

# Imagine Signature Grants Program Guidelines

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## About the Imagine Learning Foundation

### **Imagine a world where the well-being of learners is a priority.**

At the Imagine Learning Foundation (ILF), our mission is to foster the well-being of learners and the people who support them at home and in their communities.

Imagine Learning, our primary sponsor, *ignites learning breakthroughs* with innovative and accessible digital-first K-12 products and services. Imagine Learning looks to empower student and educator potential. The Imagine Learning Foundation embraces and extends this mission by focusing on the powerful connection between the well-being of students and the people who support them outside of the classroom to bolster academic success.

Schools are better able to develop healthy and supportive learning environments activities centered on the well-being of learners with programs that are extended from classrooms into home and community environments. At the Imagine Learning Foundation, we aim to bridge connections between classroom learning and positive learning environments outside the classroom by promoting and expanding access to these programs at home and in the community.

At the Imagine Learning Foundation, we aim to tap into this meaningful connection between a supporting learning environment in the classroom and expanding it outside the classroom by facilitating access to programs and activities focusing on mental and physical well-being at home and in the community. By bringing these programs into life beyond the classroom, we activate a learner's full community and support system to ignite more breakthroughs in every learning environment.

### **What We Do and How We Work**

Our efforts are geared to drive family and community support for the well-being of learners and the people who support them so that these students thrive both in and out of the classroom. Community support — be it from family, allies or educators — has a meaningful positive impact on students' well-being and academic outcomes.

Students will be in a better position to succeed personally and academically if their learning environments and experiences at school and beyond include aspects of mental and physical well-being. We engage students and connect families and communities to these resources outside the classroom to help students apply these foundational life skills and strategies in all aspects of their lives and relationships.

As we expand supportive learning environments into life beyond the classroom, we ignite more learning breakthroughs by engaging a learners' broader family and community support system — making every space a positive learning environment.

To learn more about what we do and how we work, visit us at [www.imaginelearningfoundation.org](http://www.imaginelearningfoundation.org).

# Imagine Signature Grant Program Overview

## Purpose

Part of our overall funding and resources will be directed to the Imagine Signature Grant Program. This grant program seeks to amplify national or regional non-profit organizations' efforts which align to the mission of ILF and meet one or more of the funding priority areas of focus identified by ILF.

## 2024 Funding Priority Areas of Focus

Chronic absenteeism, particularly for children experiencing homelessness, has severe consequences for learning, emotional well-being, stability, and future outcomes through a student's life. According to the National Center for Homeless Education's December 2023 report, over 1.2 million students identified as experiencing homelessness and approximately 52% were chronically absent during the 2021-2022 school year.

ILF's 2024 Imagine Signature Grant program plans to sponsor worthy initiatives looking to address vital issues concerning student housing insecurity and their basic needs along with the associated chronic absenteeism by students from their daily K-12 learning environments. While these areas are funding priorities for the 2024 grant cycle, ILF will also consider projects from eligible entities aligned with ILF's mission and the Imagine Signature Grant program. The Imagine Signature Grant Program will prioritize the following areas under the 2024 grant cycle:

Funding Priority	Area of Focus
<b>2024 Funding Priority</b>	Supporting eligible organizations who are addressing vital issues concerning student housing insecurity and their basic needs along with the associated chronic absenteeism by students from their daily K-12 learning environments.
<b>Other Mission-Aligned Programs</b>	Supporting programs, activities or services fostering the learning well-being of youth, families, and educators outside the classroom and into the home and community environments.
<b>Education and Community Research</b>	Studying the current impacts social, physical, mental, and emotional well-being has on accelerating student achievement across diverse communities, including students experiencing homelessness and chronic absenteeism.

To learn more about prior investments and Imagine Signature grantees, visit us at: [www.imaginelearningfoundation.org/what-we-do/](http://www.imaginelearningfoundation.org/what-we-do/).

For future grant cycles, ILF reserves the right to change the funding priorities and areas of focus to further meet the needs of learners and the people who support them.

