

IOP Institute of Physics

Public Engagement Grant Scheme 2012

Guidelines for panel members on grading applications

A. Introduction

The Institute of Physics aims to provide positive and compelling experiences of physics to public audiences through engaging and entertaining activities and events. The Institute's public engagement grant scheme is designed to give financial support of up to £1000 to individuals and organisations running physics-based events and activities during 2012.

B. Objectives

The Institute's grant scheme aims to encourage and support the development of projects that:

- Raise public awareness of, and engagement with, contemporary physics.
- Inspire and enthuse public audiences, especially those not previously interested in physics.
- Reach audiences beyond the classroom.
- Develop the communication skills of individuals.

C. Eligibility

The grant scheme is open to all and provides funding for individuals and organisations to organise public engagement with physics activities. This includes, but is not limited to, members of the Institute of Physics, researchers in academia or industry, museums, schools, community groups, not-for-profit organisations, arts groups and libraries.

D. Criteria for the grant scheme

Applications will be judged against the following criteria and should demonstrate:

- That the project is physics-based and explores underlying concepts and issues, rather than just providing information.
- Awareness of public interest and concerns including the relevance of the project to the target audience(s).
- Timeliness and relevance. Projects linking physics to external events in the wider community, eg the Olympics, local anniversaries etc, are welcome.
- Targeting of specific public audiences. Projects that target traditionally hard-to-reach groups (eg ethnic minorities, geographically isolated communities etc) and independent adults (ie not accompanied by children) are encouraged. Projects that target children at school will only be considered if they involve the wider community, eg parents, university students or physicists, as well as pupils.
- Clear objectives for the project and the potential to make an impact on the target audience.
- Evidence of adequate and appropriate means of publicity to reach and attract the target audience.
- Evidence of working with physicists to ensure accurate content. The physics in society team can help to identify local physicists to assist with projects if required.
- Evidence of realistic evaluation commensurate to the project.

- That the activity is dependent on Institute funding or that it adds a significant element.
- Evidence that the applicant has a plan to meet any shortfall in funding not covered by the Institute's award or by other institutions they might have applied to.
- A realistic assessment of practical issues such as copyright, insurance and health and safety issues.

Grants will not be awarded to:

- Projects that will take place outside of the UK and Ireland.
- Projects aimed at solely delivering the curriculum to school pupils.
- Cover the cost for project staff who receive a full-time salary from their organisation or employer.
- Cover the cost of projects which are part of an organisation's usual programme of activities.
- Cover the cost of general purpose hardware, apparatus or equipment such as digital cameras, telescopes or computers etc, unless it is shown to be integral to the project, will be used beyond the project lifetime to communicate physics and does not make up the majority of the project costs.

Previous recipients of Institute of Physics grants are welcome to apply for funding, but the Institute will look for development of the idea or activity in the new application. You can request the completed final reports from previous projects during the assessment process.

E. Grading

The grading form has two purposes.

- It is to record your grade for each grant application. The average of the grades from each panel member will be used to rank the application to determine the allocation of funding.
- It is to record your judgements, if you wish, on how well you feel that the application meets the criteria for funding and why you feel it should be funded or not funded. These comments can be used during the panel meeting, when discussing those applications which have received widely differing gradings from the panel members.

Scoring a grant application

Please allocate an overall grade from 0-3 (0 being the lowest) according to how well you feel the application meets the scheme's criteria. The use of half-marks is discouraged.

If you feel that you require any further information about an application, including a reference, before awarding a grade, please email the Physics in Society team. Where possible, any further information requested will be available at the panel meeting.

Ranking the applications for funding

The final grade of a grant application will be made on the basis of the average grade from all of the panel members. At the panel meeting there will be an option for the panel to look in detail at those applications with widely differing grades before accepting the final composite grade. Awards will then be made to the highest graded applications dependent on the amount of money available. The panel may decide to fund particular aspects of some higher ranking applications where it is felt appropriate. The panel will also be asked to identify the grade below which applications are unfundable.