

MVLA Foundation Innovative Learning Grants

2026-27 Program Description and Application

Phase 1 Deadline: April 21, 2026, for Fall and/or Spring projects

Phase 2 Deadline: Sept. 23, 2026, for Spring projects

Apply for an INDIVIDUAL grant of \$5,000 maximum or a COLLABORATION grant for up to \$10,000 per Multi-Discipline Collaboration team.

Multi-discipline teams are encouraged to apply to promote cross-curricular collaboration among course teams and address unique needs or interests.

Program Description: The MVLA High School Foundation has awarded the district **\$100,000** for the **2026-27** school year to inspire **CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION** in instruction.

Innovative Learning Grants enhance the educational experiences of students, taking them **above and beyond** those that are typically available to students in high school classrooms across California and the country. Projects should create **unique** learning experiences that deepen student knowledge and understanding in a particular subject or across multiple subject areas. Wellness-related projects, such as Social-Emotional Learning, will be considered and are highly encouraged.

Among the many desired outcomes:

- Solving real-world problems
- Critical thinking
- Teamwork
- Creating authentic out-of-class, career-oriented learning experiences
- Creating learning experiences that mirror those encountered in institutions of higher learning and in professional settings

These grants are available to everyone who has a role directly impacting learning, regardless of whether the applicant is a teacher, a paraprofessional, or a classified employee. Projects outside of science and technology are highly encouraged.

Projects are intended as pilots; if successful, they are expected to become part of the District's curriculum, supported with District funds.

- Foundation grants are to be considered "seed money"
- Any unused grant funds **cannot** be carried over to future years
- Teachers, the Department Coordinator, and Principal must acknowledge the expectation that future consumable costs are the school site's responsibility, as are any expenses over what is approved

Timeline:

- **April 21, 2026** - Phase 1 application deadline for either Fall or Spring 2027 projects
- **May 13, 2026** - Phase 1 approval of projects; award notifications will go out within a week
- **September 23, 2026** - Phase 2 application deadline for Spring 2027 projects
- **October 7, 2026** - Phase 2 approval of projects; award notifications will go out within a week

Criteria for projects to be eligible for funding:

Proposals will be ranked on how well they address the goals/objectives below. Projects will be scored holistically.

Impact of the project on student learning and motivation to learn; scaling projects to enhance instruction across course teams and potentially across the curriculum at the school and district level:

- Evidence that the project will enhance students' depth of knowledge and curiosity, consistent with 21st Century Skills: career readiness, collaboration and teamwork, communication in diverse formats, critical thinking, complex reasoning, and problem-solving
- Relevance to real-world issues and attempts at finding solutions to issues and problems, at home and/or globally
- Interdisciplinary approaches and experiences that involve field work or collaboration with professional experts within and outside of MVLA
- Evoking interest, curiosity, and passion for learning and making learning relevant to the individual student
- Potential for project to be scaled and integrated at the course team level and across district curriculum
- For Course Team grants, we are looking for enhancing consistency across the team in curriculum delivery, creativity, and grading practices, as well as common assessments

Within two weeks of completion of the project, you must submit a written narrative reflection of your project's outcomes to Ed Services using the [Innovative Grant Reflection form](#).

NOTE: Applicants who fail to submit a reflection from a prior project are *not* eligible to apply for a new grant.

For examples of previously approved projects, please click [here](#).



MVLA Foundation Innovative Learning Grant Application 2026-27

Submit to Educational Services

Phase 1 Deadline: [April 21, 2026](#), for Fall and/or Spring projects

Phase 2 Deadline: [Sept. 23, 2026](#), for Spring projects

Please indicate the grant you are applying for:

Individual grant up to \$5,000

Collaboration grant up to \$10,000 for Multi-Discipline Collaboration Team

Name of Applicant(s):

Course/Program Name:

School Name:

Project Title:

Project Description

- 1. Impact of the project on student learning (projects will be scored holistically on a scale of 1-15 points)**

In your narrative, please consider and address the following prompts:

- What will your students be doing? What goals do you want them to achieve?
- What resources do you need to complete the project?
- How does this project deepen or enhance knowledge and understanding of the subject matter?
- How does this project address 21st-century learning, e.g., career readiness, collaboration/teamwork, communication in diverse formats, critical thinking, complex reasoning, problem-solving, and relevance to real-world issues and experiences?
- What sets this learning experience apart from what students normally experience in this class, and how will this project take teaching and learning to a higher level?
- How does this project support the mental health and well-being of your students and address their social-emotional needs?

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Student Information

2. How many students would likely be impacted by this grant? (range: minimum to maximum)	
3. What is the typical grade level? (9 th , 10 th , 11 th , 12 th)	
4. What class or classes will be involved in this project? (Class titles)	
5. What types of students will be involved in the project? (Example: AP, Honors, College Prep, EL, SPED, or traditionally underserved students)	

Budget

6. List expenses, material costs (including shipping and tax), and Compensation for collaborative projects.

Please separate fixed one-time costs of equipment and potential annual costs for consumables.

