



BASIC EDUCATION AND LITERACY GUIDELINES FOR GLOBAL GRANT FUNDING

Rotary is dedicated to six [areas of focus](#) to build international relationships, improve lives, and create a better world. Through [global grants](#), awarded by The Rotary Foundation, clubs and districts participate in strategically focused, high-impact activities in these areas.

All global grant activities are required to align with the goals of an area of focus. For basic education and literacy, the goals are:

1. Involve the community to support programs that strengthen their capacity to provide basic education and literacy to everyone
2. Increase adult literacy
3. Work to reduce gender disparity in education
4. Support basic education and literacy studies for career-minded professionals

Use this document as a guide when applying for a global grant. You'll learn how to make your projects sustainable, what information is required for specific project types, and where to find additional resources.

A. Elements of Sustainability

Sustainability means different things to different organizations. For Rotary, sustainability means providing long-term solutions to community needs that the beneficiaries can maintain after grant funding ends. Pay careful attention to the following items to ensure your project's long-term sustainability and increase the likelihood of being approved for global grant funding.

1. COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

Community assessments identify where support is most needed, and the role Rotarians can play in making a difference. Project sponsors (often with a cooperating organization) need to conduct a community assessment before submitting their application. An assessment can reveal a community's strengths and weaknesses and help you work on solutions. If an assessment has already been done, use the relevant data to design your project.

Use the community assessment to:

- Gather perspectives from a broad cross-section of the community, including women, young people, and professionals
- Allow community members to identify the needs they perceive as most critical
- Ask community participants how they can contribute to the proposed project

- Work with community members to identify long-term goals and expected project outcomes

The community assessment results need to be incorporated into the grant. The results should describe:

- How the community's resources will be used to implement project activities
- How the project will meet the needs identified by the community
- The long-term goals or project outcomes and how they will be met (for example, through training and public awareness campaigns)
- How the community will sustain the project after the grant has ended

When conducting a basic education and literacy community assessment, it's important to:

- Invite teachers, students, school staff, directors/principals, parents, and community members to be part of the discussion. Some community leaders may be reluctant to include diverse stakeholders in the conversation, but project sponsors have a unique opportunity to bring these important voices together.
- Help school staff and community members identify and articulate their educational needs and goals.
- Understand the goals of local schools and explain to the community how Rotarians can help facilitate the achievement of those goals.
- Find out if other schools or education programs in the community or nearby communities are addressing similar educational needs. Are they working with the proposed technology or a new teaching methodology? Can project sponsors use their expertise and experience?
- Donate more than materials or equipment. Look for ways to build educators' skills and knowledge or build a new program designed to improve educational outcomes.
- Involve the Ministry of Education or local education officials whenever possible.

2. MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGY

It is important to purchase equipment and new technology from local sources when possible. Make sure that replacement parts are readily available. Involve community members when selecting technology or equipment, and train them to operate, maintain, and repair it on their own.

The grant application should:

- Describe the equipment to be purchased or received via donation and the plans for the training on and operation and maintenance of the equipment.
- If the equipment is not locally sourced, explain why and provide plans for training, operation, and maintenance in the community, including how replacement parts will be obtained.
- Describe the physical environment where the equipment or technology is to be kept, identify ownership, and provide security protocols.
- Explain how this equipment or technology is essential or related to the project's objectives.
- If software must be purchased, include long-term financial means for updating it.
- Explain how the technology or equipment will be used to directly improve educational

outcomes. Training for how to use and maintain the equipment, on its own, is not sufficient enough to be eligible for a global grant.

3. FINANCIAL PLANNING

Getting funding from local organizations, the local community, or the government integrates your project into the community and supports its long-term success. Confirm that local funding sources are available to cover the costs of long-term operation, maintenance, training, and replacement costs of equipment or new technology. Compensate project participants appropriately for their work to ensure continued service.

The grant application should:

- Describe project fundraising activities that the community, government agencies, other nongovernmental organizations, or private entities have planned to generate future funding. (Neither the Rotary club nor Rotary Foundation grants can provide indefinite support.)
- Document the available support for the project, if applicable, from the appropriate government ministry or authority, including monetary contributions to cover current or recurring costs, advocacy, policy implementation, training, education, allocation of personnel, or the provision of materials.
- List foundation or private-sector partners that support, or may support, the project and will continue to do so after completion of the global grant.
- Describe any fee-for-service, insurance, or revolving funds that may provide sustained revenue for the project.
- Describe your best two- to four-year projection for how the community will replenish funds after completion of the global grant.
- Include details on how the school or community will raise additional funds, if that will be necessary. For many basic education and literacy global grants, Rotarians work with public or government-run schools on tight budgets. The project should not make any additional demands on the school's budget unless originally agreed upon with school and local officials.

4. TRAINING AND EDUCATION

A project's success depends on its people. Provide training, education, and community outreach to project beneficiaries and service providers and technicians. Collaborate with local government, private and public agencies, and organizations to supply expertise as needed.

