

# PROMOTING INNOVATION IN SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS (PRISM)

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**Proposal deadline:**

September 30, 2025

BURROUGHS  
WELLCOME  
FUND 

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# KEY DATES

Grant application portal available	May 2025
Application deadline	September 30, 2025
Notice of award	By March 2026
Award start date	April 1, 2026
Award end date	June 30, 2027

# PROGRAM BACKGROUND

Engaging children in science has been a focus of the Burroughs Wellcome Fund since it became an independent, private foundation in 1994. We are convinced that all children, regardless of their future career path, need basic science literacy to participate fully in civic life. We believe that the best method for achieving the goal of science literacy is to get students involved in the scientific process and let them do what comes naturally: ask questions and participate in hands-on activities and experiments that convey basic scientific principles.

Burroughs Wellcome Fund supports teaching professionals in their efforts to provide quality hands-on, inquiry-based activities for their students. This award provides up to \$3,000 for one year to cover the cost of equipment, materials, and supplies. An additional \$1,500 may be requested for professional development related to the implementation of new equipment or use of materials in the classroom. Awards are made to teaching professionals that hold a professional educator’s license to teach in a North Carolina K-12 public school.

The Burroughs Wellcome Fund recognizes the important role that K-12 teachers play in the lives of students by stimulating a passion for science and mathematics innovations. In this time of limited budgets, BWF wants to support teaching professionals in their efforts to provide quality hands-on, inquiry-based activities for their students. BWF launched this program to support North Carolina K-12 teachers in their efforts to promote excitement for science and mathematics in the classroom by providing grants for materials, equipment, and supplies related to the implementation of high quality curriculum and activities in the classroom.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The PRISM award program provides grants up to \$3,000 to cover the cost of equipment, materials, and supplies to implement hands-on, minds-on science and mathematics curriculum in the classroom. Recognizing the need for materials training, additional funding of up to \$1,500 may be requested for professional development related to the implementation of new equipment or use of materials in the classroom. Eligibility requirements are outlined below:

- Applying teaching professionals must currently hold a professional educator's license to teach in a North Carolina K-12 public school. Teachers holding licensure in elementary education are eligible.
- Applying teaching professionals must currently be employed at a K-12 public school (including charters) in North Carolina.
- Equipment, materials, and supplies must be related to quality hands-on experiences for the students in science and/or mathematics. Items must be used directly by students in the classroom or in a structured afterschool time activity.
- All applications require a signature from the principal indicating support for the proposal and permission to use the requested equipment, materials, and supplies in the K-12 classroom. It is not the intent of the Burroughs Wellcome Fund to provide funding for basic technology equipment, such as laptop computers, projectors, white boards, graphing calculators, digital cameras, etc. The purchase of books related to the projects will not be supported. BWF will not support field trips or expenses related to guest speakers.

## SELECTION PROCESS

Grants will be peer-reviewed by an advisory committee established by the Burroughs Wellcome Fund with final approval by its Board of Directors. Critiques of proposals will not be provided.

The following selection criteria will be used:

- Quality of proposal and how requested equipment, materials, and supplies relates to an engaging, innovative, hands-on curriculum, lesson plan, or project in science or mathematics
- Impact of the PRISM award on students and teachers as demonstrated in the project plan
- Quality of the professional development activity and relationship to the implementation of the equipment, materials, and supplies to be used in the classroom or afterschool (if professional development funds are requested)
- Reasonable budget that aligns with classroom or afterschool science and/or mathematics activities
- Eligibility of teaching professional
- Application documents meet outlined eligibility criteria and guidelines
- Support of principal

# INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO PREPARE AND SUBMIT A COMPLETE PROPOSAL

## Application Process

Interested candidates who meet the eligibility criteria will need to submit one online proposal through BWF's online application system by September 30, 2025 at 3:00 pm ET. The proposal submission site or grant application portal will be available by end of May 2025.

The proposal includes:

- Applicant Information
- Project Plan
- Budget
- Signature Page

All communications will be made through email.

BWF does not provide critiques or written comments of unfunded proposals.

## How to Submit a Proposal

To begin a proposal submission use this link: [proposal](#)

To return to a proposal already in progress you must use this link: [saved proposal](#)

It is recommended that applicant bookmark this page to return to a proposal in progress.

## Proposal Elements

A complete proposal consists of fields submitted through the online application. The detailed components of the complete proposal are shown below.

**Online proposal form** (see previous links):

- Teaching professional contact information
- School name, district, and principal contact information
- Proposal information
- Applicant demographics

## Online Application

The following questions and information will be found in the online application.

### **Project Plan** (*consists of five components*)

Include the following components noted below.

