



# Assembly Grant Program FAQs

## Applicant Eligibility

### Who is eligible to apply?

Entities eligible to apply for funding include family-serving organizations, technology companies or providers, and state agencies or state program administrators. Individuals are not eligible to apply unless they partner with an eligible organization.

All applicants and partners must be registered or incorporated in accordance with applicable state and local laws, as well as maintain a primary place of business in the United States, including U.S. territories.

### Can an eligible entity be an applicant on multiple applications?

An eligible entity may be a partner on multiple applications but may not be the lead on more than one application.

### Are international entities eligible to apply?

No. An entity must maintain a primary place of business in the United States. The entity may include foreign citizens participating as employees of the entity.

### Are for-profit entities eligible to apply?

For-profit entities are eligible to apply if they intend to use the grant only for charitable purpose of the grant program - to design or develop new solutions to help families furthest from opportunity access flexible, personalized learning options. For-profit entities must also agree to submit organizational and financial documents to give a reasonable assurance that it will use the grant for the proper purposes.

### Are schools, LEAs, or higher education institutions eligible to apply?

Yes, we consider schools and LEAs to be family-serving organizations. That said, the purpose of the grant program is to help families navigate *multiple* learning options, so solutions that facilitate enrollment in a specific option are not eligible.

### Are solutions that serve postsecondary students eligible?

Solutions must facilitate participation in or satisfaction with K-12 learning options. While helping families access information and funding for postsecondary options is important, programs that help families navigate postsecondary options are not eligible to apply.

### Are solutions that serve preschool students eligible?

Solutions must facilitate participation in or satisfaction with K-12 learning options. While we will not consider solutions that focus exclusively on navigating preschool learning options, we

will consider applications from organizations that support families as they navigate options for kindergarten.

### Are organizations without for-profit or nonprofit status from the IRS eligible to apply?

Organizations must have for-profit or nonprofit status from the IRS to receive grant funding. Organizations may apply for a grant if they do not have status in place, but status must be in place by September 15, 2023, to receive a grant. Organizations may also apply via a fiscal sponsor that has for-profit or nonprofit status.

## Grant Purpose

### Should solutions focus on a specific region or demographic, or a specific number of students and families?

Solutions should be targeted to meet the needs of families and students who are eligible to enroll in grades K-12. We will not consider solutions that focus on preschool or postsecondary students. Otherwise, we will consider solutions from any region in the U.S., at any level of scale, that align with the purpose of the grant.

### Is the grant program meant to source new solutions or expand existing solutions?

Bellwether seeks to support new solutions, which may include a tool, resource, or approach that helps families identify high-quality options and select those best aligned to students' needs, interests, and goals.

### Does the program support the development of new features for existing programs? Can the solution be part of a larger program?

While solutions do not have to be newly conceived or developed to be eligible, the grant should support the design or development of some aspect of the solution, including a new feature for an existing program or a new solution under the umbrella of a larger program.

### Is the Assembly Grant Program focused on technology?

We envision that technology will help scale and sustain a solution, and we are excited about how it might be leveraged, but there is no requirement to include it.

### Is the grant program focused on increasing access to specific kinds of learning options?

No, learning options are broadly defined as "an experience offered by a family, nonprofit, business, or other entity in which a student receives services or supports to advance their learning and development."

Learning options include schools of choice, as well as more flexible and personalized options like after-school enrichment programs, tutoring, or home-school co-ops.

Can grant funds go directly to families (e.g., giving scholarships, arranging transportation services)?

No. The only exception is that grant funds may be used to compensate students and families for their participation in focus groups, interviews, or other research activities.

## Grant Application

Do applications have to meet all three competitive priorities?

Solutions do not have to meet any of the competitive priorities to be eligible, but the more priorities a solution addresses, the more competitive it will be in the application process.

Do partners have to have formal agreements in place?

Partners should apply together, and each partner should contribute meaningful work or expertise to the solution. We do not require partner organizations to have any formal agreement, memorandum, etc. in place to apply. Organizations do not have to list contractors as partners unless they choose to do so.

