nov. 6, 2025.
Any funded projects must be completed by June 1, 2026 with a final grant report due on June 30, 2026.
- **Mon. Jan. 26, 2026**
Applicants and school principals are notified about funding decisions by Feb. 26, 2026.
Any funded projects must be completed by June 15, 2026 with a final grant report due on June 30, 2026.
- **Mon. April 6, 2026**
Applicants and school principals are notified about funding decisions by May. 6, 2026.
Any funded projects must be completed by Dec. 1, 2026 with a final grant report due on Dec. 30, 2026.

Applications are due by midnight of each deadline day and must be submitted through [this Google Form](#).

A copy of the application will be sent to the applicant as well as the applicant's school principal.

Any questions should be directed to ipei@ipei.org.



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Grant Review Panel & Criteria

A panel of local community members including IPEI Board members, community volunteers, representatives of the ICSD administration and/or the Ithaca Teachers Association will review grant applications and make recommendations for funding with the highest priority given to applications that:

- Clearly articulate student learning outcomes and goals
- Demonstrate a strong tie between the project being funded and the classroom or school curriculum
- Involve project-based or hands-on learning experiences for students
- Offer an innovative idea, approach, or resource to enhance student learning
- Show an intention to support one or more of the following: joyful, creative learning opportunities; deepening of content knowledge and critical thinking; social justice and equity; affective growth (ex. empathy, agency, wisdom); innovative, inspiring education

IPEI will give preference to applicants who have been awarded less than 3 IPEI grants in the past, if all applications recommended for funding exceed available funds in any given grants cycle.

Terms and Conditions of the Grant

IPEI funds project-related materials or fees for visiting community members or organizations. *Requests for basic materials as part of your classroom or department should be submitted to the district through Department Chairs or School Principals.* Principals will be made aware of all grant applications as soon as they are submitted.

1. Applicants for Red & Gold Grants must be ICSD teachers or staff members.
2. Applicants may only be awarded only one Red & Gold Grant per school year. Once that grant is concluded and the final summary report has been submitted, an applicant may apply for another grant in the following school year. Applicants whose applications are not awarded are encouraged to apply again in a future grant cycle.
3. If funds are available, separate requests for the same project for multiple classrooms will be considered; however, the supporting rationale will be needed as well as the principal's approval.
4. IPEI Red & Gold Grants may not be used to fund professional development initiatives. In addition, the following are generally not supported (IPEI reserves the right to make exceptions in some cases):
 - a. Food or prizes
 - b. Equipment such as TVs, computers, tablets, etc. which are typically available through the school district
 - c. Payments to other ICSD teachers
 - d. Funding for overnight field trips
 - e. After school programs and clubs
 - f. Summer projects
 - g. Transportation costs
 - h. Extension of an approved grant that is not completed, into the following year
 - i. More than 1 year of funding
 - j. Acquisitions or activities that are normally funded by the school district



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5. Grant funds must be used only for the purpose stated in the approved application request.
6. Funds not expended within a year of grant award notification are to be returned to IPEI.
7. Applicants and school building principals will be notified via email regarding the decision of whether or not their application is approved for funding within a month of the application deadline. Approved projects will be sent a Grant Contract to complete and sign. The Grant Contract must be completed in order for funds to be disbursed.
8. If approved for funding, funds may be disbursed in the following ways ONLY:
 - a. Funds can be disbursed through the Ithaca City School District, which will make purchases exempt of sales tax, including purchases made through Amazon.
 - b. If your proposal is BOCES-aidable, funds will go through the BOCES State Aid Return process. Schools that go through this process can receive return funds to use for future BOCES-aidable expenses. This process will require an additional form from the applicant which will be coordinated through the district Business office.
 - c. Funds may be sent directly to you at your school's address. Please note however that you will need to submit a W9 form to receive funds and you will be responsible for any personal tax accounting related to funds received from IPEI that equal \$600 or more in a calendar year.
9. Any durable materials or equipment purchased with IPEI grant funds become the property of ICSD.
10. Fees or honorarium, to compensate for services provided negotiated between the applicant and any partner, should not exceed \$80 per hour. Consideration will be given to fee requests in excess of that cap on an individual basis *if a separate letter of rationale is provided*. Whenever possible, fees paid to partners or vendors will be made utilizing the BOCES State Aid Return process. Partners and/or vendors will be contacted by BOCES to complete the necessary tax paperwork.
11. A Grant Summary Report must be submitted electronically within 30 days of completion of the awarded project. Failure to submit a final report by report deadline will jeopardize future grant applications.
12. IPEI reserves the right to publicize information about the awarded application and project. Applicants are expected to acknowledge the Ithaca Public Education Initiative (IPEI) in any publicity related to their awarded project. IPEI encourages awardees to invite IPEI staff and Board Members to events related to the awarded project.



APPLICATION

APPLY HERE!

IPEI strongly recommends that applicants create a rough draft document where you can respond to the questions below and then copy and paste them into the above Google Form application when the time comes to apply.

