



Alabama Wildlife Federation

2021-22 Outdoor Classroom Grant Rules & Instructions



Overview

The purpose of the Alabama Wildlife Federation's (AWF) Outdoor Classroom Grant Program is to provide financial and technical assistance for schools enrolled in the Alabama Outdoor Classroom Program to help them develop, use, and maintain schoolyard wildlife habitats that function as outdoor classrooms that can be used as effective educational tools for hands-on, inquiry-based activities.

All kindergarten-12th grade, public or private schools **enrolled** in the Alabama Outdoor Classroom (OC) Program are eligible to submit one AWF OC Grant Proposal **up to \$1,000**. Schools may apply multiple years in a row, but schools who did not receive an AWF OC Grant award the previous year will receive priority for the current year.

All grants must be submitted through AWF's online grant application **by Friday, October 29, 2021**.

Eligible Projects & Expenses

AWF OC Grants focus on directed study opportunities by providing funds for any or all of the following:

- **Outdoor Learning Stations** – Native plants, building supplies and other materials needed to develop or enhance a songbird sanctuary, butterfly garden, pollinator garden, sensory garden, weather station, or frog and toad bog.
- **Outdoor Activity Kits** – Instructional materials, educational tools and non-consumable activity supplies to develop or enhance hands-on activities to be used in conjunction with the school's outdoor classroom and specific outdoor learning stations such as field guides, magnifying glasses, digital cameras, etc.
- **Outdoor Educational Signage** – Kiosks, plant identification signs, and educational signs that improve the use of the outdoor classroom as an educational tool and can be used in conjunction with outdoor classroom activities.

Note: Any materials/equipment received through the grant or purchased with funds from the grant become property of the school. Grant funds cannot be used for teacher training. Free in-service teacher training can be provided through the Alabama Outdoor Classroom Program if needed, just let us know.

Grant Proposal Criteria

The Proposals will be evaluated by the AWF OC Grant Committee based on the following criteria:

1. Completeness of the Grant Application including a thorough explanation of the details, the soundness of the budget, and clearly defined project implementation stages;
2. Relevance to the purpose of the Alabama Wildlife Federation Outdoor Classroom Grant Program;
3. Integration of interdisciplinary, inquiry-based, hands-on outdoor activities;
4. Student involvement in planning, design, implementation and maintenance of the outdoor learning stations; and
5. Sustainability of the project for long-term use.

Grant Proposal Scoring

- Each section of the grant application will be awarded points based on the above Grant Proposal Criteria.
- The number of possible points for each section are listed in the Grant Application Instructions below.
- These scores will help the AWF Outdoor Classroom Grant Selection Committee determine which grant application projects to fund.
- To maximize your scores, review the grant writing tips at <https://www.alabamawildlife.org/oc-grants/>

Steps to create your Grant Application

Step 1: To access the application, you must provide your school's **Outdoor Classroom (OC) ID number**, which can be found near the top of your school's OC webpage under your Enrollment date. Your OC ID# allows you to fill out your grant application in multiple online sessions if needed, and it auto-fills your grant application with data from your school's OC Data Hub – found at the bottom of your school's OC webpage.

Step 2: Review the questions and checklists in the online grant application *before* working on the application.

Step 3: Complete your grant application in a **word processing file** *before* you fill out your online grant application to minimize the amount of time you spend editing your application online.

Step 4: Click the **“Save” button** at the bottom of the webpage **each time** before exiting the application. Otherwise, your updates will not be saved and you will have re-enter the information.

Step 5: After you complete the online application, click the **“Submit” button** at the bottom of the page.

Online Grant Application

Below is the information that you will need to provide for each section of the online grant application.

Section A1: School Eligibility (5 points)

You must do the following to be eligible to apply for an AWF OC Grant:

- Provide the year that your school enrolled in the AOC Program. Your Enrollment date is near the top of your OC webpage that is connected to AWF's online [OC Schools Map](#).
- Provide the date in which you reviewed this document.
- Provide the date in which your outdoor classroom planning committee met this school year to discuss your outdoor classroom plans and this grant project.
- Review and update the sections of your school's Outdoor Classroom (OC) Data Hub information listed below **BEFORE** you begin filling out your outdoor classroom grant application. Your OC Data Hub portals are located at the bottom of your school's OC webpage via AWF's online OC Schools Map.
 - OC School Information
 - Planning Committee Members & Emails
 - Volunteers, Partners & Sponsors
 - OC Impact Data for Grants
- Confirm the following: As the Outdoor Classroom Project Coordinator, you agree to follow the Alabama Wildlife Federation's Outdoor Classroom Grant Rules & Instructions, and you confirm that the principal of your school approves the submission of this Grant Proposal and the implementation of the project described herein. (**You must click “Yes, I agree”** or you are not eligible for this grant.)