- **General Overview (limit 350 words):**

Briefly outline the goals of the PRISM award. Include background information on the school and the students to be served (including grade level). Provide an overview of the materials, equipment, and supplies to be purchased and how these purchases will fulfill a need in the classroom and at the school.

- **Engaging and Innovative Curriculum or Lesson Plan (limit 250 words):**

Describe how the requested materials, equipment, and supplies will be related to the implementation of a hands-on, engaging, and innovative curricula, lesson plan, or project for students. Give examples of how this curriculum will motivate student learning.

- **Impact of Award (limit 250 words):**

Describe the impact the PRISM award will have on student outcome with the implementation of innovative teaching practices and curricula, as well as on your overall classroom, colleagues and school. Indicate how you plan to assess this impact.

- **Professional Development Funds (only if requested) (limit 300 words):**

If professional development funds are being requested describe how the professional development activity will supplement the use of the materials, equipment, and supplies. Give a description of who will deliver this training.

- **Plan of Action (limit 250 words):**

Describe the timeline for purchasing materials, equipment, and supplies and for implementation in the classroom. If professional development funds are being requested, integrate this into the plan of action.

## **Budget**

Complete the budget form provided, outlining the materials, equipment, and supplies you will purchase and the cost for each. Keep in mind that BWF will not support basic technology equipment, such as computers, projectors, white boards, graphing calculators, etc. BWF will also not support the purchase of books related to the implementation of the project. BWF will not support field trips or visiting guest speakers. Any equipment purchased by the award recipient can be transferred to another North Carolina public school if the teacher relocates.

## **Signature Page**

Signatures for the teaching professional and principal are required.

## Submission Process

Complete all portions of the online application. Click “Validate” on the Validate tab to see if any errors are identified in your application. All information must be provided before the “SUBMIT” button is available. Click the “SUBMIT” button to transmit the application. An automated message will confirm that the application was successfully submitted.

Proposals will not be accepted after 3 pm EST on September 30, 2025. The online application system shuts down automatically at the deadline and the SUBMIT button will no longer be available. Plan to submit your application well in advance of the grant deadline to allow adequate time to troubleshoot any issues. NO EXCEPTIONS OR EXTENSIONS WILL BE GRANTED.

After the deadline, applicants with incomplete proposals and those not adhering to instructions will be disqualified without prior notice.

Only proposals submitted through BWF online application website will be accepted.

## Questions?

Please review our online [Frequently Asked Questions](#) first. Eligibility inquiries should be directed in advance to BWF program staff by contacting:

Samantha Moore, Program Associate  
[smoore@bwfund.org](mailto:smoore@bwfund.org), 919-917-5137

Alfred Mays, Senior Program Officer  
[amays@bwfund.org](mailto:amays@bwfund.org), 919-991-5103

# TERMS OF THE GRANT/USE OF GRANT FUNDS

Burroughs Wellcome Fund supports teaching professionals in their efforts to provide quality hands-on, inquiry-based activities for their students. This award provides up to \$3,000 for one year to cover the cost of equipment, materials, and supplies. An additional \$1,500 may be requested for professional development related to the implementation of new equipment or use of materials in the classroom. Awards are made to teaching professionals that hold a professional educator's license to teach in a North Carolina K-12 public school.

Schools receiving PRISM awards are responsible for disbursing the funds and for maintaining adequate supporting records and receipts of expenditures. Awarded grants will be payable to the school of the teaching professional. The teaching professional and the school leadership will be responsible for ensuring that the funds are spent according to the budget as outlined in the proposal. The school is responsible for providing timely access to BWF funds for the purchase of materials, equipment, supplies, and professional development activities. BWF funds cannot be used for indirect costs.

Partial funding may be granted based on the discretion of BWF staff, the advisory committee, and the BWF board. All awards will be granted to the school (or school district) on behalf of the applying teaching professional. All awards must have the full support of the principal, who must accept the award and give permission for the materials, supplies or equipment to be used in the classroom. BWF will not accept responsibility for the mismanagement of materials, equipment, or supplies nor the safety of the students who use these items.

Within eight weeks of the completion of the project or the implementation school year, the teaching professional must submit a report detailing how the funds were used and outline the impact of the award as described in the proposal. The school must submit a financial report. Forms will be provided by BWF. Funds must be used by the end date of the award noted on the grant agreement. Professionals not currently holding BWF awards will receive priority.

Any unused funds held by the school when awards expire or are terminated must be returned to BWF, unless BWF has granted prior permission to retain the funds. Grantees may request a no-cost extension of up to 12 months; requests explaining why an extension is needed must be submitted in writing at least two months prior to the end of the award.