SUSTAINABLE JERSEY GRANTS PROGRAM

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2026-2027 NJEA Grants Cycle QuickStart Guide

The Sustainable Jersey Grants Program is an important resource benefit available to any NJ public school or school district participating in the Sustainable Jersey for Schools program. Please consider taking advantage of the annual funding cycles in order to support your school's journey to becoming more sustainable. This QuickStart Guide provides a basic overview of the 2026-2027 NJEA Grants Cycle. More detailed cycle information can be found in the Application Information Packet. Apply online here.

APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY 11:59PM ON OCTOBER 30, 2026

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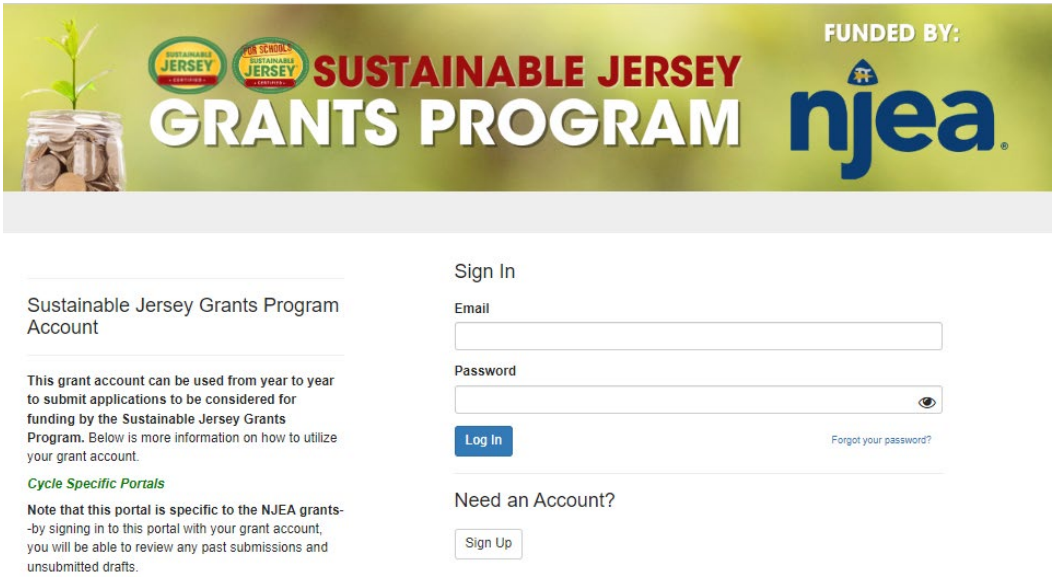
Online Application

Applications must be submitted using the online application portal by midnight 11:59 PM on Friday, October 30, 2026. At that time the portal will close.



Sign up for an account to access the online application. Instructions for getting started are available in the Application Information Packet. You may save your work, log out, and resume your in-progress application at any time by using the login feature.

Eligibility Rules

Eligible Applicants

To be eligible to apply for a grant in this cycle, the following requirements must be met:

- The applicant must be a New Jersey public school district or school* with an NJEA local association.**
- The applicant must be **registered or certified** in the Sustainable Jersey for Schools program. View Sustainable Jersey for Schools participation status here.
- The applicant must have appointed a **school or district green team** that meets the Green Team action standard. Note that the principal or superintendent needs to invite the union leadership of the school district to appoint up to two (2) members to the green team.

* We encourage partnerships between schools and non-profit organizations. Note that while grants can only be awarded to school/school districts, with checks made payable

to the school/school district and sent to its fiscal agent, funding may be passed through to a partner organization, contractor, or consultant.

** If your school or district is not affiliated with NJEA, know that you can still submit a grant application in the Sustainable Jersey Grants Program cycle funded by the PSEG Foundation that will be announced in the October 2025 (contingent upon Sustainable Jersey receiving funding).

Can I Submit Multiple Applications?

School Applicants

Schools are eligible to apply for one $10,000 AND one $2,000 grant, but can only receive one grant award per cycle. If applying for both grants, note that the $10,000 grant application will be considered first.

Due to the limited number of large grants, applying for both a large and $2,000 grant is a good strategy to optimize the chances of receiving a grant.

District Applicants

School districts are only eligible to apply for one $10,000 grant—they are not eligible to apply for a $2,000 grant. District applications should focus on programs or projects that benefit more than one school. The District can apply for grants at the same time as its individual schools using a grant account set up for the District.

Previous Grant Recipients

If you received a Sustainable Jersey grant in program year 2026 or earlier, refer to the chart below to determine if you are eligible to apply. Contact Kaitlyn Vollmer at grants@sustainablejersey.com or 609-771-3189 if you have questions.

Grant Cycle of Previous Award	Amount	Grant Status	Eligible to Apply for $10k Grant	Eligible to Apply for $2k Grant
2026 PSEG	$10,000 or more	Open	No	Yes
		Closed +	No	Yes
	$2,000	Open	Yes	No
		Closed +	Yes	No
2025 PSEG or NJEA*	$10,000 or more	Open	No	Yes
		Closed +	Yes	Yes
	$2,000	Open	Yes	No
		Closed +	Yes	Yes
2015-2024 PSEG, NJEA, or Gardinier	$10,000 or more	Open	No	No
		Closed +	Yes	Yes
	$2,000	Open	No	No
		Closed +	Yes	Yes

*Please note that NJEA grants are awarded in March of the following year (i.e. 2025 grants awarded in 2026)

+ A grant is closed when the final report has been submitted and approved by Sustainable Jersey

Potential Grant Projects

Eligible Projects

The funding supports efforts to implement projects that help schools gain points needed for Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification and make progress toward a sustainable future. The funded projects serve as practical and innovative models for the rest of the State and make measurable contributions toward the long-term goal of a sustainable New Jersey. Projects should relate to one of the 100+ program actions, which includes the Innovative Project action.

