



Application Form and Instructions
Kelly Lane Earth and Space Science Grant (2026)
NASA South Dakota Space Grant Consortium
(*This Announcement Released on January 26, 2025*)
Application Deadline: **March 13, 2026**



The South Dakota Space Grant Consortium (SDSGC) <https://sd.spacegrant.org> invites applications from South Dakota teachers for the 20th annual Kelly Lane Earth and Space Science Grant, an award of up to \$8000 in 2026. Applications are due by **March 13, 2026**.

About the Award

The Kelly Lane Earth and Space Grant was established in 2006 in honor of Kelly Lane, who retired from teaching science at Douglas Middle School. Through his pioneering efforts in the use of geospatial technology, Kelly helped to inspire countless students and fellow teachers and to advance the use of technology to foster better comprehension of the physical and biological sciences.

Purpose

The purpose of the award is to recognize and support outstanding teachers and innovative educational programs at the pre-college level. The SDSGC believes that early engagement of students in STEM disciplines will yield long-term benefits to the state including a strengthened higher education system and a more diverse technological workforce. The application must demonstrate how the proposed program or activity will support these long-term goals.

Scope of program

Funds may be used for supplies or travel; to attend or present workshops; to develop new curriculum, media, or programs; or any other activity consistent with the goal of strengthening STEM education. Funds may not, however, be used to supplement or replace teacher salary. **When supplies are purchased, they must be purchased directly by SDSGC (SDSU) through the grant and shipped/delivered to the teacher's school. To facilitate ordering, the teacher must supply the ordering information to SDSGC including specific details on the supplies they wish to order (e.g., vendor, item numbers, price, etc).** Supplies purchased through the grant become the property of the teacher's school. **No computer or clothing purchases** are allowed.

Eligibility

Grant applications are encouraged from any science or math teacher at a public, private, or tribal K-12 school in South Dakota. The SDSGC recognizes that STEM education encompasses a broad spectrum of physical and biological sciences, mathematics, and related fields. Teachers from any STEM-related field are eligible. All persons receiving NASA Space Grant funds under the Kelly Lane Earth & Space Science Grant must be U.S. citizens.

Selection criteria

Grant applications will be evaluated by the SDSGC Management Team. Important review criteria include:

1. Does the applicant offer a clear plan to inspire and engage students in STEM?
2. How will the activity be sustained beyond the grant period?
3. Beyond the impact on the grantee, what are the broader impacts on students, other teachers, or administrators?

Applicants may wish to consult NASA's *Strategy for STEM Engagement* for alignment with the Agency's objectives:

- <https://www.nasa.gov/sites/default/files/atoms/files/nasa-strategy-for-stem-2020-23-508.pdf>

In the end, the SDSGC is most interested in innovative, grassroots ideas from teachers in South Dakota classrooms. Preference will be given to applications focusing on topics pertaining to space science, earth science, and/or the use geospatial technology.

Application procedure

To apply for the grant, please refer to the following directions. NOTE: Funds may not be used to supplement or replace teacher salary, and no F&A (overhead or indirect) costs are allowed. The application must include:

1. Name, contact information, school, and grade levels and classes taught.
2. How the teacher plans to use the funds (maximum 2 single-spaced 12-font pages), which includes:
 - a) Title and description of proposed program or activity
 - b) Clear, measurable objectives with associated metrics that will be used to evaluate the success of the project and reported to the SDSGC
 - c) Quantitative impact of activity (e.g., estimated number of participants/students reached in first year)
 - d) Qualitative impact of activity (long-term benefit to STEM education)
 - e) Sustainability of activity
 - f) Time period during which funds will be used (no longer than 1 year from grant award)
3. Brief biographical sketch emphasizing past teaching accomplishments (maximum 1 additional page).
4. Budget page (no special form is required, but clear, specific breakdown of costs will help reviewers evaluate proposal). Request is limited to a maximum of \$8000 and budget page should include:
 - Cost estimates for domestic travel, supplies, workshops, services (no computer or clothing purchases allowed)
 - If total project cost exceeds the amount requested, indicate the amounts and sources of other funds, and whether the success of the project depends on these other sources
 - Any "in-kind" or cash match as cost-sharing is not a requirement for selection, but is welcome if it can be provided.

5. Name and statement of support from school administrator (maximum 50 words) indicating approval of project and budget.

Distribution of awards

Supplies are to be ordered directly by SDSGC through South Dakota State University and shipped to the grantee as described on page 1 under “Scope of program”. Other approved expenses (consistent with the budget and objectives) will be reimbursed to the teacher or his/her school (when necessary) upon submittal of invoices including “proof-of-purchase” receipts. A completed W-9 form supplied by SDSM&T from the teacher or school will be required prior to reimbursement.

Application submission and deadline

One completed copy of the application must be received as a **single electronic file** (Word or PDF format preferred) via email by **March 13, 2026** to:

Dr. Todd Letcher, Director, SDSGC
Email: Todd.Letcher@sdstate.edu

Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted. We anticipate notifying award winner(s) and all other applicants by March 31, 2026. Information on the winning projects will be posted shortly thereafter at:

<https://sdspacegrant.sdsmt.edu/KellyLaneTeacherGrant.html>

Questions?

Questions can be directed to Dr. Todd Letcher at todd.letcher@sdstate.edu or 605-688-5311.

Reporting, tracking, and evaluation

Winners will need to complete an evaluation survey provided by SDSGC Program Evaluator Steckelberg Consulting, LLC, at or near the end of their first project year, which will include the number and ages of students reached and the educational impacts of the project. Because there is a shift in the start and end dates of our grant cycle, we do not yet have guidance on when this survey will be due.