Building Opportunities for Out-of-School Time (BOOST) Grants
Frequently Asked Questions
Implementation Phase
Last Updated: October 29, 2021

This document contains frequently asked questions related to the BOOST Grants Program. Be sure to review this document, as well as the original RFP and GaDOE Program Specific Assurances to gain a complete understanding of the BOOST grants. If you still have questions about the BOOST Grants Program or any aspect of program implementation, after reviewing these resources, please contact GSAN staff at BOOST@georgiavoices.org.

**BOOST Grant program**

What is the purpose of the BOOST Grants program?
The purpose of the BOOST Grants program is to expand access to, reduce barriers to participation for and improve the quality of summer enrichment opportunities and comprehensive afterschool programming for K-12 youth across the state of Georgia.

Where did the funds for the BOOST Grants program come from?
The funds come from the American Rescue Plan Act, which was approved in March of 2021. You can read more about the American Rescue Plan [here](#). Through this plan, Georgia has an unprecedented opportunity to provide expanded and improved learning and supports for all students. The federal stimulus package will help Georgia combat learning loss and support students’ connectedness and well-being utilizing a whole child approach as we move ahead and begin to recover from the setbacks exacerbated by the events of 2020. The American Rescue Plan has made approximately $85 million available over the next 3 years to be awarded through the BOOST Grants program.

Why did the Georgia Department of Education (GaDOE) choose to partner with Georgia Statewide Afterschool Network (GSAN) to award these grants?
Across the country, states have approached the process of awarding these dollars in various ways. GaDOE and GSAN have a long history of partnership and the two started discussing how to administer these dollars shortly after the American Rescue Plan Act was passed. As Georgia’s resource organization for afterschool and summer learning programs, GSAN cultivates environments that allow these programs and the youth they serve to thrive. GSAN’s strong relationships with community-based organizations across the state made them the right partner for this opportunity.

**Eligibility: Expenses**

Can we use some of the BOOST Grant dollars to pay for administrative costs? Yes. Organizations may request up to 10% of BOOST grant funds to support administrative/indirect expenses.

Are indirect costs an eligible budget expense? If so, do you have a maximum rate? Yes, see above.

What expenses can applicants include in the administrative costs line item? Applicants may include costs that are considered reasonable and necessary to effectively administer the program consistent with the cost principles in the Uniform Guidance. Administrative costs include costs (direct and indirect) involved in the proper and efficient performance and administration of the BOOST grant.
**Timeline**

**Will there be additional BOOST funding opportunities for organizations who did not receive a grant in Year 1?** At this time, there are no additional BOOST grant application windows planned. However, 5% of total BOOST funds were held back intentionally to allow GSAN, in partnership with GaDOE, to explore future funding opportunities. Any future funding will serve to fill gaps in OST programs, meet emerging trends observed in Year 1, and respond to the ever-changing COVID-19 pandemic. We recommend staying connected to GSAN’s newsletter and social media channels to ensure you receive notification if opportunities do occur in the future.

**What will the reimbursement process be like?** As a contracted vendor for the State of Georgia, you will use their online system to submit your requests for reimbursement. At this time, the GaDOE has signaled to GSAN that receipt uploads will not be required, and, instead, grantees will need to submit expenditure reports, reflecting high-level line items, that reflect the amount being drawn down. GSAN will provide more support on this topic in an orientation session as well as future updates.

**When will GaDOE start reimbursing organizations for expenses incurred for BOOST Grant programming?** Grantees are expected to have 3 months of working capital to start their programs while trainings are conducted and budgets/invoices are reviewed. GaDOE anticipates being able to process reimbursements monthly thereafter.

**Why is this first grant year starting after the academic school year has already started?** GaDOE decided it was best to wait to announce the BOOST Grants until the U.S. Department of Education approved our state application. Waiting for approval guaranteed that Georgia would be able to proceed with awarding the full $85M for afterschool and summer enrichment programming. You can read that announcement here, and you can read GaDOE's announcements here and here.

**What is the grant/expenditure period?**

GSAN has received confirmation from the GaDOE that the following dates will be used in forthcoming contracts:

Year 1: August 1, 2021-July 31, 2022
Year 2: August 1, 2022-July 31, 2023
Year 3: August 1, 2023-September 30, 2024

These grant periods are also the expenditure periods for each grant year. For example, in Year 1, grantees will be allowed to submit BOOST project-related expenditures for reimbursement dating back to August 1, 2021 and should plan to expend their funds by July 31, 2022.

**Questions related to Afterschool & Summer Enrichment Programs**

**Why is it so important to use evidence-based strategies in my programs?** Using evidence-based strategies is important because they work. The idea behind using a research-based or an evidence-based practice is you know that there is research behind it that demonstrates that it will, in fact, be an effective intervention. The following is a sampling of resources you can consult:

- Evidence-Based Interventions: Summer Learning or Enrichment and Comprehensive Afterschool Programs [https://bit.ly/EvidenceBasedAfterschoolandSummer](https://bit.ly/EvidenceBasedAfterschoolandSummer)
In terms of the learning acceleration required component - do those learning acceleration activities need to be directly tied to what students are learning at school? Our programs support teens in skill building that help them perform better in school but our activities don’t correlate directly to subjects and we don’t provide homework help. Learning acceleration does not equate to tutoring or homework help. Learning acceleration can be directly aligned with subjects taught at school and can also include skill building activities that will help students be more successful in school.

