



AMATEUR RADIO DIGITAL COMMUNICATIONS

Request for Proposals: Education Projects April 2021

Amateur Radio Digital Communications (ARDC) is a California-based foundation with roots in amateur radio and the technology of internet communication. ARDC makes grants to projects and organizations that follow the practice and tradition of technical experimentation in both amateur radio and digital communication. Such experimentation has led to broad advances for the benefit of the general public – such as the mobile phone and wireless internet technology. ARDC envisions a world where enabling communications technology is ubiquitously available through open source hardware and software, and where anyone has the ability to study, modify, and share it.

In an effort to bring this vision to life and to further [our mission](#), ARDC is seeking proposals for educational grants.

Submissions due: June 1, 2021
Distribution target: August 1, 2021

Please note that the above processing time applies primarily to 501(c)(3) public charities, schools, and government entities based in the US; to accommodate the needed administration, distribution to other entity types may be delayed.

About ARDC Education Grants

Amateur Radio has been a gateway for many people into the world of communication science. For some, it has led to fulfilling and lucrative careers in science, technology, and engineering. Following our goal of both getting more people involved in amateur radio and also broadening its demographics, ARDC supports projects that enable such education, particularly projects that lower the barrier for entry into what is, for some, difficult subject matter. How can we intrigue and inform new generations about how the electromagnetic spectrum ACTUALLY works? What will let kids peer behind the “magic” of mobile phones, WiFi, television, and radio-control toys to really know what is involved? Who will invent the radio breakthroughs of 2075 in a time when most electronic engineers focus on understanding digital rather than analog electronics?

In pursuit of answers to these questions, we seek educational projects that:

- Create easy-to-understand and accessible educational materials about amateur radio, digital communication, or communications science;
- Provide hands-on opportunities for learning these technologies, inside of the classroom and out; and/or
- Educate legislators, regulators, and the public about these technologies and their implications.

Additionally, we look for grants that further the following aspirational goals:

- Broad reach,
- Social over commercial benefit,
- Inclusion of underrepresented groups,
- Empowerment of individuals, and distribution over centralization,
- Preservation of the right to innovate, and
- Innovation on business models.

For more information about our goals, visit: <https://www.ampr.org/grantmaking-categories-requirements-goals/>



Education Grants: 2021

With the above questions, frameworks, and goals in mind, ARDC education grants fall into a couple different scopes and sizes. Grant requests may be for any amount, though note that larger requests will be prioritized based on the scope of their impact. In other words, the larger the grant request, the larger we hope for the impact of the grant to be.

Level 1: Support for teachers, classrooms, and schools.

Examples of grant requests that might fall into this category include:

- Computers and other equipment needed for a network lab.
- Conferences and training for teachers and staff.
- Amateur radio equipment for use in the classroom.
- Sending students to a summer “Cyber Academy.”
- A scholarship program for students who are active in amateur radio, digital communications, or IT.

Estimated grant award value: \$2,000 – \$150,000

Number of estimated grants to issue in this category: unknown; unlimited

Level 2: Support for National, International, and Online Programs

Examples of grant requests that might fall into this category include:

- An open source learning module on how mobile devices work.
- Open source course materials covering WiFi, wireless technology, and the communication spectrum.
- A national program for training kids and adults on amateur radio.
- A scholarship program for students who are active in amateur radio, digital communications, or IT.

Estimated grant award value: \$10,000 – \$500,000

Number of estimated grants to issue in this category: unknown; unlimited

Examples of ARDC Educational Grants

- **[Woodridge Middle School – Project Hamulanche – \\$5,453](#)**
Provided equipment such as radio kits, antennae, and soldering irons to support hands-on projects in an 8th-grade classroom, helping students learn about electricity, magnetism, waves, physics and energy.
- **[TAPR – Student ARRL/TAPR DCC Attendance – \\$10,000](#)**
Made it possible for 10 students to attend the [ARRL & TAPR Virtual Online Digital Communications Conference \(DCC\)](#).
- **[Outreachy – Paid Mentored Internships Countering Systemic Bias and Underrepresentation in Tech – \\$200,000](#)**
Supports paid internships for people underrepresented in technology to work on open source technology projects. Fiscally sponsored by the [Software Freedom Conservancy \(SFC\)](#).