Section A2: School Information (5 points)

Your Outdoor Classroom Data Hub should provide the following information about your school:

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> School's Name | <input type="checkbox"/> School Phone Number | <input type="checkbox"/> County |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Principal's Name | <input type="checkbox"/> School Address, City & Zip | <input type="checkbox"/> School System |

Section A3: Outdoor Classroom Project Coordinator Information (4 points)

Provide the following so that we may follow up with you if we have any questions:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Project Coordinator's Name | <input type="checkbox"/> Project Coordinator's Email Address |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faculty Position | <input type="checkbox"/> Cell Phone Number |

Section B1: Grant Request Amount (1 point)

List the total amount of funds you are requesting, which can be any amount up to \$1,000.

Section B2: Project Scope (5 points)

Which of the following will your grant project include? You can choose more than one.

- [Butterfly Habitat](#)
- [Frog & Toad Habitat](#)
- [Pollinator Habitat](#)
- [Sensory Garden](#)
- [Songbird Habitat](#)
- [Activity Kit\(s\)](#)
- [Informational Kiosk\(s\)](#)
- [Plant ID Signs](#)
- [Educational Learning Station Sign\(s\)](#)
- [Weather Station & Cardinal Directions Sign](#)
- [Decomposition Stations](#)

Section B3: Project Details (20 points)

Describe the details of your project including specifics about what your project encompasses (outdoor learning station(s), outdoor activity kit material(s), and/or educational signage). Also, explain the size of the project(s) along with the materials needed to complete the project(s) so that we can understand the purpose and amount of the specific materials listed in your itemized budget in Section E below. *(in approximately 350 words)*

Use our AWF website to help you develop the details and budget for your OC Grant project:

- [Outdoor Learning Station Project Plans](#)
- [Outdoor Classroom Activity Kit Ideas](#)
- [Educational Outdoor Classroom Signs](#)

Section B4: Impact on Outdoor Classroom (10 points)

Describe where your outdoor classroom is/will be located on your campus, which learning stations (if any) you already have, how your grant project will enhance your current outdoor classroom, and how it will impact your long-term goals for your outdoor classroom. *(in approximately 150 words)*

Section B5: Impact on Educational Opportunities and Curriculum Details (10 points)

Which of the following hands-on, outdoor activities will you and your teachers use with the students in conjunction with your grant project and your outdoor classroom? You can choose more than one.

- [AWF Outdoor Classroom Field Investigation Activities](#) - If yes, list the names of the activities.
- [AWF Outdoor Classroom Themed Activities](#) - If yes, list the names of the activities.
- [Journey North’s Website & Citizen Science Activities](#) - If yes, list the names of the activities.
- Other activities** - List other activities your faculty will use in conjunction with your outdoor classroom.

Which of the following Outdoor Classroom Activity Kits (if any) will you use with your students in conjunction with your grant project AND your outdoor classroom lessons? You can choose more than one.

- [Learning about Living Things](#)
- [Analyzing the Weather](#)
- [Comparing Life Cycles](#)
- Other: _____
- [Observing Songbirds](#)
- [Finding Food Webs](#)
- [Comparing Animals](#)
- [Investigating Pollination](#)
- [Evaluating Habitats](#)
- [Examining Plants](#)

Describe how your outdoor classroom grant project will increase and/or enhance the educational opportunities for your students, including how these activities help teach the Alabama Department of Education’s standards for science, math, reading, and/or technology. *(in approximately 100 words)*

Section B6: Student Involvement (5 points)

Describe the student population who will benefit from this project including which classes, grade levels, and/or student clubs will participate, and explain how they will be involved in the planning, design, and/or implementation of the project. For instance, if you are adding new learning station(s), which students will help build it? If you are adding educational signage, which students will help design them? If you are procuring new activity kits, which students will participate in activities using the new activity kits? (*in app. ~100 words*)

Section B7: Maintenance (5 points)

Which of the following Outdoor Classroom Maintenance Resources (if any) will you use to help maintain your outdoor classroom from year to year? You can choose more than one.

