AFCEA STEM Kickstarter Program
Central Maryland Chapter – Education Foundation

Thank you for your interest in the AFCEA Central Maryland (CMD) STEM Kickstarter program. This guideline is intended to provide proposal writers some background on the STEM Kickstarter process and application template.

The Process:

Proposals submissions will be accepted beginning September 15, 2021 through midnight ET on October 31, 2021. No late submissions will be considered.

Proposals should be formatted in Microsoft Word format, following the application template that is provided on the AFCEA-CMD website. If you don’t have Microsoft Office, there are substitutes like Open Office that will work. The format does not need to be fancy. Just convey the necessary details.

Once a proposal has been submitted, the person who sent the proposal will receive a confirmation email within 48 hours (generally sooner than this). If a confirmation is not received, please inquire through stem.kickstarter@centralmd.afceachapters.org to ensure that the proposal was delivered. We have encountered issues with mail servers that remove attachments being sent, and also, there have been submissions that did not get delivered through the AFCEA mail system. Let us know if you aren’t hearing from us so that we can fix the issue. Please save your original submission email until you receive a confirmation response.

Review of proposals will take place during November. The award announcements will be published during the first week of December. Whether a proposal receives an award or not, the point of contact listed in the proposal will be notified.

Our goal is for checks to be distributed prior to the December holiday break. An AFCEA-CMD STEM Volunteer will present the award in person, and we like to take pictures to be shown at the awards ceremony in May.

AFCEA-CMD wraps up the year with an Awards Night dinner reception where all of the STEM Kickstarter award recipients are recognized along with our scholarships awardees. Awards Night truly recognizes the great achievements of K-12 teachers and shines a spotlight on future leaders in STEM fields. All awardees are invited to attend Awards Night, and we also look for recipients who are willing to demo the results of their Kickstarter grant activity. AFCEA chapter members enjoy seeing how STEM Kickstarter dollars have been spent, which reinforces the value of the program. Prior recipients have given amazing demonstrations - we look forward to seeing yours!
Entry Submission:

STEM Kickstarter Awards are funded based on the review committee’s understanding of the intended use of the funds, the number of students influenced, and the need of the school/department/organization. AFCEA is a group focused on applied use of STEM. So, applications that describe direct use by students will be reviewed more favourably. Additionally, most awards are made in support of Technology, Engineering, and Math rather than pure Science.

Proposals should answer the questions in the template:

| School contact information including school name, address, county or city, phone, email, and point of contact (POC). | Self explanatory items. We need to know how to reach you and your school. |
| AFCEA-CMD STEM Volunteer contact information | Many schools that apply for a STEM Kickstarter grant have received the information from an AFCEA-CMD chapter member with students who attend the school. The chapter also has members who are interested in acting as a liaison to schools who are looking for professional resources to volunteer. If you do not have an AFCEA-CMD STEM Volunteer who you already work with, please ask to have one assigned. To ensure the program’s success, we would like to make a personal connection between the school and AFCEA! |
| If approved, how will the school use these funds? Please include a discussion of how the investment will complement/fit into the school curriculum. | STEM Kickstarter is an investment by our chapter in K-12 STEM programs in central Maryland. Our Board of Directors and our chapter membership are very interested in knowing how Kickstarter money gets spent by the schools. Past proposals that received an award included purchase of items like the following:  
- A classroom set of iPad minis  
- Beebots  
- Click circuits and programmable Arduino boards  
- 3-D printers  
- Programmable calculators  
- Parts to build robots for a robotics club  
- 3-D printing pens  
- Lego robotics kits  
- A classroom set of computers  
- A lab setup of computers  
- Overhead projection systems for STEM labs |

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(continued) If approved, how will the school use these funds? Please include a discussion of how the investment will complement/fit into the school curriculum.

| Things that are rated as positive | include buying enough items to support an entire class and also securing additional funding from the school district to support development of a program. |
| Things that are viewed as negative | include adding funding to a “general STEM budget” or providing a random list of items not associated with a specific cost. |

| Total requested amount for this proposal | Our cap is $5,000. You can request the full amount or just a part. We have an internal budget to follow, and we provide funding up to our approved budget based on how proposals score during the evaluation. |
| | NOTE: We prefer proposals that can be fully funded by $5,000 or less. However, if more than $5,000 is required to provide the full impact of your idea, please tell us how you intend to fund the remainder of your effort. |

| Detailed list of costs – breakout all items including shipping, if known. | Please provide enough details to show that the cost estimate is realistic. While a direct vendor quote is not required, providing line item specifics makes it easier for our team to evaluate your proposal. Is there a shipping charge or tax? Go ahead and include it in your estimate. Also, consider that technology may require a maintenance agreement. |
| | NOTE: The committee does not normally agree to fund membership fees, contest entry fees, advertising, promotional items, clothing (uniforms), or transportation costs. |

| Number of students that will be aided by the award this school year | Some teachers are working with a small number of students to build a capability. Some teachers work with the entire school. We want to know about the impact of the award. |

| Total number of students in school | See the previous item. It’s good to know how far the grant money will go toward promoting STEM education in your school. The committee decision is not solely based on this criteria. In some cases, it is good to describe the impact a program could have on the school. Grants have been given for large classroom purchases that impact the whole school as well as for small club usage. |
Describe how this grant will help you overcome challenges related to STEM education at your school.

We hope that this grant can be the difference that helps you succeed with student STEM education. Please take a moment to tell us: What are the challenges that your school and your students face when it comes to STEM learning? How will this grant help to overcome those challenges?

What is the anticipated useful life of the items that are planned for this award?

Will the materials purchased be useful only during this school year or are they intended to last for several years? Are you planning to build a program over many years that will benefit from a relationship with AFCEA?

For prior award recipients, how have you used the award? How many awards has your school received?

Many teachers have provided demonstrations and other feedback regarding how they used a STEM Kickstarter award. This information is used to describe the value of this program to our sponsors and to the AFCEA-CMD leadership. Please provide some details about how you applied Kickstarter funds. If your school received multiple awards, has all of the grant funding been applied to building a program or has it been spread across various efforts? If your school ran into problems applying the funding, please provide some information about the problems.

A template for proposals can be found at [https://centralmd.afceachapters.org/stem-kickstarter](https://centralmd.afceachapters.org/stem-kickstarter) or by sending an email to the address below. All entries must be received by midnight ET on October 31, 2021.

Proposals and questions may be submitted via email to stem.kickstarter@centralmd.afceachapters.org.