Imagine Signature Grants Program Guidelines

Table of Contents

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 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.

Imagine Signature Grant Program Overview

Purpose

The Imagine Signature Grant Program (ISGP) seeks to amplify national, regional, or local 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.

2026 Funding Priority Areas of Focus

This year's theme highlights programs that intentionally build learning experiences through service activities that take place in homes, neighborhoods, and broader community spaces. These programs activate a student's full support ecosystem (families, caregivers, mentors, and community members) to create enriching environments beyond the classroom. Through service, students practice life skills, strengthen relationships, and connect what they learn in school to real needs around them.

2026 Funding Priorities

The Imagine Learning Foundation will prioritize non-profit organizations that create authentic, age-appropriate service opportunities where young people can lead, collaborate, reflect, and grow. These efforts should foster connection, overall well-being, and further instill a sense of purpose. By supporting community-rooted, youth-centered service, the ILF seeks to expand positive learning environments into everyday life - empowering students to flourish.

To learn more about the previous 2025 grant cycle and its grant awards, read our national press release. ISGP reserves the right to change the funding priorities and areas of focus in future grant cycles to further its mission.

Awards and Timing

ILF will fund and partner with national, regional, and local organizations that align with its mission and demonstrate the potential for significant impact. To qualify for the Imagine Signature Grant program, organizations must align with one or more of the identified funding priorities and adhere to the 2026 grant guidelines established under the program. ILF expects to award a total of $600,000 or more in grants to new and existing grantees, with individual grant amounts ranging from $25,000 to $100,000 per grantee.

Application Opens:	February 9, 2026
Application Deadline:	April 9, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. (PST)
Application Review:	April-May 2026
Award Notifications:	June 2026
Grant Awards:	July 2026
Program Start Dates:	on/after July 1, 2026
Funding Term:	up to fifteen (15) months

Ineligible Organizations and Projects

The ISGP will not fund any awards for or to:

o Capital expenses or construction projects
o Endowments or capital campaigns
o Existing deficits or retroactive funding
o For-profit entities
o Grant-making organizations
o Individuals (or scholarships to individuals)
o Orgs w/out Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status
o Orgs not classified in Section 509(a)(1) or (2)
o Orgs using 3rd-party Tax ID or exempt status

o Political causes, campaigns, candidates, orgs
o PreK-12 schools (public, private, charter or virtual)
o PreK-12 school districts
o Projects outside the United States
o Sacramental/theological/religious functions
o Social sororities or fraternities
o Sponsorships or fundraising events
o Programs limiting participation based on race, ethnicity, gender, sex, or sexual orientation

Geography and Priority

o Priority will be given to applicants that have national, regional, or local impact serving more than 150+ youth, students, or community members and align with the ISGP's 2026 Funding Priorities.
o Priority will be given to organizations and programs focused on high-need communities.
o Priority will be given to organizations with limited access to large-scale funding for whom this funding would meaningfully expand their capacity.

2026 Grant Application Cycle & Deadlines

The ISGP accepts grant applications annually. Applications and all required documents must be properly submitted through the online grant application portal; instructions are provided at the end of this guide.

The ISGP is highly competitive. As such, ILF may elect to close the application at any time at its discretion based on the number of applications received. All applications received 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.**

Grant Application: Overview and Components

Overview

The grant application process is comprised of four (4) phases:
- Phase 1: Determine Eligibility (reference the *Ineligible Organizations and Projects section)*
- Phase 2: Grant Application (for all eligible applicants)
- Phase 3: Application Evaluation and Review by ILF
- Phase 4: Notifications and Awards (by ILF to Grantees)

Applications and all required documents must be properly submitted through the ISGP 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. Incomplete or poorly written applications will not be accepted.

Application Deadline: April 9, 2026 by 11:59 pm (PST).

Grant Application Components

The online grant application is structured into six (6) sections that all applicants must complete. Below is an overview of the sections, including fields, questions, ILF guidance, and character count limits to help applicants prepare. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

SECTION ONE: Summary - Organization & Contact Information	

Application Title/ Project Name	*Keep it short, concise, and clear to your proposed program goals and outcomes. Typically, no more than 20 words. Here are some examples:*
	  o *Giving students experiencing homelessness the right to have their basic needs met to improve school attendance*
	  o *Investigating the trends of school absenteeism with focus on students who are experiencing homelessness.*
	  o *Implementing Community/Family Guidance and Supports to Improve Student Absenteeism*

Applicant Primary Point of Contact Information	Contact Name, Title, Phone number, Email

Organization Information	o Organization Legal Name/Entity Name
	  o Organization Primary Mailing Address
	  o Organization IRS EIN Number
	  o Organization Website
	  o Organization Social Media Channels (optional)

CEO/Executive Director	Contact Name, Title, Phone, Email
SECTION TWO: Program/Project Overview and Narrative	
Program Start Date Maximum 255 characters)	*Add the exact or approximate implementation start date of your proposed program/project.*
Program End Date Maximum 255 characters	*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 proposal Maximum 500 characters	*No more than 5 sentences. Be mindful of the 500-character count.*