## Awards and Timing

ILF will fund and partner with a variety of national and/or regional organizations that align to our mission and whose activities can make the greatest impact. To be eligible for a grant as part of the Imagine

Signature Grant program, organizations must meet one or more of the funding priorities identified and meet the 2024 grant guidelines established under the Imagine Signature Grants Program.

The Imagine Signature Grants Program anticipates awarding \$400,000 or more in total grant awards to new and/or existing grantees with estimated grant awards, per grantee, in the range of \$50,000 to \$100,000.

- **Funding Announcement:** January 2024
- **Application Opens:** January 30, 2024
- **Application Deadline:** March 29, 2024, by 11:59 p.m. (PST)
- **Application Review:** May/June 2024
- **Award Notifications:** Late June/early July 2024
- **Grant Awards:** July 2024
- **Program Start Dates:** after July 1, 2024
- **Funding Term:** up to fifteen (15) months
- **Reporting Requirements:** Progress Report, Final Grant Report, and Post-Grant Update Report

### Ineligible Organizations and Projects

The Imagine Signature Grant Program will not fund the following:

- Individual PreK-12 schools (public, private, charter or virtual)
- Public PreK-12 school districts
- Individuals
- Organizations not exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code
- Organizations not classified in Section 509(a)(1) or 509(a)(2)
- Organizations that use a third-party fiscal sponsor's Tax ID number/exempt status
- Grants for scholarships to individuals
- Grants to other grant-making organizations
- Sacramental or theological functions of religious organizations
- Political causes, candidates, organizations, or campaigns
- Social sororities or fraternities
- For-profit entities

In addition, the Imagine Signature Grant Program will not support:

- Sponsorships or fundraising events
- Endowments or capital campaigns
- Capital expenses or construction projects
- Existing deficits or retroactive funding

### Geography and Priority

- Funding for programs that have national or regional impact and serve over 300 youth, students and/or families will be prioritized.
- Organizations or projects outside of the United States will not be prioritized.
- The ILF will accept grant applications from locally focused organizations, however, the breadth of the impact of the program for which funding is sought will be considered. Projects with limited geographic impact will not be prioritized.
- Priority will be given to organizations and programs focused on high-need communities.

- Priority will be given where ILF funding is budgeted to be used for one or more of the 2024 grant cycle's Funding Priority Areas of Focus.

## 2024 Grant Application Cycle & Deadlines

The ILF accepts grant applications from eligible organizations on an annual basis. The 2024 grant application cycle will open on **January 30, 2024** and close on **March 29, 2024**. Applications and all required documents must be properly submitted through the ILF Imagine Signature Grant Program [online grant application portal](#) and instructions are provided in this guide.

The Imagine Signature Grant Program is a competitive grant program and open to eligible organizations throughout the United States. The ILF anticipates a high volume of applicants and may elect to close the application at any time at its discretion. All applications will undergo a thorough review and evaluation process by the board members and staff at the ILF.

The ILF will not accept nor respond to unsolicited meetings, telephone calls, emails or other communications and/or requests.

## Grantee Reporting Requirements

All awarded grantees must submit grant reports to the ILF such as:

- Grant Progress Report (within 120 days post-project start date)
- Final Grant Impact Report (within 30 days post-project end date)
- Post Grant Term Update Report (within 3 months post-project end date)

Each report will include updates on the grant progress, scope of work activities, performance, milestones, budget expenditures, program metrics and outcomes and any successes and/or challenges of which the ILF should be made aware.

# Grant Application: Overview, Components, Submission Process

## Overview

The grant application process is comprised of four (4) phases:

- Phase 1: Determine Eligibility (reference the *Ineligible Organizations and Projects* [section](#))
- Phase 2: Submitted Grant Application (for all eligible applicants)
- Phase 3: Application Evaluation and Review by ILF
- Phase 4: Notifications and Awards (by ILF to Grantees)

## 2024 Grant Application

Applications and all required documents must be properly submitted through the ILF Imagine Signature Grant Program [online grant application portal](#). An overview of the online application and instructions on how to use the online grant portal are provided in the subsequent sections. Our goal is to help you prepare for a successful submission. Incomplete or poorly written applications will not be accepted.