The grant application should:

- Describe training plans for teachers and staff. Provide an overview of the curriculum, schedule, and performance indicators. Include training activities as appropriate. Determine whether training is budgeted within the project or externally funded. Basic education and literacy projects typically include teacher training on new methodologies, ways to increase student participation, and working with children who have special learning needs. The best way, however, to know what training teachers need is to consult with them and design a program that addresses the challenges they face.

- Include a community plan for the continuation of education activities and/or programs after the project is completed.
- Describe ongoing training or draft a plan to train new staff and teachers who join after the grant ends.

Training should be conducted in the local language, and training topics should be determined by community assessment. A clear understanding of how training will affect educational outcomes is important.

5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Develop clear and measurable project objectives and set methods for collecting project data. Include an initial recording of pre-project levels. Data could include the following:

- Number of teachers trained (or number of teachers with a new skill)
- Number of school-age children who've benefited from the project
- Change in student attendance
- Change in test scores or GPA
- Number of adults who are now literate

B. Project Types

Global grants commonly fund seven types of basic education and literacy projects. For each project type, pay close attention to the grant eligibility requirements and the information that must be submitted with your application.

1. TECHNOLOGY PROJECTS

Technology projects are commonly proposed to help schools improve their infrastructure. They often provide computer labs, interactive whiteboards, media centers, and other computer-based learning tools to schools. While this project type can narrow the gap between low- and high-performing schools, technology projects must do more than donate equipment. They must incorporate teacher training that aligns with the goals of the area of focus and addresses one of the needs or goals identified in the initial assessment.

For your project to be eligible, you must provide the following:

- A community assessment that includes an understanding of teachers' knowledge of computers
- Teacher training which should include methodology (i.e., how teachers will use the computers and integrate them into the curriculum) and lesson planning. Training should also include practice time or classroom observation. Training can be done by the Ministry of Education or a cooperating organization. If the Ministry of Education has a computer curriculum, training may focus on that. Project sponsors may also consider developing more robust training. Training should be new to the grant.
- Proof that the school or facility has an adequate and reliable supply of electricity and is prepared to pay for the cost of the additional electrical usage

- Proof that schools are able to pay for internet services after grant funding ends, if they plan to have the internet
- A computer maintenance plan that includes training, a security plan (including internet security which should prevent viruses and inappropriate content from being downloaded), and the ongoing costs of maintaining the equipment. (This is in addition to teacher training.)

To ensure the success of your project, we also suggest implementing:

- Follow-up training and classroom observation
- Measurements for teacher training, including testing before and after the project, ideally, to demonstrate what was learned

2. LIBRARIES

School and community libraries are often a much-needed resource in promoting and increasing literacy. But providing books without having a trained staff and formal programs won't have the long-term impact grant sponsors hope to achieve. It's important to staff libraries with professionals or trained volunteers and to consider the culture, language, and age of readers when purchasing books.

For your project to be eligible for grant funding, you must provide the following:

- Documentation of who will run the library and their qualifications. If a trained librarian isn't hired, you will need to provide staff training. This should include training in library organization (e.g., a classification system), a system for loaning books, and follow-through on book returns.
- A description of the new, formalized programming the library will provide based on the needs of the community. Options include adult literacy classes, reading and writing tutoring for children or adults, and literacy courses for children.

3. LANGUAGE TRAINING

If someone lives in a country but can't read or write in the country's official language, he or she is considered illiterate. Language training is a popular project type aimed at helping communities with large immigrant populations or countries that receive a large number of refugees. Language projects can also be implemented at schools, so long as the school requires those language courses as part of the curriculum mandated by the national department of education. If a language project is being implemented in a school, teachers must receive training in teaching the language as part of the global grant's scope.

For your project to be eligible, you must provide the following:

- Documentation that the language is an official language of the country or is taught as part of a nationally mandated curriculum (e.g., English language learning classes in the United States for newcomers to the country, or English courses in China for students). If the language course is not required but is nonetheless part of the school curriculum, this may be acceptable, but it must be documented.
- A plan on how the program will continue after the grant funding ends. When possible, include written acknowledgement from the institution that will maintain the program.
- An outline of the curriculum.

4. **TEACHER TRAINING**

The Rotary Foundation believes in teacher training. According to UNESCO, less than 75 percent of teachers are trained to national standards in one-third of countries with data on primary education. A skilled teacher can transform almost any environment into a fun, accessible place to learn.