Program Narrative	*When compiling your program narrative, please highlight how your program/project aligns to ILF's vision and mission and the 2026 Signature Grant funding priorities.*
	  o Program Purpose (maximum 1000 characters)
	  o Problem Statement/Need to be Addressed (maximum 1000 characters). *When compiling your response, please ensure the demonstration of need is clear, concise, and easy to understand. In addition, please provide any supporting data.*
	  o Provide your impact and reach (participants, locations/geographic footprint, demographics, age groups, etc.) (maximum 1000 characters)
	  o Scope of Work (Program Activities) (maximum 1000 characters)
	  o Overview of proposed timeline (maximum 255 characters)
	  o Share your organization's implementation plan (maximum 1500 characters)
	  o Please list any partners in this proposal, and the partner's role and your relationship with them. (maximum 255 characters)
	    Enter N/A if not applicable to this program.

Evaluation Information/Outcomes & Outputs	o Anticipated outcomes (maximum 1000 characters) *When compiling your response, please reference the Grant Program Guidelines to ensure you capture what the ILF is seeking for this question. Expected results of your proposed project/program (outputs and outcomes).*
	
	o Please describe how you intend to measure and report on the effectiveness of the proposed project/program and associated services. (maximum 1500 characters) *Share how the program(s) will be evaluated and measured. Provide in-depth details around testing, measurements, metrics, assessments, and evaluations. Must include specific numeric outputs and outcomes, including the number of students, tools used, milestones, etc.*
	
	    o *Outputs are what and how many activities, services, methods and/or approaches you are using to measure your project/program.*
	    o *Outcomes are the results, impact and/or accomplishments you aim to achieve. They must include numeric goals.*
	
	o Plan for the sustainability of the project or initiative after the grant award has been exhausted. (maximum 500 characters)

Brief overview of how funds will be spent Maximum 1000 characters	*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	o Please provide your organization's mission statement. (maximum 1000 characters) o Tell us about the history of your organization, including any key accomplishments. (maximum 1000 characters)
Key Programs, Accomplishments and Challenges	o Tell us about your geographic reach, current programs, and activities. (maximum 1000 characters) o Please describe your top challenges and how your organization responded. (maximum 1000 characters) o How will your organization recognize and engage with the Foundation? (maximum 255 characters). *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.* o 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 500 characters). *Enter N/A if not applicable to your organization.*
Leadership and Staff	o Please include a link (if available) to your organization's Board of Directors and/or Executive/Leadership Team. (maximum 1000 characters). *If unavailable, please provide a short list (e.g., name and title)* o Please list key staff involved with this project along with their title and brief description of their project role. (maximum 1000 characters). *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 brief description on their project role.*

SECTION FOUR: Budget and Budget Narrative	
List of Other Funding Sources	*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	*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	o 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. *Respond to the "how the funds will be spent" question with an overall narrative of your project budget, including timeline. Ensure the narrative 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.)? 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 FIVE: Documents & Supplementary information	
Documents (Required)	Please upload/attach the following financial documents: o Audited Financial Statement/Report (most recent) o IRS Form 990 (most recent) o Verification of Tax-Exempt Status (IRS Determination Letter) o W-9 Form/EIN# o Current fiscal year operating budget o Program Budget (template on ZoomGrants)
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 are items the ILF would like to see but does not require to be considered for a grant. (Acceptable formats: .pdf, .docx, .doc, .xlsx, .xls)
List of Other Funding Sources (optional)	*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)	*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)	*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)	*If your organization has any research to share with the ILF, please upload all relevant reports, studies or impact reports.*

Grant Application Evaluation Process

All received applications will undergo a thorough review by ILF board members and relevant staff. This review process will occur during April and May 2026.

Grant Awards Notifications, Announcements, and Payments

Grant Notifications

All applicants (either awarded or declined) will be notified of the ILF's decisions in July 2026 (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 will coordinate with the awarded grantees on such communications and announcements to obtain boilerplates, high-resolution logos, contact information, etc.

Grantee Reporting Requirements

All awarded grantees must submit grant reports to the ILF, including a Grant Progress Report (within 120-days post-project start date), a Final Grant Impact Report (within 30-days post-project end date), and an optional 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.

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 2026 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.
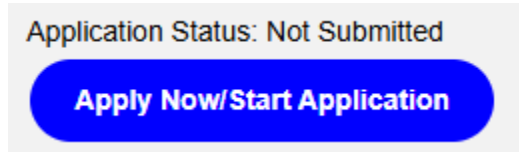
Submission Process: Online Grant Portal (ZoomGrants)

Step 1. Access the Online Grant Portal
- Click the direct link to apply: https://zoomgrants.com/zgf/ILFsignature2026
- **If you do not have a ZoomGrants account, you must create an Account.**
- If you are an existing ZoomGrants user, log in where requested.

Step 2. Start your Application. Click the "Apply Now/Start Application" button.

Application Status: Not Submitted

Apply Now/Start Application

Step 3. 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 4. 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 5. 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 6. Submit your Application! 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 April 9, 2026. 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.

imaginelearningfoundation.org