**Application Deadline: March 29, 2024 by 11:59 pm (PST).**

## Grant Application Components

The online grant application is structured into six (6) sections that all applicants must complete for a successful submission. Outlined below is an overview of the sections, list of fields, questions, guidance from ILF and character count restrictions for applicants to review in order to successfully prepare for the submission. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

### SECTION ONE: Summary - Organization & Contact Information

- Application Title/Project Name
  - *ILF Guidance: Keep it short, concise, and clear to your proposed program goals and outcomes. Typically, no more than 20 words. Here are some examples:*
    - *Giving students experiencing homelessness the right to have their basic needs met to improve school attendance*
    - *Investigating the trends of school absenteeism with focus on students who are experiencing homelessness.*
    - *Implementing Family Guidance and Virtual Supports to Improve Student Absenteeism*
- Applicant Primary Point of Contact Information
  - Contact Name, Title, Phone number, Email
- Organization Information
  - Organization Legal Name/Entity Name
  - Organization Primary Mailing Address
  - Organization IRS EIN Number
  - Organization Website
  - Organization Social Media Channels (optional)
- CEO/Executive Director
  - Contact Name, Title, Phone, Email

### SECTION TWO: Program/Project Overview and Narrative

Please provide an overview of your proposal, including the following information:

- Program Start Date (maximum 255 characters)
  - *ILF Guidance: Add the exact or approximate implementation start date of your proposed program/project.*
- Program End Date (maximum 255 characters)
  - *ILF Guidance: We suggest allowing 1-2 months after the program end date to collect and aggregate data (i.e., program effectiveness, usage, growth, impact, outcomes, etc.) which will be provided to the ILF as part of the grant reporting requirements.*
- Brief summary of the proposal (maximum 500 characters)
- Program Narrative
  - *ILF Guidance: When compiling your program narrative, please highlight how your program/project aligns to ILF's vision and mission. Include which focus area established*

- under the 2024 grant cycle's Funding Priority Areas of Focus, your organization is responding to and why.*
- Purpose (maximum 1000 characters)
  - Problem statement or need that you intend to solve (maximum 1000 characters)
    - *ILF Guidance: When compiling your response, please ensure the demonstration of need is clear, concise, and easy to understand. In addition, please provide any data to support the problem or need you are aiming to solve.*
  - Participants Impacted (Participants, Locations, Demographics, Age Groups, etc.) (maximum 1000 characters)
  - Scope of Work (Program Activities & Timeline) (maximum 1000 characters)
  - Overview of proposed timeline (maximum 255 characters)
  - Evaluation, Metrics and Measurements of Success (maximum 1000 characters)
  - Anticipated outcomes (maximum 1000 characters)
  - Plan for sustainability of the project or initiative after the grant award has been exhausted. (maximum 500 characters)
  - Please list any partners in this proposal, and the partner's role and your relationship with them. (maximum 255 characters)
- Brief overview of how funds will be spent (maximum 1000 characters)
    - *ILF Guidance: Respond to the "how the funds will be spent" question with an overall narrative of your project budget. Ensure the overall narrative of your project budget matches the amounts requested to the ILF which should also be noted your budget.*

### **SECTION THREE: Organization Information**

- About
  - Please provide your organization's mission statement. (maximum 1000 characters)
  - Tell us about the history of your organization. (maximum 1000 characters)
  - Provide your impact, reach and targeted demographics. (maximum 1000 characters)
  - Tell us about your geographic footprint. (maximum 500 characters)
  - Share what (if any) volunteer and/or employee engagement opportunities your organization offers to the community-at-large and/or a donor's corporate employees? (maximum 255 characters)
    - *ILF Guidance: Please share any engagement and/or volunteer opportunities you might have across your organization for the ILF as well to Imagine Learning, our primary sponsor.*
    - *Enter N/A if not applicable to your organization.*
  - How will your organization recognize and engage with the Foundation? (maximum 255 characters)
    - *ILF Guidance: For example, how will your organization recognize the ILF on your organization's website, social media channels, or annual reports? How will your organization engage with the ILF throughout the grant term?*
    - *Enter N/A if not applicable to your organization.*
- Key Programs, Accomplishments and Challenges
  - Tell us about your current programs and activities. (maximum 1000 characters)

