

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**Office of Education Improvement and Innovation
Educational Technology and Data Coordination**

**Section 99h, FIRST Robotics Grants
Revised Request for Proposal**

**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS
(REVISED 10-22-2013)**

DISCLAIMER:

THE FOLLOWING COMPETITIVE GRANT IS ANNOUNCED AND AWARD IS CONTINGENT ON THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS. GRANT APPLICATIONS WILL BE COLLECTED USING THE MICHIGAN ELECTRONIC GRANTS SYSTEM, PLUS (MEGS+). FUNDS WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE STATE AID MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (SAMS).

INTRODUCTION:

The FY2013 State School Aid Act, section 99h appropriated \$3,000,000 for the 2013-14 school year for competitive grants to districts that provide pupils in grades 7-12 with expanded opportunities to improve mathematics, science, and technology skills by participating in events hosted by a science and technology development program known as FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics.

PURPOSE OF THE GRANT:

To support the State Board of Education's mission in making "All students graduate ready for careers, college, and community," the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) staff has developed a structure to award the \$3,000,000 appropriated under Section 99h of FY 2013 State School Aid to public school districts and public school academies to support students in grades 7-12 through participation in FIRST Robotics programs.

PROGRAM DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

Defined in Statute:

- To be eligible for funding, a district shall demonstrate in its application that the district has established a partnership for the purposes of the FIRST Robotics program with at least one sponsor, business entity, higher education institution, or technical school.

Proposed by Staff:

- Applicants will establish a middle school FIRST Tech Challenge team or a high school FIRST Robotics Competition team (referred to hereafter simply as a "FIRST Robotics program") in the 2013-2014 school year and register their team with www.usfirst.org or,
- Applicants have a registered FIRST Robotics program and identified a coach, and will use funds available for coach's salary or costs related to funding a FIRST Robotics Program. The full amount of the grant must be available exclusively for the team's use.

TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE:

*****\$3,000,000*****

The MDE understands that the legislation under Section 99h of State School Aid Act intends for the funds available to be spent over three years.

GRANT STRUCTURE:

7-8 Grade Team Participation:

FIRST Tech Challenge (FTC) Teams at the 7th and 8th grade levels are eligible for \$1,500 in grant funding to be used solely for coach's salary. Grant awards are limited to 1 award of \$1,500 per team for 7th and 8th grade FTC teams. Awards are limited to 100 applicants, based on submission of MEGS+ applications.

9-12 Grade Team Participation:

1. Coach's Stipend Grants

Each registered, public school FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC) team in the State of Michigan is eligible for a \$1,500 grant to be used for the sole use of coach's salary. Awards are limited to 500 applicants, based on submission of MEGS+ applications. Intermediate School Districts (ISDs), Local Education Agencies (LEAs), and Public School Academies (PSAs) are eligible for multiple coaches' stipend awards if they support multiple FIRST Robotics teams and each team meets the outlined application requirements.

2. Start-Up Team Grants

To support FIRST Robotics teams beginning in the 2013-14 school year, the MDE has made grants available in the amount of \$7,500 per registered team that meets the outlined application requirements. ISDs, LEAs, and PSAs are eligible for multiple Start-Up Team Grant awards if they support multiple FIRST Robotics teams and each team meets the outlined application requirements.

*****Clarification: start-up teams will receive priority in funding. This means qualifying start-up applications will be funded ahead of existing team applications.*****

3. Existing Team Grants

To support existing FIRST Robotics teams, the MDE has made grants available in the amount of \$5,000 per registered team that meets the outlined application requirements. ISDs, LEAs, and PSAs are eligible for multiple Existing Team Grant awards if they support multiple FIRST Robotics teams and each team meets the outlined application requirements.

*****Clarification: existing teams will receive funding after qualifying start-up applications are funded in the order they are received until funding in this category (\$1,000,000) is expended.*****

4. Travel Grants

To support long distance travel MDE has made grants available in the amount of up to \$2,500 per registered team.

5. State and World Competition Grants

The MDE will provide funding for reasonable expenses for qualifying teams to participate in the State Championship (no less than \$4,000) and/ or the World Championship (no less than \$5,000) FIRST Robotics Competitions.

