



2019-2020 Matching Grant Application Instructions

The Virginia Literacy Foundation (VLF) is pleased to announce that applications for 2019-2020 matching grants are available. We are now accepting funding requests from Virginia's 501(c) (3) community-based adult literacy organizations. Grant deadline: March 29, 2019.

Please NOTE significant changes in this year's RFP. They include:

- Removal of the \$2,500 grant category (programs serving fewer than 49 students are now encouraged to collaborate with another community-based literacy organization (CBLO) and community partner in order to qualify for a \$5,000 capacity-building grant).
- A grant award for two consecutive years in the following categories
 - Capacity-building regional grants: \$5,000 award (75+ students)
 - Collaborative demonstration grants (competitive):
 - \$7,500 award (175+ students)
 - \$12,500 award (475+ students)
- Required collaboration with at least one other community-based literacy organization, regional adult education program, local community college, workforce investment board (WIB) partner, and local business and other partners to increase community engagements and impact over time of VLF matching grants on localities.
- Required MOUs (Memorandums of Understanding) that formalize partnership roles in achieving grant outcomes and that outline reimbursement for services rendered by each partner. (Reimbursements can take the form of in-kind contributions, tutor training, tutoring, workshop space, and funds.)
- Counted students have attended a minimum of 12 hours of literacy instruction in the past full fiscal year. (The 6-hour limit per year is eliminated.)

Find grant documents on the Virginia Literacy Foundation WordPress blog, 'About Our Grants,' at <https://vllc.wordpress.com/grants-and-funding/about-our-grants/> or call 804-237-0178 for paper documents.

FUNDING FOCUS: (Also note the changes in funding priorities)

Virginia Literacy Foundation grants target organizations that provide literacy, ESOL, and numeracy services to **adults 18 years and older** for a minimum of **12 hours** per year.

ALL VLF GRANTS ARE MATCHING GRANTS. Programs **are required to actively seek a NEW match** for their grants and describe how they will do so. A matching grant should NOT be

monies that have come in for years and/or are always expected. They should be new revenue streams. No less than 80% of the VLF grant should be matched in this way. In-kind contributions, current funds, and the value of volunteer time may be used to describe 20% of the match. (Note: this is a change from previous years.) A document about matching VLF funds is available on the VLF wordpress blog: <https://vllc.wordpress.com/grants-and-funding/about-our-grants/>

Activities eligible for funding:

1. Collaborative efforts with local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) and One-Stop partners, local regional public adult basic education programs, local businesses and post-secondary education programs, and local businesses and apprenticeship programs that teach workforce skills for collective impact.
2. One-on-one or small group literacy instruction and services provided to adults, including basic literacy, pre-GED, GED, ESOL, and numeracy skills
3. Activities and strategic plans that strengthen student and tutor recruitment and retention
4. Literacy and numeracy skills provided to parents & caregivers in family literacy programs (teaching adults about workplace and civics education, to read to children, to transition to adult literacy and education programs or secondary education programs)
5. Digital literacy in instruction in order to teach literacy, numeracy, and workplace skills
6. Community awareness, outreach, and marketing materials (includes social media and web development) modernized and updated
7. Strategic planning for increased program capacity through partnerships
8. Improved or streamlined data collection and management
9. Staff salaries tied directly to the grant's project and student outcomes
10. Established and scientifically researched curriculum tailored to tutor training and other instructional practices to meet client needs (Demonstrate qualification of staff to tailor curriculum. Mention curriculum to be modified.)
11. Standardized pre- and post-tests that measure student progress effectively implemented

Activities not eligible for funding are:

1. Wholesale purchase and distribution of children's books and/or handing out free giveaways in a family literacy project. (Your program must provide literacy instruction to parents and caregivers – handing out books to children does not fall under this category.)
2. Classes that teach individuals how to use a computer and/or specific software, such as for a Microsoft Word certificate. (Using the computer as a tool to complete literacy, numeracy, and workplace skills lessons is allowed.)
3. Family literacy activities that involve only children. Parents and adult literacy are the focus for the VLF. An ideal partner would be one that serves children.
4. Developing new curriculum. Adapting current curriculum that is based on best practices is allowed. In this instance, the qualifications of staff making the adaptations should be attached.
5. Out-of-state travel.
6. Parties or celebratory events, such as tutor appreciation.
7. Purchasing accounting or legal services.