- Please describe a few top accomplishments of your organization. (maximum 1000 characters)
- Please describe your top challenges and how your organization responded. (maximum 1000 characters)
- Leadership and Staff
  - Please list your Board of Directors and Executive/Leadership Team and include short bios. (maximum 5000 characters)
  - Please list key staff involved with this project along with short bios. (maximum 1000 characters)
    - *ILF Guidance: provide a list of the key staff involved who will be overseeing the program as well as monitoring the implementation for successful outcomes. Include Name, Title, Location, and a Short Bio.*

#### **SECTION FOUR: Evaluation Information/Outcomes & Outputs**

- Please describe the desired measurable outcomes and their anticipated timeline. (maximum 500 characters)
  - *ILF Guidance: Your organization will need to share how the program(s) will be evaluated and measured. Provide in-depth details around testing, measurements, metrics, assessments, and evaluations.*
- Share your organization's implementation plan to demonstrate how the program(s) will help achieve your goals and intended outputs and outcomes. (maximum 500 characters)
- Please describe how you intend to measure and report on the effectiveness of the proposal. (maximum 500 characters)
  - *ILF Guidance: The expected results of your proposed project/program are your measures/measurements of success (i.e., these are the Outputs and Outcomes). They must include specific numeric outputs and outcomes, including the number of students and families you are measuring, tools you will use to measure, timelines for measurements, etc.*
    - *Outputs are what and how many activities, services, methods and/or approaches you are using to measure your project/program (i.e., number of students and families served).*
    - *Outcomes are the results, impact and/or accomplishments you aim to achieve. They must include numeric goals.*

#### **SECTION FIVE: Budget and Budget Narrative**

- List of Other Funding Sources
  - *ILF Guidance: How much is your organization able to contribute towards the total program/project costs? How much are you requesting from the ILF (i.e., grant amount requested portion of the grant application/proposal)? Are you seeking funding from other sources to help cover the total program/project costs? What sources (i.e., federal funding, state funding, private grants, crowdsourcing, etc.)?*
  - *Enter N/A if no other funding sources will be used to support this program/project.*
- Grant Funding Uses/Expenses

- *ILF Guidance: Describe for each line item the Total grant program costs to deliver the Program supports and services as outlined in the budget and Program narrative within the grant application.*
- Budget Narrative (how the funds will be spent/used) (maximum 2000 characters)
  - *ILF Guidance: Respond to the “how the funds will be spent” question with an overall narrative of your project budget, including timeline. Ensure the overall narrative of your project budget matches the amounts requested to the ILF which should also be noted your budget. How much is your organization able to contribute towards the total program/project costs? How much are you requesting from the ILF (i.e., grant amount requested portion of the grant application/proposal)? Are you seeking funding from other sources to help cover the total program/project costs? What sources (i.e., federal funding, state funding, private grants, crowdsourcing, etc.)?*
  - Provide a clear explanation on what your contingency plan will be should your organization not secure the funding necessary to implement your proposed program. In addition, if awarded, provide your sustainability plan for the proposed program for subsequent years.
  - NOTE: The ILF will permit up to 15% for indirect costs of the total project budget to support your organization’s general overhead and administration expenses.