Besides funding projects, $2,000 grants can also be used for general green team support such as outreach efforts and capacity-building.

Need Help Thinking of a Project?

View the project ideas presentation here or view projects that have been funded through previous grant cycles via the Previous Recipients and Projects page on the Sustainable Jersey for Schools website.

Not Sure If Your Project Idea is Eligible?

Set up a meeting to discuss your project idea with staff using the Booking Tool here. We will be able to give you confirmation of project eligibility.

Ineligible Projects

Besides projects that do not meet the Eligible Projects guidelines, any projects that are already underway or completed are not eligible for funding. “Phase Two” of ongoing projects are eligible for funding. Sustainable Jersey grants cannot be used to reimburse schools or districts for expenses made before the grant was awarded.

What About Energy Projects?

Do to funding available through the state and utility energy incentive programs, energy efficiency upgrades to facilities and electric vehicle fleet projects are not eligible for funding. If you are interested in funding for these types of projects, please review Attachment 1 in the Application Information Packet.

Proposals for energy education, conservation, and/or behavioral change projects ARE eligible. This includes renewable energy equipment such as solar or wind powered equipment that can be utilized in the school curriculum.

Grant Expenses

Eligible Grant Expenses

Eligible grant expenses include:

- Staff stipends, consultant or contractor service fees (e.g., for content expertise, marketing, and/or technology)
- Equipment Training and educational materials or related expenses
- Project supplies
- Promotional items
    - **These items should not comprise of more than 10% of the proposed grant budget.** Promotional items include "give-aways" such as refillable water bottles, t-shirts, bags, etc., and incentives or awards such as prizes, gift cards, refreshments, etc.

Matching or in-kind contributions are encouraged, but not required. Any donated items, time and expertise should also be included in your budget—if you are unable to monetize the value of these donations, note them in your budget narrative. Including in-kind contributions such as donations (PTO, local businesses, etc,), fundraising, district funds, municipal funds, etc. as part of your budget makes it more competitive.

$10,000 Grants

- Must be used to fund all or part of a project that will earn points for an action in the Sustainable Jersey for Schools program.

- The project should leverage partnerships with community resources and include an outreach component focused on promoting community awareness of the project.

$2,000 Grants

- Can be for a specific project that will contribute to earning points for an action in the Sustainable Jersey for Schools program.

- Can be used for general green team expenses.

Ineligible Expenses

- Facilities and administrative (overhead) costs.

- Reimbursement for a project underway or already completed. Efforts to be funded by the grant should not start until **after the grant announcement event** in late May.

Application Sections

The online NJEA grant application is comprised of four sections:

1. School Grant Proposal
2. Sustainable Jersey for Schools Program Status
3. NJEA Local Association President Correspondence
4. Grant Authorization Documentation

Instructions on how to complete each section of the grant application are available in the Application Information Packet but a brief overview is available below. The first three sections must be completed by **October 30, 2026**. The final section does not need to be completed until **December 4, 2026.**

Section One: School Grant Proposal

Complete this section requesting information about your school/district, your school/district's Sustainable Jersey grants history, and your proposed project. The main proposal sections for $2,000 and $10,000 include:

- Project Title and Brief Project Description
- Action Plan and Timeline
- Budget Narrative and Detailed Project Budget
- Optional Information

$10,000 grant proposals must also include:

- Project Team
- Community Engagement
- Project Impact and Evaluation

Templates are available for use for some sections:

Action Plan & Timeline **Project Budget**

Section Two: Sustainable Jersey for Schools Program Status

Complete this section requesting information on your school district's/school's current status in the Sustainable Jersey for Schools program. School districts/schools must be registered in the program and have an active Sustainable Jersey for Schools district or school green team to be eligible to apply.

Use the Participating Districts and Schools map here to check your school district's/school's current program status. Find the name of your school district/school using the "List View". Each school is listed under its respective school district.

Green team documentation will be requested in this section of the application, however, schools currently certified Bronze or Silver in the program or school districts with at least one school that is currently certified Bronze or Silver do NOT need to upload this information.

More detailed information, including an explanation on each type of program status and how to get registered if your school/district is not, can be found in the Application Information Packet.

Section Three: NJEA Local Association President Correspondence

Please upload evidence that your **NJEA Local Association President** has been informed of the green team's intent to submit the grant application. This can include either a copy of the email that was sent to, or a letter of support from, your NJEA Local Association President.

You will also be asked to provide the NJEA Local Association President's contact information that Sustainable Jersey will use for notification purposes if your school or district is selected to receive a grant.

Section Four: Grant Authorization Documentation

After submitting the completed grant application, you will gain access to the Grant Authorization Documentation stage that has a longer deadline than the grant application. A school district or school can either upload a School Board Resolution supporting the grant application or a letter from the superintendent, business administrator, or school principal. You are not required to use one of the templates as long as the grant authorization document names the **specific Sustainable Jersey grants cycle** (2026 Sustainable Jersey Grants Program funded by NJEA), **the requested funding amount(s)** ($10,000 and/or $2,000), and the **name of the applicant** (your school district/school name).

Sample School Board Resolution

Sample School Letter