Does one applicant need to be identified as the “lead,” or can we submit a fully joint application?

We ask that partnering organizations submit one application together. The organization that starts the application in our portal will be identified as the lead applicant.

Will there be any opportunities to get feedback on our application?

Unfortunately, given the number of applicants, we are not able to provide individualized feedback on applications.

What should applicants cover in the video submission?

The purpose of the video submission is to give the judging team a quick introduction to your organization and your solution. You should not plan to share new information in your video but instead introduce yourselves and your work to the judges. The video is not scored in the review process.

Are the illustrative examples in the Grant Program Brief sample programs that have been funded previously?

The illustrative examples are fictional. We have included them to help applicants get a sense of the grant program’s purpose.

## Grant Funding

If you have a partnership, how will grant funds be distributed?

Grant funds will be distributed to the lead applicant. Applicants with partners should include all partners’ costs in the application budget.

Can the grant funds be spent outside of the grant program timelines (e.g., in the 2024-2025 school year)?

No, Phase 1 grant funds must be expended by the end of the grant period, January 31, 2024.

What kinds of expenses are allowable?

Grant funds can be used for any activity provided it is within the charitable purposes of the grant. Grant funds may not be used to carry on propaganda, influence legislation, fund any political campaign, influence the outcome of any election, carry on any voter registration drives, or violate any applicable local, state, federal, or foreign law.

Will the Assembly Grant Program offer grants again?

Phase 1 applicants will be eligible to apply for Phase 2 grants in 2024, but there are no plans to run the full grant program again next year.

## Grant Agreements

What are the obligations of grantees?

As part of the grant agreement, each grantee must agree to:

- Use grant funds solely for the charitable purposes of the grant - to design or develop new solutions to help families furthest from opportunity access flexible, personalized learning options.
- Repay any portion of the fund not used for the purposes of the grant.
- Maintain records and receipts of expenditures.

What kinds of documents must grantees submit to receive a grant?

After a grantee is selected but before grant funds are dispersed, each grantee must give a reasonable assurance that they will use the grant for the proper purposes. Documents may include but are not limited to:

- Evidence of the grantee's legal status.
- Recent financial statements or other reports outlining the grantee's financial position.

For-profit entities may be asked to provide additional documentation, including but not limited to:

- Organizational documents (e.g., articles of incorporation, bylaws, or other enabling documents).
- List of grants received from any other organization.
- The name, position, and experience of the individual managing the grant funds.
- An annual report on the previous year or a brief description of the organization's history, goals, mission, recent activities, and future plans.

## Intellectual Property and Dissemination of Grant-Funded Work

### Do applicants retain intellectual property rights to their solutions?

Applicants will retain intellectual property rights to their solutions. Bellwether does not seek ownership of any solution submitted as part of the grant program. Applicants must ensure that grant-funded work does not infringe on or violate the intellectual property rights of any other entity.

### Are submissions confidential?

Applicants grant Bellwether permission to reproduce, publish, link, display, or otherwise share information about themselves or their submissions. Applicants are responsible for clearly identifying any confidential commercial information contained in a submission that they wish to protect as proprietary.

### Will grantees be required to share their learning with the field?

The dissemination of grant-funded work is essential to maximize the impact of the grant program and grantees' solutions. If awarded grant funds, applicants should plan to share the outputs or outcomes of their work for educational or charitable purposes.

## Grant Reporting

### What are the reporting requirements at the end of the grant term?

At the end of the grant term, grantees will provide a detailed account of expenditures of grant funds and a narrative of what was accomplished by the use of such funds during the grant term. This should include progress toward grantees individual metrics and a description of progress made in designing or developing new solutions to help families furthest from opportunity access flexible, personalized learning options.

## Where can we find more information on the grant program?

Please check out our webpage [here](#), which contains links to the Call for Applications, Grant Program Brief, Grant Program Rules, and a recording of our informational webinar from August 8, 2024.