STEM Grant Program Overview

Member Schools are invited to apply for annual **STEM grants**, made possible through the generous support of the Schott Foundation and Xcel Energy Foundation. Refer to the STEM Grant Calendar for application deadlines and important dates.

Types of STEM Grants

Innovation Grants — up to $5,000:

Innovation Grants will be awarded for projects that:

- Create authentic STEM learning experiences using **engineering design** or **scientific inquiry**; multidisciplinary projects are encouraged.
- Expand and strengthen the school's **STEM offerings**.
- Align with relevant **academic standards** and **STEM skills**.
- Include **assessment or evaluation** to guide implementation, measure success, and identify improvement opportunities.
- Support **teacher professional development**, including training, mentoring, or planning stipends.
- Connect STEM learning to **real-world applications** and student experiences beyond the classroom.
- Build a foundation for **continuation, growth, and sustainability** of the project.
- Involve **two or more teachers**, either within one school or across multiple schools
- Develop **meaningful community partnerships** with nonprofits, higher education, other K–12 schools, STEM professionals, or businesses. Applications must include a **Letter of Commitment** from at least one partner.

Starter Grants — up to $1,500

For schools **new to the MINNDEPENDENT STEM Grant Program**, Starter Grants help launch STEM initiatives. Schools do **not** need to start with a Starter Grant—those with fully developed projects may apply for Innovation Grants. Funding can cover:

- STEM curricula or educational materials
- Teacher professional development and planning stipends

Sustainability Grants — up to $1000

For schools continuing a previously funded STEM project. Grants can cover **materials or resources needed to sustain or enhance the project**. Each original project is eligible for **one Sustainability Grant**.

Community Partnership Grants: We Care Solar – up to $7000

For schools serving **grades 7–12** interested in launching the **We Care Solar Solar Suitcase Program**, a hands-on solar energy and service-learning program.

Grant Funding Includes:

- Access to the **We Care Solar Solar Suitcase Program** learning platform
- Teacher training
- Up to **10 Solar Suitcase kits**, including materials and tools

Grants are paid directly to We Care Solar. Participating teachers must attend a **one-day training in Minneapolis/St. Paul in August 2027**.