

Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant

Frequently Asked Questions

Specific information about this grant is provided in the application form that may be accessed at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/grants.aspx>. Be sure to review that information in detail.

1. What is the application deadline?

The application must be postmarked by January 31.

2. How often are the grants distributed?

The *Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grants* are distributed once per year.

3. When will I receive the money?

This grant is awarded on a reimbursement basis. Notification is made to the winners by about March 15. Your school or organization must spend the money, and then submit the proper paperwork to receive reimbursement.

4. Can I use the money to pay for a field trip that we will take before the grants are awarded?

No. The field trip cannot occur prior to the awarding of the grants.

5. I want to buy some equipment to use on the field trip. Will the funds cover that expense?

No. Equipment is not eligible for funding.

6. If I am awarded a grant, can I apply again for more funding in subsequent years?

Yes. There is no limit on the number of times you can apply for the grant.

7. The weather conditions did not allow us to take our planned field trip. What should we do?

Contact the IDNR Division of Education at 217-524-4126 or dnr.teachkids@illinois.gov with any questions that you have regarding changes in the scheduled trip.

8. Since we couldn't go on our field trip as scheduled this year, can we save the funds and go in the next calendar year?

No. The funds must be used in the calendar year that they are awarded.

9. We are going to have funds remaining from the grant award. Can we pay for some items that were not in the original budget?

No.

10. What is the time frame for spending the funds?

The field trip must be completed by December 31 of the calendar year in which the funds are awarded. Reimbursement paperwork and the final report are due by one month after the field trip date.

11. My school hosts an afterschool program. Can we apply for the funds to use for the afterschool program?

No. The funds are only available for use by classroom teachers in Illinois with their own students and to home-schooling educators in Illinois with their own students.

12. The place we want to visit charges a fee for admission. Is that charge eligible for funding?
You may include admission fees as secondary expenses in the budget. However, secondary fees will only be awarded if ample funding exists, and any portion of them dedicated to food or lodging is not eligible.

13. We live on the border of Illinois and want to visit a site in Missouri. Can we apply for funds for this trip?

No. The field trip destination must be in Illinois.

14. I would like to take my students on a field trip, but I don't know where to go. What are some options?

Your field trip should relate to your curriculum. For example, if you are studying forests, then take the students to visit an Illinois forest. You can find much information about taking students on a field trip, including possible destinations, at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/education/Pages/fieldtrip.aspx>.

15. We want to visit the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum in Springfield. Would your grant provide funding for this trip?

No. The *Illinois Biodiversity Field Trip Grant* only provides funds for field trips to learn about Illinois' natural heritage.

16. Several of the teachers in our school want to apply for a grant. Is it OK to do so?

Yes. There is no limit to the number of teachers who can apply per school.

17. I would like to apply for funding for multiple field trips within the school year. Am I allowed to do so?

Yes. There is no limit to the number of applications per teacher. However, each trip must be represented by its own application.

18. All of our fourth grade students are studying about Illinois. We would like to take them on a field trip to Starved Rock State Park. Can all of the fourth grade teachers apply on one application form?

Yes. Multiple teachers may apply on one application form if they are taking their own students on a field trip on the same day, to the same location for the same purpose. The amount of funding available also can be combined. For example, if four, fourth-grade teachers want to take their students on one field trip to Starved Rock on April 30, their application can be for a maximum of \$2,000.00. If you have questions about eligibility, please contact the IDNR Division of Education at 217-524-4126 or dnr.teachkids@illinois.gov before submitting your application package. Please note that the maximum amount that can be spent on transportation on collaborative field trips is \$1,000.00.

19. I would like to apply for the funds to take my college students on a field trip. Do I qualify for the grant?

No. The grant funds are only available to teachers of prekindergarten through grade 12 students.

20. What are in-kind donations?

In-kind donations are those items or donations being provided by the grant applicant's school. They may include food, equipment, lodging, volunteer time and other items provided to support the field trip.

21. I want to take a field trip in January or February. Will the grant funds pay for it?

No. The grant schedule does not allow for field trips in January or February.

22. My principal originally signed the grant application, and now has decided that we cannot go on the field trip. What should I do?

Unfortunately, changes sometime occur after the grant is awarded. If you can no longer go on the field trip, send an email to the IDNR Division of Education (dnr.teachkids@illinois.gov) stating so.

23. We would like to take our students to the zoo to study lions and tigers. Will this trip qualify for funding?

No. The purpose of the trip must be to study Illinois' natural heritage: the species that can be found in Illinois in the wild.

24. We have been studying how our food is produced and would like to visit a farm to see chickens, pigs and cows. Will our trip qualify for funding?

No. The purpose of the trip must be to study Illinois' natural heritage: the species that can be found in Illinois in the wild. Field trips to study agricultural topics will not be funded.

25. We applied for a field trip grant last year. Can we submit that application again instead of writing a new one?

No. The questions and requirements are updated annually in order to improve the program. Providing information from a previous year may not meet the current year's requirements and can cause your application to be disqualified.

26. If we apply for a grant, will we automatically receive the funding?

No. This is a competitive grant. Applications are scored independently by judges. The number of grants awarded is based on the scoring results and the amount of available funds.