GRANT APPLICATIONS:

Process to Apply:

Eligibility Requirements:

All individual LEAs, PSAs, and ISDs that enroll students, or operate a FIRST Robotics or Tech Challenge team on behalf of their constituent districts are eligible if they meet the following requirements:

- Have a current FIRST Robotics Competition or Tech Challenge team registered to participate during the 2013-2014 school year.
- Register a new FIRST Robotics Competition or Tech Challenge team in the 2013-2014 school year.
- Program must serve students in grades 7-12.
- Willingness to offer elective high school credit for students who have successfully logged 60 hours, provided the high school team attends a minimum of 2 district competitions.¹

Grant applications will be made available via MEGS+ and monitored by the Educational Technology Unit staff within the Office of Education Improvement and Innovation. ISDs, LEAs, and PSAs are allowed multiple applications for high school teams and middle school teams per district. Schools with multiple teams in the same program (ex., two middle school teams, or two high school teams) may use

¹ To issue credit for participating on a FIRST Robotics team, a school district must assign a certified teacher as the teacher of record. Because robotics is not a core subject, the teacher of record must be certified in the grade range, but not by a specific content area, i.e., science or mathematics.

one application for each program and differentiate their teams by providing separate team numbers.

Requirements of the Application:

1. Indication of middle school (7, 8 grade) or high school (9-12) team, please use a separate application for FTC and FRC grants.
2. Up to five digit permanent FIRST Robotics team registration number (no temporary team numbers allowed).
3. Name and contact information (email address and phone number) of FIRST Robotics team coach.
4. Name and classification of FIRST Robotics team sponsor.
 - a. Business
 - b. Higher Education Institute
 - c. Technical Program
5. Name(s) and contact information (email address and phone number) for sponsor(s) contributing a match of at least 50% of the cost to participate in the competition which is \$6,000 (\$3,000 match required) for new teams and \$5,000 for returning teams (\$2,500 match required) from either the school or an outside sponsor. (Note: match requirement only applies to Start-Up Team Grants and Existing Team Grants, not to coach stipend).

OPENING AND CLOSING DATES:

Grant applications will be available in MEGS+ on October 15, 2013, and are due by 11:59pm on November 7, 2013.

NONPUBLIC SCHOOL PARTICIPATION:

State of Michigan law does not allow the use of State School Aid funds for non-public school funding.

ASSURANCE OF ACCURACY:

P.A. 60 of 2013, section 99h of FY State School Aid Act

Staff Proposed Assurances:

1. Full \$1,500 coach's stipend awarded to the district must be used solely to supplement FIRST Robotics team coach's salary.
2. \$7,500 awarded to new 9-12 grade teams must be used solely for team registration and other team expenses.
3. \$5,000 awarded to existing 9-12 grade teams must be used solely for team registration and other team expenses.
4. Applicants agree to participate in a minimum of two FIRST Robotics Competition district events or one FIRST Tech Challenge qualifying event in the 2013-14 school year.
5. If a FIRST Robotics team qualifies for State or World competitions, the team will participate in the competition.
6. Grant funds awarded to FIRST Robotics teams to participate in State or World competitions do not require a local match.
7. By submitting a FIRST Robotics Grant application in MEGS+, the district

agrees that all information provided is true and accurate. If it is found that information is incorrect, the MDE reserves the right to rescind funding awarded under Section 99h, FY 2013-14 State School Aid.

Legislative Assurances:

1. Each team receiving funding must receive a local match in the form of in-kind services or funding from other sources equal to at least 50% of the \$6,000 cost to participate in the FIRST Robotics Competition, which is \$6,000 for new teams and \$5,000 for returning teams under Section 99h of FY 2013-14 State School Aid (amounting to a \$3,000 match for new teams, and a \$2,500 match for returning teams).

PROCESS FOR THE GRANT COMPETITION:

Key Dates*

August 13, 2013State Board of Education approves grant criteria
August 15, 2013.....Grant RFP is announced via eblast memo
October 15, 2013.....Application is live in MEGS+
November 7, 2013.....Applications due at 11:59pm in MEGS+
November 13-14, 2013.....Grant applications reviews
December 23, 2013.....Awards made via SAMS

*All dates subject to change at the discretion of the MDE

REJECTION OF PROPOSALS:

The MDE reserves the right to reject any applications received as a result of this grant program announcement.

REVIEW PROCESS, CRITERIA, AND REVIEWERS:

The MDE utilizes a review panel when scoring its competitive grants. For this grant program, review teams will be composed of people from within and outside the MDE as needed, with expertise in FIRST Robotics Competitions. MDE staff will supervise the review process.

Length of Award:

All funds awarded as part of FY2013 of State School Aid, Section 99h must be used in full by June 30, 2015.

Indirect Charges:

State law does not allow indirect charges on State School Aid funds.

Payment Schedule:

Payments for Coach's stipends grants, Start-Up Team grants and Existing Team grants will be scheduled for December 23, 2013, via SAMS. Funding for state, national and world competition participation will be scheduled for Spring 2014 at the discretion of the Educational Technology Unit in coordination with members of FIRST Robotics Leadership.