In order of importance, the VLF's focus is on projects* that:

1. seek close and integrated collaborations with regional adult education programs, community colleges, and agencies with similar missions to increase the community's impact to serve low-level adult learners towards reaching their goals.
2. are workforce and career pathways oriented.
3. strengthen current services or introduction of new services based on community need and internal data analysis, i.e., use data and strategic planning to drive program improvement.
4. offer family literacy services with
 1. integrated literacy instruction to parents/caretakers of children,
 2. meaningful collaborations with current family literacy and adult education and secondary programs,
 3. components that improve parents' literacy skills and target parents of at-risk children
5. improve and strengthen student retention and persistence.
6. incorporate 21st century technology in digital literacy instruction.
7. use evaluation instruments that reliably pre- and post-test students to measure progress and are outcomes-based.
8. align student lessons to College Career Readiness Standards.
9. incorporate social media and a variety of technology resources in outreach and marketing.
10. explore innovative ways to recruit, train, and retain volunteers, following a best practices model that demonstrates success in other settings

*The term project may be defined loosely. You may choose to improve specific program components, such as recruitment or fund development activities, or to start new program components. Or you may choose to **fund a salaried position** that is crucial to a particular program or project in your partnership. If this is the case, then your grant focus should be on the need for the salaried position and how this position advances the project. The activities you describe will then be related to how that position achieves student outcomes. If you have any questions about activities that are eligible for funding or how to write for a salaried position, please contact Victoire Gerkens Sanborn at vjsanbor@vcu.edu.

NOTE: Programs requesting \$7,500 and \$12,500 grant funds are asked to design projects that belong to the top five priorities in this section.

When scoring the grant, the VLF Grants Committee looks for at least two of the following:

- collaborative grants that focus on our priority areas.
- collaborative grants written from a strategic plan that seeks to improve student outcomes in 3-5 years.
- collaborative grants that focus on strengthening or improving one or two goals identified by internal and external data.
- realistic and measurable goals and objectives that are outcomes-based and that demonstrate partnership impact in the community.

- frequent collection of high quality data and regular, consistent evaluation that drives program improvement.
- pre- and post-tests that use reliable evaluation instruments to measure student progress and achievement.
- evidence of a strong Board of Directors that has an active involvement in the strategic direction of the partner organizations (if two CBLOs collaborate on this grant).
- sustainability of the collaboration beyond the grant period.
- ample professional development opportunities for the staff and volunteers in this partnership.

Points are lost when two or more of the following are evident:

- The grant proposal seeks to continue the status quo and maintain the organizations as they are.
- The programs fail to pursue the grant project to its strategic conclusion by prematurely asking funds for another project before the first one achieved measurable goals.
- The grant’s project description fails to focus on a specific project worth \$5,000, \$7,500, or \$12,500 per year or does not identify where VLF funds fit into a larger community effort.
- Submitted collaborative grant projects are not supported by the data or ignore the data.
- Data collection and evaluation of student achievement are not adequately addressed.
- An active grant match is not described (see the active grant match description on the VLF's website).
- The Board of Directors of partnership programs (or programs that are guided by Advisory Boards) fail to monetarily support the program 100%.
- Board turnover in both or more organizations is not followed or nonexistent.

MATCHING GRANT CATEGORIES:

Virginia Literacy Foundation matching grants are offered in the following categories (**NOTE: these categories have changed significantly since the 2018/2019 grant guidelines**). All accepted grant proposals, regardless of the awarded amount, will be funded for two years, with requested funds distributed once per year.

1. Capacity-building grants:

- Matching grant of \$5,000: A community-based adult literacy organization with 75+ students (or two community-based adult literacy organizations that serve 75+ students combined in 2017-18, the last full fiscal year) can partner with community collaborators to increase their capacity to serve adult students within the region. (\$5,000 x 2 = \$10,000) * **
 - Capacity-building grants are characterized by
 - MOUs (Memorandums of Understanding) between two or more programs to embark on a collaborative project

- shared goals for capacity-building through shared resources and training
- Grant outcomes are tied to the success of the collaboration, as well as to the achievement of capacity-building goals (such as increased number of students served, increased locations for instructing students, flexible office hours, etc.)
 - **Year One:** partners actively work on the success of the partnership and focus on activities that will ensure goal success and outcomes.
 - **Year Two:** partners learn from the previous year's results and improve on those activities, revises goals and objectives as needed, and aim to achieve goals outcomes.