Items		Total cost
Tax & Shipping		
Grand Total		

Evaluation/Reflection Plan

7. Project evaluation

a. How will you determine whether this project was successful in motivating students and enhancing their depth of knowledge or improving their skills?

b. What outcomes are you seeking?

c. How will you measure the results you have achieved with this project?

Applicant(s) Signature and Date _____

Total estimated annual cost of consumables: \$ _____

NOTE: Grant totals are a **MAXIMUM** amount, and any overages will be charged to your Department at your school site

Department Chair or Program Director's Statement of support for this project.

By checking this box, the Department Chair confirms that they have read the attached statement and agrees with the terms of how "ongoing" projects are funded.

NOTE: Educational Services will obtain the principal's signature AFTER your application is submitted.

**Principal's Signature:
Supporting the Project**

The Principal gives support for this project, confirms that they have read the attached statement, and accepts the condition that the school will have to pay for consumable expenses related to this project in year two and beyond.

Denial of Support for the Project

The Principal cannot accept the above conditions or cannot support the project for other reasons. Please provide rationale:

General Guidelines and FAQs

Eligibility:

- Previous recipients of Innovative Learning Grants are eligible to submit an application for a **different** grant if they have submitted a [Learning Grant Reflection](#) on the implementation of their previous project.
- There is a limit of one application (individual or group) for the same course.
- There is a limit of \$10,000 benefitting a particular course per school year.

Field trips:

- Field trips must be tied to a specific learning objective and must support a unit of study or a standards-based project. The object of this lesson must be defined in the application, and the related learning goals must be specified.
- Field trips **cannot** be overnight.

Limitations and Restrictions:

- Furniture, fixtures, and basic equipment, and technology are the district's responsibility and **will not be** considered for funding by the Foundation.
- Food **will not be** funded unless explicitly stated and approved.
- Basic materials or upgrades of outdated equipment will not be considered unless they are directly tied to an innovative project.
- Proposals for new courses must be approved and funded by the district.
- Equipment and other paraphernalia acquired with Foundation funds must be inventoried and used for multiple years. The same equipment cannot be bought more than once.
- Previously approved projects will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Decisions rendered by the Foundation Board are final and cannot be appealed.

Collaboration and Innovation

Collaborative projects among teachers can inspire creativity and innovation, fostering a dynamic learning environment for high school students. Here are some examples of collaborative initiatives that promote creativity and innovation across multiple classes or course teams:

- **Interdisciplinary Projects:** Teachers from different subjects collaborate to design projects that integrate their respective curricula. For example, a history teacher, an English teacher, and a technology teacher could collaborate on a multimedia project where students research a historical event, write narratives about it, and create digital presentations or websites.
- **STEAM Challenges:** Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) teachers collaborate to create hands-on challenges. For instance, students could work in teams to design and build Rube Goldberg machines, incorporating principles from physics, engineering, and creative arts.
- **Service Learning Projects:** Teachers across various subjects collaborate on service learning initiatives. For example, social studies, science, and language arts teachers could engage students in a project related to environmental conservation, where students research, take action, and document their efforts, integrating multiple skills and knowledge areas.

- **Global Collaboration:** Teachers connect their classrooms with peers in different countries. Students collaborate on projects that involve cultural exchanges, language learning, and collaborative problem-solving. This can be done through video conferences, shared online platforms, or joint research initiatives.
- **Innovation Challenges:** Teachers create innovation challenges where students are tasked with solving real-world problems using creativity and critical thinking. These challenges could be related to sustainable energy, community issues, or technological advancements. Teams of students from various classes then collaborate to devise innovative solutions.
- **Project-Based Learning (PBL) Units:** Teachers from different subjects collaborate to create a comprehensive Project-Based Learning unit. For example, in a unit about renewable energy, science teachers can focus on the science behind different energy sources, math teachers can calculate energy efficiency, and art teachers can help students create visual representations of sustainable energy concepts.
- **Cross-Curricular Exhibitions:** Teachers collaborate to organize exhibitions showcasing students' projects from various subjects. This could include art displays, science experiments, historical reenactments, and literary presentations. Students collaborate across disciplines to prepare and present their work to the school community.
- **Collaborative Online Platforms:** Teachers use online platforms like Google Classroom or Edmodo to create collaborative spaces where students from different classes or subjects can work together on projects. These platforms allow for seamless sharing of resources, discussions, and collaborative project work.
- **Guest Speaker Series:** Teachers invite guest speakers or professionals from different fields to address students. This collaboration provides students with diverse perspectives and insights, inspiring them to think innovatively about their future careers and projects.
- **Cross-Curricular Competitions:** Teachers organize friendly competitions that require students to collaborate across subjects. For example, a literature teacher could collaborate with a drama teacher to host a Shakespearean monologue competition, encouraging students to analyze texts and perform creatively.

These collaborative initiatives not only enhance students' learning experiences but also promote teamwork, creativity, and critical thinking skills across a variety of subjects. We encourage staff to look at [successful past projects](#) for additional inspiration.