Q&A

Who is eligible to apply for an education grant from ARDC?

Any organization with a focus on education – either in the US or internationally – may apply for an education grant. This includes but is not limited to:

- 501(c)(3) public charities
- Schools (K-12)
- Colleges and Universities
- Technical Schools
- Online educational content providers
- Museums

How do I apply?

To submit an application:

1. Review ARDC's [2021 Grantmaking Goals and Requirements](#) and the materials on ampr.org/giving.
2. Prepare your brief but thorough proposal and budget. Feel free to ask questions to giving@ampr.org!
3. Answer the relevant questions at mailman.ampr.org/hotcrp and upload your proposal.

What happens after I apply?

Following a check for eligibility, all grant applications will be reviewed by ARDC's Grants Advisory Committee (GAC). Members of the GAC or ARDC staff may reach out to you with questions. In some cases, you may be asked to submit supplementary information or a revised proposal. The GAC will then vote to accept or reject your proposal, followed by an approval vote by the ARDC board. Once accepted, a member of our staff will collect relevant information from you to process your grant request.

Are there any reporting requirements?

Yes. Grantees are expected to provide a report every 6 months documenting their progress, along with a final report detailing your results and how funds have been spent.

Are there any other important requirements I should know about?

Yes. Any hardware, software, or research resulting from your grant needs to be freely distributed as widely as possible, ideally using an [Open Source Initiative \(OSI\) approved](#) license. Also, be sure to review our [2021 Grantmaking, Requirements, and Goals](#) before submitting an application.

Grant period?

Typically our grant periods are no longer than 1-2 years. If you need more time, consider breaking your proposal into smaller chunks to ensure that you will be able to complete the project on time. The idea is to give you as much time as you need, but no longer.

What if something happens and I am not able to spend the money on time?

In the event that this happens, you may request a grant extension by submitting a request to giving@ampr.org. **It is important that you send this request at least 30 days before your grant period end date.** In the event that an extension is unavailable (if, say, the project you intended to spend the money on has ended, or if one or more extensions have already been granted) you may need to return unused funds to ARDC.

If I get a grant from ARDC, will you renew it next year?

No annual renewal should be assumed. That's because we want to see how your project goes before making any kind of ongoing commitment. Once the first project is completed (including final report submitted) then you may apply for another grant in the next education grant cycle.

Maximum limit of the grant?

No. If the project is truly awesome, we want to give you exactly what you need but not a penny more. Note that in 2020, we gave away nearly \$2.7 million, and we aim to at least double that number in 2021.



What about events like science fair prizes and sponsorships? Do they count?

We're interested. Send us a proposal!

Is there a limit on the number of grants that you will give?

No. ARDC will make a determination on the number of grants and the amount that we'll disburse based on the proposals we receive.

I am a home-schooling parent. Can I apply for a grant?

Unfortunately, we are not able to give grants to individuals at this time. If, however, there is a local nonprofit supporting your community's home schooling efforts, perhaps they might have a project that could be eligible.

My education project is made up of a collection of volunteers. Can we apply for a grant?

As ARDC is not yet able to make grants to individuals, we cannot make grants to groups of volunteers. As a path forward, it may be worth it to find a fiscal sponsor for your project, such as a local nonprofit whose mission aligns with that of your project.

References

More information can be found at AMPR.org, including but not limited to:

- Overview of ARDC Grantmaking: <https://www.ampr.org/giving/>
- ARDC Grantmaking Requirements and Goals: <https://www.ampr.org/grantmaking-categories-requirements-goals/>
- List of Grants to-date: <https://www.ampr.org/grants/>
- Grant Application Portal: <https://mailman.ampr.org/hotcrp/>

Contact

Please direct inquiries to giving@ampr.org