**Please Note: CBLOs that served fewer than 75 students (the number of students who received at least 12 hours of literacy instruction during fiscal year 2017-2018) are eligible to apply for a VLF matching grant as a collaboration, guaranteeing that at least 75+ students are served through the collaboration.*

***Both programs will partner with a third community partner. See list of possible partners on page 7, or call the Virginia Literacy Foundation at 804-237-8909 for consultation.*

2. Demonstration* Matching Grants, which are Competitive

- **\$7,500 category:** A community-based adult literacy organization with 175+ students (or two community-based adult literacy organizations that serve a combined 175+ students) can partner with community collaborators to
 - Embark on a two-generational family literacy model, with an emphasis on parental literacy and community involvement
 - Work on workforce instruction that involve community partners
 - Other collective impact projects that involve adult literacy services, such as: assessing literacy needs in the community; addressing barriers to literacy; identifying evidence-based best practices; increasing alignment of services among the partners; reducing duplication of services; integrating support services and increasing accountability; building on existing funding streams; and raising awareness of literacy services and needs within the community. - *U.S. Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education*
- **\$12,500 category:** Two community-based adult literacy organizations that serve a combined 475+ students or a single CBLO that serves 475+ students can partner with community collaborators to
 - Embark on R&D in recruitment, retention, or data gathering and/or provide deliverables, such as a workplace curriculum in partnership with a community agency or business
 - Embark on a two-generational family literacy model, with an emphasis

on parental literacy and community involvement

NOTE: These projects might take 2-3 years to achieve student outcomes
 Demonstration grants: \$7,500 x 2 = \$15,000; \$12,500 x 2 = \$25,000

*Programs receiving demonstration grants are required to share results at the VAACE/VLF conference or in webinars that will be shared online with the field as recorded sessions. Organizations applying for these grants, which have stricter requirements for eligibility, must be able to demonstrate overall program strength and past achievements in using data to drive program improvement. If you have a question of whether your organization is eligible to apply for Demonstration grants, please contact Vic Sanborn at vjsanbor@gmail.com or call 1-800-237-0178.

Community Partners	
Adult learners	Libraries
Business community	Literacy providers
Chamber of commerce	Local government
Child care providers	Local media
Civic organizations	Other coalitions
Community Colleges	School districts
Correctional institutions	Social services
Faith-based organizations	State adult education
Family literacy providers	Vocational training organizations
Health care providers	Workforce investment boards
Institutes of higher education	

Timeline for 2019-2020

2019

January 31	Requests for proposal (RFP) mailed to organizations
March 29	Proposals due to the VLF office by 5 p.m.
End of June	Organizations notified of VLF board's decision
September	Checks sent out

2020

February 15	Mid-year reports due
August 16	Year-end reports due

PROPOSAL SPECIFICS:

- Use 1 inch margins, 12 point Times New Roman or 11 point Arial font, and regular or loose kerning. Fonts inside a table format may be one point smaller (10 point Times New Roman and 10 point Arial).
- You must use the format and place the grant elements in the order as outlined below, no exceptions.
- **Proposal Length:**
 - \$5,000 Capacity-building grants – 5 to 6 pages
 - \$7,500 & \$12,500 Demonstration grants – 6 to 8 pages

WRITING YOUR PROPOSAL:

Use the same headings supplied in this R.F.P. and in the order the grant elements are placed. For additional details on writing your proposal, please refer to the *Guidelines for Writing a Virginia Literacy Foundation Matching Grant Proposal* found on our website, or call Rita Layne at 804-237-8909 to request an electronic copy of the document.

1. **Cover Page: This is a PDF document.** Include current contact information for your organization, such as phone and fax numbers, and an email address for the executive director.
2. **Introduction and Statement of Need (15 Points):** In one or two sentences, include a summary of your proposal at the top of the page that includes topic of the project, your partnership, and the amount requested. Using external facts and statistics no older than 2013 (we prefer the most recent data from this site: <https://literacyfacts.wordpress.com/>) and internal data, describe the problem your partnership wishes to solve in your region or community. Include client description, numbers, and area to be served. Describe the problem in positive terms and in a way that tells us how your proposal can help to improve the situation. If necessary, describe internal program needs that are related to the projects (such as the need for a staff position) and how that need is tied to projected outcomes. This section should be succinct. **TIP: The VLF grants committee is well aware of the dire need for adult literacy services in the Commonwealth. State your local need!!**
3. **Capacity and Commitment (15 Points):** Briefly describe your organization’s history in serving adult students and its current capacity to serve them. Demonstrate past history in achieving student outcomes, and commitment to the mission in terms of how they relate to your project design and needs statement. Include past successful collaborative efforts. To show numbers, table formats or other graphics are preferred. Example:

	Program 1 & 2 student served 12+ hours		
Year	2018	2017	2016
	ABE/ESOL	ABE/ESOL	ABE/ESOL
Program 1	22/18	17/12	11/10
Program 2	31/52	28/40	23/21
Totals	53/70	45/52	34/31

- 4. Program Description: (20 Points):** Include the stated purpose of your partnership/collective impact project, number of individuals to be served, and how you will solve the problem you described in your statement of need. In a table format (see example found on our website) include realistic and attainable goals, and measurable objectives and outcomes. Make sure the size of your project is realistic for the amount of money you are requesting and attainable in the given time (2 years). If your strategic plan goes beyond that period, state the projected endpoint 3-5 years down the line.