## **SECTION SIX: Documents & Supplementary information**

- **Documents (Required)**

Please upload/attach the following financial documents:

- Audited Financial Statement/Report (most recent)
- IRS Form 990 (most recent)
- Verification of Tax-Exempt Status (IRS Determination Letter)
- W-9 Form/EIN#
- Current fiscal year operating budget
- Program Budget

- **Supplementary Information (Optional)**

Please include any supplementary documents which you feel will be essential to the review committee (i.e., Annual Report, Case Studies, Research, White Papers, Testimonials, etc.). Below is what the ILF would like to see but this is optional and not required to be considered for a grant. (Acceptable formats: .pdf, .docx, .doc, .xlsx, .xls)

- List of Other Funding Sources (optional)
  - *ILF Guidance: Share if your organization is requesting funds (or already received funds) from other sources (i.e., federal funding, state funding, private grants, crowdsourcing, etc.) to help support the total project/program costs. Your organization will want to be specific with the name of the funding source and the amount requested/received. Please feel free to include this information as part of your submission.*
- Program Summary and Narrative (optional)
  - *ILF Guidance: If organization would like to provide a more in-depth proposal narrative around your project/program, please feel free to include this information as part of your submission.*

- Testimonials and/or Endorsements (optional)
  - *ILF Guidance: If your organization would like to share testimonials and/or endorsements for the project/program and why the ILF should consider supporting the program, please feel free to include this information as part of your submission.*
- Available Data and/or Research (optional)
  - *ILF Guidance: If your organization has any research to share with the ILF, please upload all relevant reports, studies or impact reports.*

### Submission Process: Online Grant Portal (ZoomGrants)

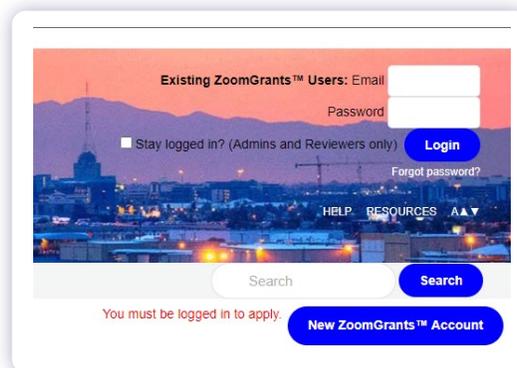
Detailed below are high-level steps to begin the application process for submission.

#### Step 1. Access the Online Grant Portal

- Click the direct link to apply: <https://zoomgrants.com/zgf/ILFsignature2024>
- **If you do not have a ZoomGrants account, you must create an Account (see Step 2).**
- If you are an existing ZoomGrants user, you will need to log in at <https://ZoomGrants.com/login>. Then, you are able to begin the application.

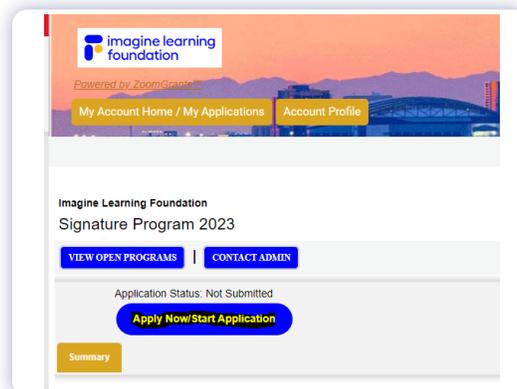
#### Step 2. Create a ZoomGrants Account (NEW USERS ONLY)

- Create your ZoomGrants account and log in using the New ZoomGrants Account box on the right-hand side. If you already have an account, log in using the boxes in the upper right corner of the page.



#### Step 3. Start your Application

- Click the “Apply” button next to the Signature Grant Program to start your application.



