

Academy of Model Aeronautics

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Flying Site Improvement Grant Guidelines

Application Available: Sunday, October 1, 2024

Optional Application Draft Deadline: No later than Monday, January 6, 2025

Final Application Deadline: Saturday, February 1, 2025

Award Announced: May 2025 (after the second quarterly Executive Council meeting)

Minimum Award Amount: \$100

Maximum Award Amount: \$3,000

Grant Period: Within 12 months before or after the application deadline

Grant Overview

The Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA) and AMA Foundation are committed to supporting its members through philanthropy. The Flying Site Improvement Grant (FSIG) program provides funding for AMA chartered clubs that have made improvements or are making improvements to their flying sites. We understand that well-maintained flying sites promote satisfaction among hobbyists, club visibility to the public, community engagement, aviation education, and safety.

Through the FSIG program, the AMA will contribute 25% of total project costs—with a minimum contribution of \$100 and a maximum contribution of \$3,000—to clubs that are improving their flying sites and demonstrating their club's commitment to the AMA mission statement: **to promote, advance, and safeguard model aviation as a hobby, sport, and educational tool.**

We encourage all applicants to review this document extensively prior to submitting the application. If you have questions about the grant program or application process, please don't hesitate to contact Rachelle Haughn, Deputy Director, at rachelleh@modelaircraft.org or at (765)287-1256, ext. 221.

Eligibility

All currently chartered AMA clubs are eligible to apply. Grant applications can be submitted by any club member who is also an AMA member. Please note: only one application can be submitted per club. Clubs are eligible to apply for funding for a project completed within the last 12 months of the application deadline or that will be completed within 12 months of the application deadline.

Clubs who have applied for and were awarded FSIG funding in previous years are eligible to apply each year, though, priority will be given to clubs who have never received FSIG grant funding. Additionally, clubs who have been awarded FSIG funding in previous years must have submitted their final report **prior to or by the final application deadline** to be eligible for grant funding in the current cycle.

Examples of What We Fund

- installation or repair of GeoTex runway(s)
- installation or repair of asphalt/concrete/gravel runway
- purchase of grass seed for runway installation or repair
- purchase of gravel, concrete, or asphalt for driveway installation or repair
- equipment rental for runway, driveway, or fence installation or repair (including fuel expenses, typically added into equipment rental costs)
- installation of drain tiles
- trenching equipment and drain tile or hose to move water around the runway and parking area
- purchase of an automated external defibrillator
- purchase of building materials
- purchase of a used shipping container, including site delivery and purchase of materials to paint, vent, and seal the roof
- purchase of mower
- purchase of land
- purchase of materials for safety fence or boundaries
- hire of a professional to roll the field with multi-ton roller
- purchase of a flag pole for a wind sock

Examples of What We Don't Fund

- fuel for mowing the field
- oil changes or battery replacement for rental equipment
- relocation of a portable toilet (Porta Jon, Porta Potty, etc.)
- operational or overhead expenses (e.g., lawn mowing services, additional required insurance beyond AMA insurance that the landowner or local government requires)
- repair of mower
- property rental
- membership fee subsidization
- food or beverages provided to workers improving the flying site
- administrative costs (compensating or reimbursing club officers or members for labor or expenses)
- bank loans

Grant Application Requirements

Successful applications will indicate a clear need for site improvements, describe a reasonable plan and timeline to address the need, and provide an accurate budget that shows all expenses. Furthermore, we are interested in applications that tell their club's story such as a brief history of the club, the club's flying site condition, typical flying activities and events, community and/or charitable involvement, membership recruitment, and long-term goals and plans for the club. We want to get to know your club and its needs through your application. Successful applications will effectively tell their club story and present a compelling flying site improvement need.

To be considered complete, an application must include all requirements below. Each item should be typed into the appropriate box on the online application form.

Project Description—a rationale for the completed or proposed project. Address the following in **250 words or less**:

- describe the current condition of the flying site (or its past condition) and what factors have contributed to its condition
- indicate the need, problem, or challenge your improvement project addresses or addressed
- describe the project's impact on the club and its community (i.e. what club or community events [Fun Flies, fundraisers, young pilots program, etc.] will be made possible by this improvement)
- demonstrate how the improvement project aligns with and supports the AMA mission
- describe the club's efforts to fundraise and/or save money for the project

Project Work Plan & Timeline—a description of the work completed or work to be completed, who completed it or will complete it, and the time required for the project. Address the following in **250 words or less**:

- explain specific activities, labor, and/or tasks that were completed or will need to be completed from the project start date to the project completion date
- indicate who will implement and manage the improvement project
- indicate who was or will be involved in the project and to what extent they were or will be involved (indicate whether club members and/or the community will be involved)
- explain when and in what sequence the improvement occurred or will occur

