Filling the Gap Fund: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

What challenge or problem should our idea address?

We know there are numerous barriers that make it difficult for some families to access supplemental learning options that meet their child's needs, interests, and goals. One fundamental gap is families' limited access to essential information and support. Your idea should address this specific challenge.

What do you mean by "supplemental learning options"?

Supplemental learning options are educational experiences students participate in while remaining enrolled in their current school.

Examples include but are not limited to
- tutoring
- college coursework
- work-based learning
- occupational therapy
- social-emotional support
- enrichment activities, like art or athletics

We're interested in ideas that allow students and families to choose from a range of supplemental learning options. Ideas should not limit families to the choice of one option (e.g., only one tutoring service or afterschool program).

What kinds of education policies are you interested in?

We are focused on education policies that allow students to
- participate in supplemental learning while remaining enrolled in their school and
- select from a range of learning opportunities aligned with their needs, interests, and goals.

We are particularly interested in policies that make public funding available to families and students who could not otherwise afford them on their own.

Examples include but are not limited to:
- part-time enrollment
- dual or concurrent enrollment
- work-based learning
- "Learn Everywhere" policies

Policies may include state, local, district, network, or school policies.

What does it look to leverage public policy to access supplemental learning options?

Much like someone might use a lever as a tool to make doing something else easier, families can use policy as a tool to access learning options more easily and equitably.

What do you mean by "students furthest from opportunity"?

Students furthest from opportunity are from historically marginalized communities (including students of color, multilingual learners, students with disabilities, low-income students, students experiencing homelessness, children and youth in foster care, and migratory students) who may be unable to access supplemental, flexible learning options because of the financial cost, transportation needs, or other barriers.

We are not a tax-exempt organization. Can we apply?

No. You if are an individual or a group of individuals, you need a tax-exempt fiscal sponsor. If you are in the process of applying for tax-exempt status, please email us to discuss your situation in more detail.

Can we apply with a partner?

Yes. We encourage applications between schools, districts, and/or nonprofit organizations. In the case of a partnership, one eligible entity should submit the application and this entity will serve as the primary point of contact. All partners must be tax-exempt entities.

Does the project have to connect families to public funding?

No. This is a priority for our grant program, but not a requirement.

Where can we get help with our application? Can you give us feedback before we submit?

Due to the short timeline for the process, we cannot provide application coaching or feedback. We do encourage you to join us for office hours to ask specific questions or send us an email with anything that you're not clear on.

How much funding can we apply for?

During this part of the process, applicants are not asked to request a specific funding amount. Grants will range from $50,000 to $300,000, depending on the opportunity for impact and the maturity of the project.

Can we change our application after we've submitted it?

Yes. You can change your submission until the deadline. If you need help doing this, please reach out to us.

What happens after the application window closes?

Our team will review applications and will invite a select number of applicants to discuss their ideas with us further and/or submit full proposals. We will respond to all applicants to let them know whether they have been invited to continue in the process.

We're hoping to use grant funds to plan a program. Can we apply?

Yes. We will make grants to support the planning and design of projects if ideas are aligned with the requirements we've laid out.

We're hoping to use grant funds to implement a program. Can we apply?

Yes. We will make grants to support the implementation of projects if they are aligned with the requirements we've laid out.

Our idea will serve students other than K-12 students (e.g., pre-K or adult education). Can we apply?

Yes, but only if you *also* serve K-12 students and will *only* use the funds to do so**.**

What are we allowed to use grant funding for?

Funds for Filling the Gap can be used to pay for any costs associated with the proposed program. You may not use funding to cover costs that are unassociated with the program.

Can our project provide students with access to our organization's supplemental learning option?

Yes, **as long as** students are also provided with access other supplemental learning options. A key requirement is that your project helps student navigate among *several* different supplemental learning options.

Can grant funding be used to cover or subsidize the fees our organization charges for supplemental learning services?

No. Ideally, families and students would use publicly available funding to pay for the cost of supplemental learning opportunities.

Can we use grant funding to create new supplemental learning options?

No. This grant program is specifically designed to help families and students navigate among a range of supplemental learning options that already exist.

How will you evaluate applications?

Initial applications **must** articulate how ideas
1) are connected to policies that allow families and students to
    • participate in supplemental learning while remaining enrolled in their school and
    • select from a range of learning opportunities aligned with their needs, interests, and goals.
2) address the challenge that some families have limited access to essential information and support about how to find, enroll in, and participate in supplemental learning options

Initial applications **may** articulate how ideas
1) are connected to policies that make public funding available to families and students who could not otherwise afford them on their own
2) are or will be designed to support families and students furthest from opportunity