EDUCATION GRANT POLICY

Purpose

The South Carolina Aeronautics Commission (SCAC) Education Grant Policy establishes guidelines for awarding grants to promote and enhance educational and workforce development opportunities in aeronautics in South Carolina.

Policy Overview

The SCAC shall allocate funding through an Education Grant Program to encourage academic excellence, workforce development, and the advancement of aeronautical science and technology. These grants are available to educational institutions, non-profit organizations, and government entities (state, county, and municipal) engaged in aviation and/or aerospace education and workforce development that meet the eligibility criteria.

1. Eligibility Criteria

Grants may be awarded to the following types of applicants:

- **Educational Institutions**: Public or private schools, colleges, universities, and vocational institutions offering aviation and/or aerospace programs or activities within South Carolina.
- **Non-profit Organizations (501(c)(3))**: Organizations offering aviation and/or aerospace projects or activities aimed at promoting STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) education within the state of South Carolina.
    - If the organization is currently not listed in Guidestar.org, a copy of the organization's public charity exemption status letter from the Internal Revenue Service is required with the grant application.
- **Government Entities (state, county or municipal)**: Entities offering aviation and/or aerospace projects or activities promoting STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) education in South Carolina.

2. Grant Purpose

- **Aviation/Aerospace Education and Workforce Development Projects**: To make funding available specifically for educational institutions, non-profit organizations, and government entities to enhance or expand aviation/ aerospace education and workforce development projects.

3. Application Process

All applicants must submit the following:

- A completed application form, available on the SCAC website, including
    - applicant contact information
    - project information
    - project narrative
    - project funding and budget information
- A copy of the organization's public charity exemption status letter from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) if the organization is applying as a 501(c)3 and is not currently listed in Guidestar.org.

Additionally, if an application is being considered for funding, a representative of the educational institution, non-profit organization, or government entity must present their proposal at a SCAC Commissioner meeting.

Applications shall be considered by the Aeronautics Commission every six months. Applications must be submitted 45 days prior to June 30th and 45 days prior to December 31st**.** Late applications will not be considered until the next selection period. If an application was incomplete or was not selected for funding, the educational institution, non-profit organization, or government entity may revise their application and submit it in a subsequent period.

4. Evaluation Criteria

Grants will be evaluated by the Education Committee prior to the project advancing to the Commission:

- Applications that meet the minimum eligibility requirements will be scored.
    - Scoring data will be provided to the SCAC Commissioners.
    - The Contact Person indicated on the application will be notified by the SCAC via email that the application is under consideration and that a representative is invited to present the proposal at an SCAC Commission meeting.
- Applications that do NOT meet the minimum eligibility requirements will not be scored.
    - The SCAC will notify the contact person indicated on the application via email that the application is not being considered.

Grants will be awarded on a competitive basis, with priority given to projects that:

- Enhance workforce development for the aviation and/or aerospace industry by increasing awareness of aerospace careers in K-12 students
- Enhance workforce development for the aviation and/or aerospace industry by providing educational opportunities for pilots, aircraft maintenance technicians, engineers, and other career paths in the aviation and/or aerospace industry.

Each application will be evaluated based on:

- **Project Description**:
  - The project must demonstrate a direct connection to aviation or aerospace education and support workforce development in aviation, aerospace engineering, aviation maintenance, pilot training, airport operations or related career pathways in South Carolina.
  - The project has a date range for implementation.
  - The project can be implemented within two years of grant approval, or the project includes at least one goal that can be implemented entirely within one year.
  - The project service area (city, county, or state-wide)
- **Project Outcomes**:
  - The project includes at least one measurable outcome. Outcome examples include, but are not limited to, workforce placement, certifications earned, internships completed, flight hours completed, completed FAA knowledge tests
  - The project impacts a significant population of students.
  - The project has the potential for continued impact beyond the initial grant period.
- **Project Need**:
  - The program creates a unique opportunity that is currently not available.
  - The program would either not exist, would have a much-reduced population impact, or would not be implemented for at least one year if grant funding was unavailable.
- **Budget**:
  - The project budget does NOT include ineligible items (unless these items are funded by sources other than the SCAC grant).
  - The budget includes all necessary materials for program implementation. (Other sources may fund some items.)
  - The applicant must match forty percent of the awarded grant. Matching funds may consist of cash, documented in-kind labor, donated equipment, donated materials, volunteer services or facility use. General organizational overhead shall not exceed 25% of the total matching contribution.
  - Grant award to a specified project will not exceed $100,000 per the SCAC authorized budget fiscal year.
- **Previous Awards**:
  - All reporting requirements were fulfilled if the educational institution, non-profit organization, or government entity had previously received a SCAC grant.

5. Grant Awarding and Disbursement

The SCAC will notify applicants of their award status before the end of the period**.** Awarded funds will be disbursed directly to the educational institution, non-profit organization, or government entity for eligible program costs, subject to the following conditions:

- Reimbursement requests may be submitted periodically during project implementation.
- Reimbursement requests must be submitted using the SCAC Request for Reimbursement Form. Receipts and a Project Tabulation Form must accompany reimbursement requests, which are also available on the SCAC website.

- The final reimbursement request must include a report detailing the use of funds and the project results. Reimbursements for lodging, meals and incidental expenses shall be made at the GSA rate.
- Grants expire two years following date of offer. Reimbursement requests submitted after grant expiration will not be funded.
- Funds must be used for the purposes outlined in the application. Misuse or misallocation of funds will result in the immediate termination of the grant and repayment of funds. SCAC reserves the right to refuse grant applications from educational institutions, non-profit organizations, or government entities that have previously misused or misallocated grant funds.
- The following expenses are not eligible for grant funding:
    - Direct salaries and wages of the organization's directors, officers, agents or employees as well as salaries/wages of third party contractors.
    - Other indirect expenses not directly tied to the administration of the educational program.
    - Aircraft purchases.
    - Travel that is not directly related to the educational goals of the projects.
    - Entertainment.
    - Brochures, flyers, or promotional materials not tied to the grant activities.
    - Basic office supplies.
    - Routine maintenance or repair.
    - Computer hardware, software or licenses that are not directly related to the program's educational goals.
    - Any expenses incurred before or after the grant period without express SCAC authorization.

6. Grant Monitoring and Compliance

The SCAC may conduct reviews of grant-funded projects to ensure compliance with the terms of the award. Failure to comply with reporting requirements or any other grant terms may result in suspension or cancellation of funding and potential disqualification from future grant opportunities.

7. Education Committee

The Education Committee will review grant applications ever six (6) months and report to the Commission. The Education Committee will also recommend policy revisions, an application rubric, reporting templates, and other documentation to support the SCAC Education Grant Program. The membership of the Education Committee shall consist of the following South Carolina Aeronautics Commission Staff: Executive Director, Program Manager for Airport Development and Airport Planner.

8. Amendments and Policy Review

The SCAC reserves the right to amend this policy to reflect changes in state priorities, funding availability, or educational needs.

9. Contact Information

For more information about the Education Grant Program, application process, or policy guidelines, please contact:

South Carolina Aeronautics Commission
2553 Airport Blvd
West Columbia, SC 29170
(803) 896-6262
dgray@aeronautics.sc.gov
https://aeronautics.sc.gov/aviation-aerospace-education