If you are doing a project that consists of teacher training, the following must be completed:

- An assessment of teachers' needs. Potential questions include:
 - What do you like most about your job?
 - What are your goals for your students? How does your work help them achieve these goals?
 - What are some of the challenges you face as a teacher? What prevents you from helping your students achieve the goals you mentioned?
 - If tomorrow you became the Minister of Education, what is the first thing you would do to improve education in your country?
 - What skills would make you a better educator?
 - What are the qualities of a great teacher? What makes a great teaching staff?
- A detailed description of the training, including plans for measuring success, desired outcomes, and activities that will help meet them. Examples of teacher training include:
 - Classroom management
 - Lesson planning
 - Instruction for students with special learning needs
 - Positive discipline and reinforcement
 - A refresher on government curriculum
 - Effective teaching methodologies
 - How to engage girls in the classroom and build their leadership skills
 - How to teach critical thinking skills
 - Reading assessment (use of tools and comprehension methodologies)
 - How to teach in a classroom where multiple languages are spoken
 - How to use science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) curricula in the classroom
 - Blended learning (combining digital learning with traditional classroom methods)
 - Interactive learning (engaging with students beyond lecture and rote memorization)
 - Conflict-sensitive education, or how to teach in an area affected by conflict or emergency

5. **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

Early childhood education centers often refer to day care centers, preschools, and kindergartens for children from birth to age 8. An eligible early childhood education project in basic education and literacy should include centers with a curriculum that focuses on developmental and educational outcomes.

For your project to be eligible, you must provide the following:

- Proof that any center involved in the project is an early childhood center with a curriculum (when applicable, a government curriculum) and registered with the appropriate ministry or department, where possible.
- A plan for teacher training. Training should focus on effective teaching methodologies, learning strategies, classroom management, and other training that is needed and identified by your teacher community assessment.

To ensure your project's success, we suggest that schools work with children in their native language. Research shows that children learn better and stay in school longer when taught in their native language, particularly during their early years. [Find more information](#).

6. WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Students with special needs can't always be integrated into traditional classrooms, and the alternative methods used to work with these children often fall outside of activities that are typically eligible for global grants. But you can incorporate tools such as sensory rooms and therapies that use lights or sounds into a project to become eligible for a global grant.

Special needs students include (but are not limited to) children who are on the autism spectrum, who have learning disabilities such as dyslexia, or who are blind or deaf. They can also be academically gifted students who may need special attention to keep them engaged.

This project type is especially complex because its scope is broad. The Rotary Foundation assesses each project on a case-by-case basis. Contact your regional grants officer early for help with the application process.

For your project to be eligible, you must include the following:

- A unique learning plan with examples of how teachers will teach to students' individualized needs. This could be an individualized lesson plan for a student or a standard sheet the school uses to identify the child's needs and how they plan to work with him or her. Please do not include real student names in your example.
- A full training plan. The Foundation recognizes that training will not be standard and will vary based on the type of school where the project is taking place (e.g., a traditional or mainstream school that integrates children with special needs, or a school that specializes in working with a certain population where teachers already have degrees in special education) as well as the intervention proposed in the grant.

The following examples are projects that would be eligible for a global grant:

- A sensory room for a school for blind children. This proposal would include specific training for teachers on how to use the sensory room and an explanation as to how such a room would help students meet their educational goals. It would also explain how the room would be incorporated into the daily or regular curriculum.
- Teacher training for a rural school with classrooms of 50 students of significantly different learning levels. The grant sponsors indicate that teachers are struggling in their reading classes because some children may have learning disabilities. In this instance, providing a general

training in working with students who have reading difficulties, conducting reading assessments, and introducing new reading methodologies would be appropriate.

- Language resources and methodologies to help teachers working with autistic students, each with his or her own individualized education plan and many which are nonverbal. The grant aims to provide teachers with materials and methodologies to help students communicate, such as teaching speech classes or sign language.

7. EDUCATION SCHOLARS

Education professionals have many different degrees and a wide range of experience. Global grant scholars do, too. Each scholar is considered on a case-by-case basis.

Typical degrees for scholars planning to work in education include:

- Early childhood, primary, or secondary education (or teaching education courses at the university level)
- Special education
- Education management
- Curriculum development
- Language
- Library studies
- Education policy
- Global education studies

Atypical degrees that may be acceptable:

- Nonprofit management
- Political science
- Policy studies

Career plans are a major consideration when determining the eligibility of a global grant scholar. Potential future careers include positions in a school setting (teaching or administration); education policymaking at the local, national, or international level; curriculum development roles; and working for nongovernmental organizations or nonprofits in education management. Basic education and literacy scholars do not have to work locally to be considered for a scholarship; working in education at the national or international level is acceptable.

C. Resources

One of the best resources available to grant applicants is the [Rotary grants staff](#). In addition to their professional expertise and education, grants staff members draw on The Rotary Foundation's long experience in funding effective projects to make sure your global grant projects are eligible for funding.

You can also find information to help you plan for your basic education and literacy global grant in the following resources:

[A Guide to Global Grants](#)

[Terms and Conditions for Rotary Foundation District Grants and Global Grants](#)

[Areas of Focus Policy Statements](#)

[Six Steps to Sustainability](#)

[Global Grant Monitoring and Evaluation Plan Supplement](#)

[Global Grant Lifecycle](#)

[Basic Education and Literacy Project Strategies](#)