- [Weekly Maintenance Checklist](#)
- [Learning Station Adoption Program](#)
- [Learning Station Maintenance Packets](#)
- [Summer Maintenance Checklist](#)

Explain how you will sustain the outdoor classroom grant project from year to year AND how you will maintain all of the outdoor learning stations over time, including who will be responsible for the day-to-day care, learning station upkeep during the school year, and summer maintenance. Include how the students will be involved. (*in approximately 100 words*)

Section B8: Evaluation (5 points)

Describe how you will evaluate and measure the success of the grant project including if/how it improved the outdoor classroom, if/how it enhanced learning opportunities and experiences for the students, and if/how it increased the teachers' use of the outdoor classroom as an educational tool. (*in approximately 100 words*)

Which of the following Outdoor Classroom Surveys (if any) will you use to help evaluate the success of your grant project and your outdoor classroom? You can choose more than one.

- [Example Student Survey](#) (Beginning and End-of-School-Year)
- [Example Teacher Survey](#) (End of School Year)

Section C: Project Partners (5 points)

Your Outdoor Classroom Data Hub should provide up-to-date information about your school's partners. List the volunteers, sponsors, and partners (parents, local businesses, community members, churches, organizations, state or federal agencies, etc.) involved in your outdoor classroom and describe the types of support (donations, discounts, funding, volunteer time, technical advice, etc.) they provide. For instance, be sure to list your Alabama Wildlife Federation Outdoor Classroom Consultant who provides technical support and advice including an outdoor classroom site map, learning stations materials list and estimated budget.

Section D: Updated Site Map (5 points)

Provide a PDF or JPG file (up to 5 MB in size) of your updated outdoor classroom map so that we can understand where your outdoor classroom is located, which learning stations (if any) you already have, and which projects will be added to your outdoor classroom through this grant project. Provide the updated site map via one of the options below:

- On the outdoor classroom site map that your AWF OC Consultant created for your school, mark which of the features "Already Exist" and which are "Proposed" in your current grant application.
- If you do not have a site map created by your AWF OC Consultant, draw one that includes the correct directional orientation (N, E, S & W), the location of the school building, site dimensions, existing significant landscape features, and proposed changes. Also, clearly mark which features "Already Exist" and which are "Proposed."

Section E: Itemized Budget (10 points)

Please provide the following for your budget:

- Project Component:** List each item (and its size and quantity!) that you need to purchase to carry out your proposed project. Include items which will be provided by other grants or donations.
- Supplier:** List the company where you will purchase the item OR the company who will donate it.
- Estimated Cost:** List the cost of the item including taxes or shipping fees. If the item will be donated or purchased using a different source of funds such as a different grant, then list the cost as \$0.
- Donor/Grant:** If the item will be donated or purchased using a different source of funds, list the donor, agency, organization or business name AND/OR the name of the grant.

Note: The final estimated cost of this budget should be the same as the amount you are asking for in Section B1 of this grant application. Matching funds are encouraged but not required. See the Eligible Expenses section on page 1 of the AWF's OC Grant Guidelines for details.

Section F: Project Schedule (5 points)

Provide a detailed schedule that **completes the project by September 9, 2022**, so that you can turn in your **Final Report by September 16, 2022**. Include the month or season in which the activity will take place, a brief description of each activity, and the participants in the activity. Also, include all activities related to the planning, development, and use of the project including educational activities for the students.

Protocol for Grant Recipients

- Grant recipients will receive notification of their grant award by **Friday, November 12, 2021**.
- Grant recipients will receive funding upon signing and returning the Alabama Wildlife Federation Outdoor Classroom Grant Memorandum of Understanding by **Friday, December 10, 2021**.
- Grant recipients **must** schedule an on-site project review with their AWF Outdoor Classroom Consultant at some point during the grant project period and prior to submitting the final grant report (**between January and August 2022**).
- The grant recipient is responsible for completing the project as proposed by **September 9, 2022**. If more than \$50 of the grant award was not used, the grant recipient must return those funds to the AWF.
- The Final Report forms, which include a review of the grant project, must be filled out and returned to AWF upon completion of the project no later than **September 16, 2022**. In order for grant expenses to be eligible, they must be included in the budget section of the Grant Application, incurred within the project period, and submitted with proper supporting documentation with the final grant report.
- Failure of your school to use grant funds as intended in your grant proposal and/or failure to submit your Final Report will cause a default by the grantee, and the grant will be revoked and all unused or misused funds shall be returned to the AWF OC Grant Program. In addition, the school will no longer be eligible for future AWF OC Grants.
- Grant recipients are encouraged to publicize grant awards. The credit line should read:

The Alabama Wildlife Federation, Alabama's largest and oldest conservation organization, created the Alabama Outdoor Classroom Grant Program to help educate our children about Alabama's rich natural history and biodiversity through hands-on conservation education activities conducted in an outdoor classroom setting.

Questions? Email us at OC@AlabamaWildlife.org