



We are excited that you are interested in applying for an Innovation Grant. Please use the following information to answer basic questions about the Innovation Grant, the application process and other important items. If you still have questions, please reach out to the Innovation Grants Team at innovationgrants@specialolympics.org.

What is an Innovation Grant? Innovation Grants are grants awarded to support projects led by young people with and without intellectual disabilities (ID) to promote inclusion in their school and community. The upcoming round will provide \$500 USD, \$1,000 USD, \$1,500 USD, or \$2,000 for projects. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this round of Innovation Grants will be closely aligned with the 3-phased approach Special Olympics has adopted for returning to activities.

Who can apply for an Innovation Grant? Young people with and without ID that are 25 years of age and below. If applying as a Unified Pair (one youth with ID and one youth without ID), both youth must be within the required age range at the time the application is submitted.

Does it have to be a Unified Pair who applies for the funding? It is not required but there will be preference placed on projects led by a Unified Pair.

How much funding is available? Innovation Grants are available in the amount of \$500 USD, \$1,000 USD, \$1,500 USD, or \$2,000 USD.

What projects qualify for the Innovation Grant? To qualify, the project must be led by a young person(s) from an accredited Program and meet one or more of the following key objectives:

- Create new or further expand existing Unified Schools and Universities
- Engage new inclusive youth leaders
- Drive sustainability and quality in youth/school-based programming

What is the application process? The application requires the following information:

- A narrative section
- Basic project budget
- Signed agreement form with signatures from the Special Olympics Program staff member working to ensure the execution of the project
- Photos of the Youth Leaders

Applications are due 15 April 2021. Applicants will be notified by 3 May 2021 if their project has been selected to receive funding.

How is the funding sent to the young person(s)? All funding will be sent to the applicant's accredited Program and the Program must work directly with the young person(s) to determine how the funding will be distributed to successfully completed projects.



What reporting is required? Only a final report will be required for innovation grants. A template for reporting will be provided and the following information will be required:

- Narrative report describing the Youth Leader's experience with the project. This could be done through:
 - Written blog post
 - Video/Video blog
 - Adobe Spark webpage
- 10 pictures and a 30 second video of the project or 15 pictures of the project
- 1 quote from a person with ID that was impacted by the project
- 1 quote from a young person without ID that was impacted by the project
- 1 quote from an adult that was involved with the project
- Metrics achieved
- Financial Report to report on where the funding was spent (receipts will need to be saved by the Program but do not need to be shared with SOI HQ)
- Any media links related to the project (e.g. YouTube video created, online news articles, etc)

How long do I/we have to complete the project? During the application process, the applicant will be asked to identify the project length based off the following choices:

- 6 month
- 9 months

The final report will be due 30 days after the chosen project length.

If I want to host an in-person activity, what steps do I need to take to ensure the health of participants during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Strict risk mitigation procedures (physical distancing, hand hygiene, sanitation, health reminders, etc.) and symptom screenings must be in place for all in-person activities. For additional guidance, please refer to the Innovation Grants COVID-19 Memo available [here](#).

What support and resources will be available to me? All grant recipients will be required to view a series of technical assistance webinars prior to submitting their final report.

How much of a time commitment will the webinars be? Each required webinar is pre-recorded and is 30 minutes or less. Dependent on the length of the project, grant recipients will be required to view a total of 6-13 webinars.

Do we need to keep receipts for the items bought using the funding? Yes, receipts need to be kept and submitted to the Special Olympics accredited Program.

Where can I find examples and ideas about successful projects in the past?



Please refer to the [Innovation Grants COVID-19 Memo](#) for examples of approved Innovation Grant projects that adapted to meet the various requirements of the 3-phased approach Special Olympics has adopted for returning to activities.

Will there be other opportunities to apply? Yes, there will be two opportunities every year for young people to apply for Innovation Grants. The next cycle will be announced in the second half of 2021.

If I want to lead a project that works with a school or university, do I need the school's approval or signature? Yes, it is important to secure the school or universities approval on the project before submitting the application.

If the project is successful, what happens next? The youth leader(s) will be welcomed into the Global Youth Leadership network and have the opportunity to connect and network with youth leaders from around the world. Through the Global Youth Leadership network the youth leaders will be activated for years to come.

If a youth leader/Unified Pair has received a grant for a past project (i.e. from the Summit) are they eligible to apply again? Yes, but the proposed project must be different from the project that received the first grant.