Include other funding sources and meaningful partnership information. State other funding streams if the overall project budget is greater than the amount you are requesting and what part VLF funds will play in the overall project. If you are requesting funding for a **staff position**, describe the need for the position and how it is integral to the project's outcome. Directly tie the importance of the position to student outcomes, even if this might take 2-3 years. Discuss the staff's activities and how they will advance the project's goals and objectives.

PLEASE NOTE: Describe the first year of your project in detail, and summarize how the project will be continued in year two. You will be asked to write a grant for the second year in 2020-2021.

- 5. Goals, Objectives, Outcomes and Impact (15 Points): This section has changed significantly from previous years.**
- Goal:** Describe **ONE** overarching goal for your project, one that was described in the needs statement.
 - Objectives:** Develop at least 3 measurable objectives and no more than five. State projected numbers as a number and % together. This is a requirement.
 - Activities:** How many steps will it take to achieve objectives? (Keep this simple)
Tell
 - us who will be responsible, by what time, and why.
 - Outcomes:** Describe the outcomes of each objective.
 - Impact:** In year two, describe the impact your project have on the community.

If you are requesting funding for a staff position, describe the outcomes and impact of this position in the success of this collaboration.

Note: Include how partner involvement will help achieve outcomes for goal and objectives, and impact on the community. **(5 Points)**

- 6. Evaluation Plan (10 Points):** Describe how you will pre- and post-test students and record the results, or record the success of the partnership. Tell us how often program data will be collected, who will collect it. Discuss how often the partnership will meet to evaluate data and make mid-course corrections in order to achieve the project's objectives. Evaluation should be embedded throughout the grant proposal, but summarized succinctly in this section.

7. **Budget Narrative and Budget (15 Points): Note this emphasis:** Discuss how you will actively match funds for this grant, demonstrating evidence of active solicitation for NEW funding support within your community, from other foundations, or with new corporate partners. (**Active match descriptions will be given 5 points. Find an active grant match description online on the VLF website).**

Mention sustainability and how the project will continue after the grant period is completed. Complete the Budget Sheet (Attachment D, which is included with your application package), filling in all categories. The budget narrative is a SEPARATE category from the budget sheet and describes how the money will be used and by whom.

Attachments: You may attach additional materials you deem necessary to explain your project. Be aware, however, that except for the required attachments described below, this additional material might not be reviewed by the Grants Committee.

REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS:

- A. **PLEASE NOTE:** All CBLOs that apply for 2019-2020 VLF partnership grants must include a completed VLF Survey Form, Attachment A. Proposals sent in without the survey will not be considered. This form can also be found on our website.
- B. Staff list and contact information, including email addresses.
- C. Board list and contact information, including email address, length of term served, and when the board member is expected to rotate off the board.
- D. A completed budget form, Attachment D. (This is in addition to the narrative. Do NOT combine the two.)
- E. An income and expenses sheet for 20167-2018, the last full fiscal year. This does not need to be an official audit.
- F. Proof of non-profit status.
- G. Completed MOUs for each of the main partners (2 or 3).

PLEASE NOTE:

- Attachment A is the survey form for all participating CBLOs. (Community partners do not need to fill out this form.)
- The project narrative is limited to **five to six** pages for the \$5,000 matching grant applications, and **six to eight** pages for the \$7,500 and \$12,500 matching grant applications.
- Incomplete applications, late applications, applications exceeding length requirements, or applications missing completed survey forms will NOT be reviewed.
- Faxed or emailed applications will NOT be accepted.
- Send one original set and five copies with required attachments of the complete grant application to the VLF before the 5 p.m. deadline.

MAILING YOUR PROPOSAL:

DUE DATE: Friday, March 29, 2019

*Applicants must submit the original and five copies of the grant proposal and attachments **by 5:00 p.m.** on March 29, 2019 to:*

**Rita Layne
Virginia Literacy Foundation
413 Stuart Circle, Suite 303
Richmond, VA 23220**

If you have any questions about completing this application, please contact
Phone: (804) 237-8909 FAX: (804) 237-8901 Email: vlilv@earthlink.net

IMPORTANT MAILING TIP!:

If you intend to ship your grant packets **overnight or require a signature from VLF staff,**
DO NOT send the grant packets via the U.S. Postal Service.
Please use FedEx or UPS to guarantee delivery by **5 P.M.**

If you have questions about writing a collaborative grant, contact Victoire Gerken Sanborn at vjanbor@vcu.edu or leave a message with Rita Layne at 804-237-8909.