



Virginia Space Grant Consortium Internal Solicitation for Innovative Proposals for 2026

Issued: September 1, 2025

Proposals Due: January 25, 2026

Contact: Jennifer Penland, STEM Education Specialist (jpenland@odu.edu) or Chris Carter, Director (cxcarter@odu.edu).

The Virginia Space Grant Consortium has about \$50,000 total in program funding for member-led innovative project awards. We anticipate making 5 to 8 awards from this funding pool. We would like to solicit proposals for innovative projects in higher education, pre-college education, or informal education where a small grant would make a difference.

Areas of interest for this solicitation include:

- Programs that include activities related to NASA's Artemis Mission for Moon and Mars exploration.
- Programs relating to Earth System Science that use data from NASA missions.
- Summer research experiences for undergraduate students.
- Service-learning experiences for undergraduate students, including, but not limited to, those that might involve uncrewed autonomous systems.
- Teacher Professional Development programs.

Other STEM education projects that align well with VSGC and NASA goals will also be considered.

Funding for faculty research is not an area of consideration for this solicitation. VSGC offers the New Investigator Program (<https://vsgc.odu.edu/new-investigator-program/>) and qualified researchers should consider that opportunity for which they can apply during the next academic year. VSGC has a separate pool of funding to support flight and design projects. Proposals for those efforts may be submitted but will be considered separately. That funding pool is more limited.

Caveats for Innovation Project Proposals:

- You must be a faculty or staff member at a Consortium member institution to request funding but can partner with external organizations. Community colleges are considered members through the Virginia Community College System. Proposals will be accepted from the Virginia Department of Education as a member but not from individual school systems.

- You must be able to fully spend and account for any awarded funds by December 31, 2026. We anticipate making awards by mid-February 2026 so the period of performance for your proposal can be between March 1 to December 10, 2026.
- A final project report is required and guidelines for reporting will be provided at the time of the award.
- Your proposal should consist of a 2- to 3-page proposal and a budget. Though the proposal is short, be sure to include sufficient detail for reviewer evaluation. The proposal budget and references are not part of the proposal page count. Be sure to provide full contact information for the Principal Investigator or Project Manager and a two-page resume for that individual. A brief description of credentials for other lead personnel and a project timeline should be included in your proposal.
- For university projects selected, we will make the award through your Sponsored Program Office. Please include the contact information for the Sponsored Program Office in your proposal. Funding will be provided at the time of the award. You will need to account for all expenditures and return any remaining funds by December 31, 2026.

One of VSGC's primary objectives is to recruit and train women, underrepresented minorities, persons with disabilities, and other underserved groups for careers in STEM. ***Applicants should develop strategies for the recruitment and retention of underrepresented and underserved populations and include these strategies in their proposal.***

For budgets, no indirect costs are permitted per Space Grant policy. We also are required to follow NASA guidelines for Space Grant funding. Funds may typically not be used to purchase equipment. You can clarify the allowability of costs as needed with us prior to submission. Matching funding is not required but will be accepted if offered.

Submit your proposals to vsgc@odu.edu by **January 25, 2026**. We plan to review proposals and make selections soon after the deadline so we can get funding out to you in a timely way for spring or summer activities. We look forward to receiving your proposals. Please email Jennifer Penland (jpenland@odu.edu) if you have any questions. We look forward to seeing your innovative project proposals!