

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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

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

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

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 program or a high school FIRST Robotics Competition program (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 hired a coach, and will use funds available for coach's salary or costs related to funding a FIRST Robotics Program.

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 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 district for 7th and 8th grade FIRST Robotics teams. Awards are limited to the first 100 applicants, based on submission of MEGS+ applications.

9-12 Grade Team Participation:

1. Coach's Stipend Grants

Each registered, public school FIRST Robotics 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 the first 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.

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.

4. State, National, and World Competition Grants

The MDE will provide funding for reasonable expenses for qualifying teams to participate in State, National, or World 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 or Tech Challenge program in place that will continue through the 2013-2014 school year.
- Establish a FIRST Robotics or Tech Challenge program in the 2013-2014 school year.
- Program must serve students in grades 7-12.

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 one application for a middle school team per district. Differentiation between teams within the MEGS+ application will be made from separate FIRST Robotics team registration numbers given in the application and confirmed by grant reviewers.

Requirements of the Application:

1. Indication of middle school (7, 8 grade) or high school (9-12) team.
2. Five digit FIRST Robotics team registration number.
3. Name and contact information (email address and phone number) of FIRST Robotics team coach.
4. Name and classification of FIRST Robotics team mentor.
 - a. Sponsor
 - b. Business
 - c. Higher Education Institute
 - d. Technical Program
5. Name(s) and contact information (email address and phone number) for sponsor(s) contributing at least 50% grant award match.

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 to supplement FIRST Robotics team coach’s salary.
2. \$7,500 awarded to new 9-12 grade teams must be used for team registration and other team expenses.
3. \$5,000 awarded to existing 9-12 grade teams must be used for team registration and other team expenses.
4. Applicants agree to participate in a minimum of two FIRST Robotics or FIRST Tech Challenge team competitions in the 2013-14 school year.
5. If a FIRST Robotics team qualifies for state, national, or world competitions, the team will participate in the competition.
6. Grant funds awarded to FIRST Robotics teams to participate in state, national, 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 total award under Section 99h of FY 2013-14 State School Aid.

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.