Applicant Information:

1. Are you an ICSD Employee? Yes/No
2. Name:
3. Job Title:
4. Subject Area:
5. Grade level(s):
6. Email address:
7. Personal Phone Number (Should not be school's number):
8. Have you received an IPEI grant in the past? Yes/No/Unsure

Note that IPEI will give preference to applicants who have been awarded less than 3 IPEI grants in the past, if all applications recommended for funding exceed available funds in any given grants cycle.

School Information:

9. Name of School:
10. Name of Principal:
11. Email of Principal:

Project Information: Short answer:

Please respond to the following questions using 1 sentence or less

12. Title of Project:
13. Describe the project in one sentence (this description will be included in any publicity regarding your grant):
14. Grade level(s) actively involved in project:
15. Total number of students actively involved in project:
16. If this project will engage more than one classroom, please list the names of the other teachers involved
17. For events, what is the proposed project date / time?



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Project Information: Longer answer

Please respond to the following questions using no more than 150 words for each numbered grouping.

18. Why do this project? What student learning goals will this project support?

Please include specific information about what students will actively make or do as part of this project.

19. How do your proposed activities align with the goals of the IPEI grants?

Specifically, we are interested in how they support one or more of the following areas:

- **Joyful and Creative Learning Opportunities:** How will your activities foster a positive and imaginative learning environment?
- **Deepening Content Knowledge and Critical Thinking:** In what ways will your activities enhance students' understanding of content and promote critical thinking skills?
- **Social Justice and Equity:** How will your activities address issues of social justice and promote equity among participants?
- **Affective Growth:** How will your activities contribute to the development of empathy, agency, and wisdom in participants?
- **Innovative and Inspiring Education:** What innovative approaches will you use, and how will they inspire and engage learners?

Please describe how your activities align with these goals, providing specific examples and expected outcomes.

20. What will IPEI Red & Gold grant funding be used for?

Please provide specific details related to the intended purchases or payments that will be made including any products, people, or organizations involved.

21. What curriculum learning outcomes or grade-level standards will this project help to support? How will this project enhance your teaching of this curriculum and/or address this grade-level standard?

Please include at least one specific curriculum learning outcome or grade level standard connected to this project.

22. Share a link that may support your request (ex: website of a visiting artist/lecturer, image of students engaged in a similar activity, etc)

Project Budget Overview

ANY PERSON, ORGANIZATION or PRODUCT mentioned in the prior narrative that needs to be purchased as part of your Red & Gold Grant project should also appear in the project budget. Complete this section carefully, identifying where and how IPEI grant funds will be used if approved.

Please note the following:

- The budget expense categories align with those of the district budget office. It is anticipated that most budget expenses will fall under the Supplies or Contract Services categories.
- IPEI believes in the value of supporting local economies and requests that grant recipients work to identify, whenever possible, local and small businesses who can supply requested materials first before utilizing large corporate chains or retailers.



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- If a visiting artist/lecturer/organization includes supplies in their overall contract fee then that total amount may be eligible to go through BOCES if that person/organization is a contractor through BOCES. This would produce a larger return to the school than if the school/district made the purchase of supplies directly.
- Fees or honorarium, to compensate for services provided negotiated between the applicant and any partner, should not exceed \$80 per hour. Consideration will be given to fee requests in excess of that cap on an individual basis *if a separate letter of rationale is provided*. Whenever possible, fees paid to partners or vendors will be made utilizing the BOCES State Aid Return process. Partners and/or vendors will be contacted by BOCES to complete the necessary tax paperwork.

23. Amount requested from IPEI not exceeding \$750: \$

24. Estimated total project budget: \$

25. If estimated total project budget is more than the amount requested from IPEI, please write in source(s) of additional funding, amount(s) of funding, and indicate if the funding is either confirmed or requested

26. Itemized Project Budget: IPEI provides up to 5 Expense Item Lines within the application.

Expense Item (What are you paying for?)	ICSD Expense Category (Supplies, Contract Services, or Other)	Cost	Anticipated supplier (Who/where are you paying/purchasing?)	Expense Detail (Details including a brief description, number of items, and optional link to the item)
<i>Example: Books</i>	<i>Supplies</i>	<i>\$250</i>	<i>Bison Street Books</i>	<i>30 copies of author's book for each student prior to author visit. www.bisonstreetbooks.com/amazingauthorbook</i>
<i>Example: Workshop Fee</i>	<i>Contract Services</i>	<i>\$350</i>	<i>Amazing Author</i>	<i>Includes 7 hours of time for meeting, prep, and author workshop. www.amazingauthor.org</i>

Application Submission Procedure

By submitting this grant application, you are confirming that this application has the approval of all involved parties including the building principal(s) and teachers involved, that you understand that no funds will be disbursed until you have completed the Grant Contract, and that you understand that you will need to complete a Grant Report in order to be eligible for future funding.

Following submission, you and your school's principal will receive a digital version of your application form. Please allow 2 business days for this form to appear in your mailbox. Contact ipei@ipei.org with any questions. **By affixing a digital signature, you acknowledge agreement with the terms related to the IPEI Red & Gold grants as listed in this Guidelines and Application document.**