Does the grant cover academic life skills such as organization and time-management skills? Where does this fall under? Academic life skills would fall under learning acceleration.

Does foreign language instruction or dual-language immersion instruction support learning acceleration? This would be a great opportunity for you to share research/evidence that points to foreign language instruction supporting learning.

Are life skills (e.g.: budgets, conflict resolution, etc.) considered enrichment activities? Budgeting is one example of an enrichment activity; conflict resolution aligns better with well-being and connectedness.

For year-round programming when equally splitting funds, can the total funds be equal but with different expenditure categories based on what is needed for each type of programming? Yes.

What types of outcomes are you seeking? Applicants are asked to identify three outcomes in the application; GSAN and GaDOE are not establishing outcomes grantees are expected to report on. The Application Guidance document gives applicants details on how to formulate their outcome statements.

What will grantees be required to report on? Grantees will have to adhere to the Program Quality Requirements outlined in the Data, Monitoring, and Program Implementation Reporting and Assurances section of the RFP. Grantees will be required to measure and report on outcomes identified in application.

Data, Monitoring, and Program Implementation Reporting and Assurances
I’d like to know before the grant what data my organization will be required to report on. Can you give us the report template now? The report template is not ready yet. However, organizations should review the information included in the Data, Monitoring, and Program Implementation Reporting and Assurances section of the RFP. As you can see, in addition to reporting on demographic data of your program participants, GaDOE and GSAN will want to gain a sense of youth satisfaction and sense of belonging. Grantees will also need to report on their specific goals/outcomes as outlined in grant application.

Will academic-based metrics be required in reporting, i.e., grade improvement, etc.? We are not an academic-focused program but are skill-building to support better school performance. GSAN does not anticipate requiring school grades or Milestone assessment data as part of reporting on BOOST grants. Collection of academic growth and skill development data will be explored with grantees and evaluation partners.

What if any requirements exist at the end of the three years? BOOST grantees will have to report at the end of each of the three grant years. GSAN anticipates reporting to be very similar at the end of year 3 as in previous years.

My budget for years 2 and 3 will grow. Is it possible for my grant award to increase after year 1? No. Because GaDOE and GSAN will be allocating all the funds this year, grant amounts will likely be flat for the three years.

In the Assurances section there’s something about having to participate in GSAN training and technical support. Can you tell me about that? How many hours per month or year will we have to do this? To support the quality
improvement of Georgia’s out-of-school time program and professionals and build capacity and sustainability in the field, GSAN will provide a variety of training and technical assistance to grant recipients. GSAN has not finalized the schedule, but we anticipate providing some on-demand and interactive trainings and workshops, opportunities for statewide conference attendance, small group virtual coaching, and non-punitive quality assessments. More details regarding the opportunities for engagement will be available following grant awards.

On the assurances form there is a section that mentions the background check requirement. My question is whether background checks are required for the same staff, volunteers, etc. every year, or if conducting background checks on staff, volunteers, etc. prior to hire will suffice? The organization will need to ensure a cleared background check for staff is collected every 365 days.

Are there any conflicts of interest with outside Federal Grants? No.

What happens after grantees are selected? Will a list of recipients be made public after the grants are awarded? Yes.

Will reimbursements be submitted electronically or manually? Reimbursement will be submitted electronically.

What does the reimbursement process look like? I am concerned about the staff time commitment this may entail. Reimbursements will be submitted electronically. Supporting documentation for expenditures will be uploaded for review to ensure alignment with submitted budget. After approval, subgrantee will be able to drawdown the funds.

Is the reimbursement based on actual cost or is it a cost per student up to a max amount (Ex. Like Summer Food Program allows only up to what you serve per student)? It is actual cost.

Are current grantees guaranteed two additional years of funding beyond Year 1? Renewed funding is not guaranteed. However, it is the intent of GaDOE and GSAN to renew BOOST grants for two additional years of funding for organizations who meet all required assurances and program requirements and demonstrate reasonably successful program implementation from year to year. Grantees do not have to meet all stated program service projections or outcome goals to receive continued funding, nor do they have to draw down all of their allocated award in a grant period. However, the organization should be able to provide a sound rationale for any unmet projections and unspent funding allocations in their report narratives or in interviews with GSAN staff. If an organization’s lack of progress or program success cannot be well-justified or if any program requirements (such as safety conditions) are unmet, GSAN may not recommend future funding.

What will the reimbursement process be like? As a contracted vendor for the State of Georgia, you will use the online TeamWorks system to submit your requests for reimbursement. At this time, the GaDOE has signaled to GSAN that receipt uploads will not be required, and, instead, grantees will need to submit expenditure reports, reflecting high-level line items, that reflect the amount being drawn down. GSAN will provide more support on this topic in an orientation session as well as future updates.
How can we request modifications to our approved project budgets or project plan? GSAN has not finalized the process for modifications at this time; we are working to align this process with the GaDOE contract process to minimize duplication of effort. However, we anticipate that almost all grantees will need to make modifications and are committed to working flexibly with you to accomplish this so that your program is a success. Scaling down budgets and service projections in the first year should be straightforward to accommodate. Any modification made cannot result in a violation of the program requirements or assurances, and if a project’s framework or scope is altered drastically, it will require special review. The process for this will be announced soon.