**Step 4. Invite Others to Collaborate (Optional)**

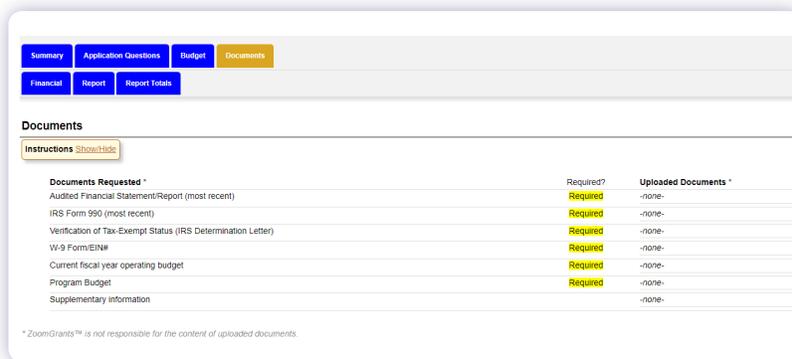
- Use the “Collaborators” section in the first tab of the application to invite others to work on this application with you. Collaborators may be in the grant application at the same time.

**STEP 5. Fully Complete the Application (All Questions)**

- The grant portal system will automatically save your answers as you move through the application and enter text. Remember there are character restrictions established for certain questions. All questions will indicate if they are required or optional.

**STEP 6. Upload Documents/Supplementary Information**

- Click the “Upload” button next to each applicable document request set up by the administrator to open up the File Upload Window for that request. Follow the instructions in the window to upload or link a file (or multiple) in that slot.
- Any document request marked with a yellow ‘Required’ note MUST have something uploaded or linked in that slot in order for your application to be submitted. If a required document is not applicable to you, create a document in which you note the inapplicability and upload that into the slot.



**STEP 7. Submit your Application! (Deadline: by 11:59 pm PST on March 29, 2024)**

- Click the grey “Submit Now” button at the top of the application when you have completed the applicable content in every tab. The system will check to ensure you have answered every question and uploaded all ‘Required’ documents.
- Any skipped questions or missing documents will be listed in red. When you are done with your edits, use the grey “Refresh Page” button in the application to reload the page, then click the “Submit Now” button to re-run the check. If your application is complete, you will be able to enter your initials and officially submit the application.

**All applications must be submitted by 11:59 pm (PST) on March 29, 2024.** The ILF reserves the right to close the grant application at any point if an unprecedented number of applications are received or extend the application period to receive additional applications.

**Grant Application Evaluation Process**

Following the grant application deadline, all applications for the Imagine Signature Grant Program will undergo a thorough review by ILF, board members, and relevant staff. The review process will occur during April-May 2024.

## Grant Awards, Notifications and Payments

### Grant Awards

The Imagine Signature Grants Program anticipates awarding \$400,000 or more in total grant awards to new and/or existing grantees with estimated grant awards in the range of \$50,000 to \$100,000, per grantee. For further details, please reference Page 4 of the Imagine Signature Grant Program Guidelines.

### Grant Notifications

All applicants (either awarded or declined) will be notified of the ILF's decisions during July 2024 (subject to change). Notifications of the awards or declinations will be sent by way of written communication through email from the ILF. Some grantees may receive a phone call in advance of such written communication.

### Grant Payments

The awarded applicants will receive an EFT payment (preferred grant payment method) after notification of the award and completion of a grant agreement and financial forms. Any grantee who requires an alternate method of payment will submit such request to ILF for review.

## Grant Announcements, Communications, and Public Relations

The ILF may elect to publicly announce the grant awards, grantees and the grant programs funded following the grant notifications. The ILF may elect to post these communications on a variety of channels including but not limited to the ILF website, the Imagine Learning corporate website, the Imagine Learning corporate social media channels, the Imagine Learning corporate communications newsletters and/or press releases, or other media channels. The ILF board staff will coordinate with the awarded grantees on such communications and announcements to obtain boilerplates, high-resolution logos, contact information, etc.

## Foundation Inquiries

The ILF will not accept nor respond to unsolicited meetings, telephone calls, emails or other communications and/or requests. The ILF will initiate any communications with applicants during the 2024 grant cycle.

Thank you for your interest in the Imagine Learning Foundation. We invite you to learn more about the Imagine Learning Foundation by visiting [www.imaginelearningfoundation.org](http://www.imaginelearningfoundation.org).