



Go Outside (GO) Grants – Guidelines (Updated July 2026)

The GO Grant FAQ is available here: <https://gooutside.nc.gov/go-grants/apply/>

1. **Eligibility**

Applicants must qualify as either a North Carolina K-12 school, or nonprofit organization as follows:

A. **North Carolina K-12 School:**

A public, private, or charter school based in North Carolina. A registered homeschool association or children's home (both must have 501(c)(3) nonprofit status) based in North Carolina.

B. **Nonprofit Organization**

A nonprofit organization with tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Organizations must have the ability to adopt the Commission's branding as part of their grant.

Applicant Requirements

Any member of a school's faculty or administrative staff may apply for a GO Grant. Parent Teacher Associations, nonprofit organizations, and outdoor activity center staff may apply on behalf of a school or in partnership with a school, but the school's administrative staff must sign off on the application.

Reapplying for a GO Grant

Applicants seeking funding for field trips or visiting programs are eligible to receive one GO Grant per class/grade each school year. For example: multiple applications (inside a school year) for a single group of students will be rejected but multiple applications (inside a school year) for different classes/grades will be considered.

2. **Funding Guidelines**

Grant awards are currently only available for off-campus field trips:

A. **Field Trips:**

Up to \$3,000 for single-day field trips or up to \$5,000 for overnight field trips. An additional \$1,000 is available per night's stay up to the \$5,000 cap. Field trips must include an outdoor learning component/activity and may include visits to National/State Parks, city/county parks, outdoor recreation areas, outdoor activity/education centers, and historical sites.

The N.C. Youth Outdoor Engagement Commission will not consider requests for:

A. **Indoor Field Trips/Visiting Programs**

B. **Amusement/Theme Parks:**

Exceptions may be made if proposed field trips contain a significant proportion of outdoor activities or STEM opportunities.

C. **T-Shirts**

Exceptions may be made for shirts displaying NCYOE's name and logo. If considered, no more than 10% of requested budget may be allocated for t-shirt costs.

D. **Gifts/Souvenirs**

E. **School Beautification Projects**

Includes structures and floral gardens that have no hands-on application to outdoor learning.

F. **Playgrounds**

G. **Lunch Areas**

Picnic tables and umbrellas outside/near the school cafeteria will not be funded.

H. **Gym/Sports Equipment:**

Excluding sports that could be described as adventurous activities, e.g., archery, camping, climbing, fishing, hiking, hunting, kayaking, mountain biking, skiing, snowboarding, and other shooting sports.

I. **Electronics:**

Excluding electronics that are integral to the use of a structure or activity, e.g., electronic installation for animal barns, aquaponic/hydroponic greenhouse systems, or trail cameras.

J. **Previous Projects/Field Trips/Programs**

Structures that have already been built (this does not include proposed renovations) or field trips/programs that have already taken place.

Structures on Personal Private Property

K. Includes applications for structures intended to be built on personal private property.

3. Applications

Applications are considered for field trips that further outdoor education and recreation opportunities for North Carolina's youth. Applicants should take into consideration the following when completing an application:

A. **Application Submission Period:**

The GO Grant application period opens May 16th, 45 days prior to the new fiscal year (July 1st) and is open for a 12 month period. GO Grant applications are accepted on a rolling basis and are awarded throughout the fiscal year, as funds allow.

B. **Application Completion:**

Grant applications must be fully completed through the Grant Lifecycle Manager application portal found [HERE](#).

C. **Application Changes:**

Should changes need to be made to the original grant application, either before or after a grant has been awarded, the applicant must request a GO Grant Amendment form by emailing GoOutside@nc.gov. The GO Grant Amendment form will be assigned via the applicant's Grant Lifecycle Manager portal. An amendment request must be approved by the Commission before grant awards can be used. Changes include but are not limited to:

- Point of contact
- Timeline/trip date
- Trip location
- Number of students attending a field trip

- Purchase requests
- Changes to cost breakdown (this includes allocation of funds)

We cannot accept amendment requests for additional funds once a grant has been awarded and the recipient has been notified. Improper or unapproved expenditure may result in the Commission requiring a refund of the grant award.

D. **Applicant Changes:**

If an applicant has left the school/nonprofit organization but the school/nonprofit organization wishes to continue with their grant application, a new point of contact must be detailed on a GO Grant Amendment form. Request a GO Grant Amendment form by emailing GoOutside@nc.gov. The GO Grant Amendment form will be assigned via the applicant's Grant Lifecycle Manager portal. An amendment request must be approved by the Commission before grant awards can be used. Improper or unapproved expenditure may result in the Commission requiring a refund of the grant award.

4. Grant Selection Process

All grant applications undergo a thorough review process by the Commission and will consider alignment with our mission and vision, geographic diversity, and community/financial need. Priority shall be extended to applications that focus on underserved youth aged 4-18, who are not traditionally outdoors and/or do not have opportunities to participate in outdoor activities. All decisions to award or not award grants are made at the sole discretion of the N.C. Youth Outdoor Engagement Commission and are final and not appealable.

5. Grant Awards and Reporting

Timeline

A Grant Agreement form will be assigned to successful applicants in the Grant Lifecycle Manager portal. This form must be downloaded and signed by the Applicant, Administrator, and Bookkeeper, then reuploaded to the portal for approval.

Grant awards will then be sent directly to the recipient school system or nonprofit organization within 45 days of the proposed event. If deposits are required in advance of this date, please indicate this on your application or notify staff.

Expenditure

A. **Timeline:**

Grant awards must be expended within 60 days of receipt and must follow the grant outlined in the approved GO Grant application. Should an applicant need to adjust their timeline or grant, refer to section 3-C for instructions.

B. **Improper Expenditure:**

Should a grant recipient expend grant funds improperly or without approval, the Commission may require a full refund of the grant award.

C. **Shipping:**

Shipping costs must not exceed 5% of the total grant award.

D. **Charter Buses:**

Charter bus costs must not exceed \$1,000 for single-day field trip applications. This cap is raised for overnight multi-day field trips but is determined by the Commission during the application process.

E. **T-Shirts:**

If T-shirt expenses are approved by the Commission, the cost must not exceed 10% of the total grant award. Funds for T-shirts are not guaranteed, but may be considered if NCYOEK branding is utilized.

Grant Reporting

30 days from the completion of your field trip you are required to submit proof of payment and photographs. A "Final Report" will be assigned to each applicant via Grant Lifecycle Manager for you to upload proof of payment and photographs. You can view and download an expense reporting quick guide [HERE](#). All documentation and photographs must be submitted via Grant Lifecycle Manager. The following documentation is required:

A. **Proof of Payment**

For each purchase we require two forms of proof of payment, to include a copy of a check stub or account transaction summary AND a receipt, invoice, or purchase order.

Note: It is recommended to have all proof of payment organized in a zip file or Google Drive link with appropriate access allowed.

B. **Reporting Responsibility**

Applicants, administrators/principals, and/or accountants/bookkeepers are responsible for collecting, collating, and providing proof of payment.

C. **Photographs**

Recipients must submit photographs of their field trip that we may use on our website, social media, and in our print and other marketing materials.

Note: It is recommended to have all photographs organized in a zip file or Google Drive link with appropriate access allowed.

Unspent Funds

Unspent grant funds must be returned to the Commission within 30 days of grant completion. Checks must be mailed to:

N.C. Youth Outdoor Engagement Commission
1715 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1715