Project Budget—an itemized list of expenses for the project. Each item should be referenced in the project justification and the project work plan. The budget section requires each applicant to indicate the amount requested from the AMA; this amount should be 25 percent of the total project costs, not to exceed \$3,000. Project costs can only include amounts spent since the previous year's application cutoff date (February 1, 2024), or projected work. **Note: Beginning with the 2023 grant cycle all receipts must not contain personal items, but only those items that are being submitted with the club's Flying Site Improvement Grant application.**

Appendices—supplemental evidence of improvements needed. Please include the following:

Required

- photos of flying site conditions (before photos of what will be improved/what has been improved)

Optional

- letter of support from external consultant or professional attesting to the conditions of the flying site and/or the need of the project
- any additional materials the club would like to submit

Note: Only receipts or quotes that have been paid or will be paid for by the club are eligible for the grant program, and all receipts and/or estimates must equal the amount requested by the applicant. Other funding that the club may receive such as additional grants and/or individual monetary contributions do not qualify for reimbursement for the FSIG program. Any grant funds unused by the club must be returned to the AMA.

Note: Beginning with the 2023 grant cycle all receipts must not contain personal items, but only those items that are being submitted with the club's Flying Site Improvement Grant application.

Submitting Your Application

Final applications must be submitted to the online application form by Saturday, February 1, 2025. No late or incomplete applications will be accepted.

To promote successful applications, the AMA encourages applicants to submit an **optional** draft of their application no later than Monday, January 6, 2025, for preliminary feedback and review. This opportunity allows applicants a chance to submit a complete rough draft of their application, so they can receive preliminary feedback on their grant application. In this stage of the process, applications will be reviewed by the Deputy Director and the club's District Vice President.

Applicants can notify—and are encouraged to notify—the Deputy Director earlier than January 6 that they would like feedback. In order to receive feedback on your application draft, the applicant must begin and save the application as a draft when prompted to do so at the bottom of each page (click "Save Draft"). **Please do not click Submit, which will submit your final application.** Once it has been saved as a draft, the applicant must email the Deputy Director at rachelleh@modelaircraft.org in order to receive the feedback. If an email is not sent, the application will not be reviewed. Feedback will be returned to applicants within two weeks of notifying the Deputy Director.

Note: Optional draft feedback does not guarantee your club's grant request will be filled by the judging committee.

Note: Applicants who opted for feedback must revise and submit their final application by February 1 to be considered for funding. Applicants who submit an optional draft but who fail to submit a final draft will not be considered for funding.

Applications must be submitted by one club member who has been appointed by the club president. Each section of the grant application must be complete for the application to be eligible for committee review.

Grant Review Process

The grant review begins in February and ends in mid-April. After applications are received in February, they will be reviewed by the Deputy Director to ensure applicants are eligible to apply and that the application is complete.

After applications are reviewed for eligibility and completion, they will be made anonymous and sent to the FSIG review committee. Members of the grant review are appointed from each district by the District Vice President. Each district is represented on the review committee. Furthermore, review committee members evaluate and score each application on the following criteria:

- project need
- project workplan & timeline
- impact on club & community
- alignment with AMA mission
- project budget

The committee members score each criterion between 0 and 4. [View the rubric in the AMA Documents Center under "Grants"](#). The minimum number of total points an application can receive is 0 and the maximum number of points is 20 (or 27 with bonus points). Bonus points are intended to (a) prioritize clubs who have never received funding or who have not received funding in the last 3 years and (b) incentivize leader clubs. Bonus points can be added to application scores based on the following items:

- +5 points: clubs who have never received FSIG funding
- +1 point: clubs who have not received FSIG funding within the last three years
- +1 point: clubs who hold Bronze or Silver Leader Club status
- +2 points: clubs who hold Gold Leader Club status

For example, if a club who has never received FSIG funding obtains a final score of 19 points, five additional points would be added to their score, making their new score 24 points.

Applications receiving 5 points or fewer will not be considered for funding. Applications receiving 6 points or more will be considered for funding. Reviewers' scores for each application will be averaged and then the average score for each application will be ranked from highest to lowest. In the case of major discrepancies among reviewers' scores for an application, the AMA will assemble reviewers together to discuss the score differences. The application will then be re-scored, and the average of the re-scores will be the official final score. Funding will be granted first to the higher-scoring applications until all grant funds have been distributed. After the review committee has scored applications, the list of recipients will be sent to the AMA Executive

Council for approval and be announced at the second quarterly (spring) meeting held in April each year.

Award Information

Immediately following the Executive Council's spring meeting (typically May), all applicants will be notified of award results by email—regardless of whether they were awarded funds or not. Furthermore, the AMA will officially announce the grant recipients through its various communication and media channels. Club presidents and the district vice president will be notified as well when constituents in their district are awarded funding. Checks will be generated after the Executive Council's spring meeting and will be mailed to grant recipients shortly thereafter. Checks typically arrive to clubs in May.

Reporting

Clubs who received FSIG grant funds for a future project must complete their improvement project and submit **a final report no later than 12 months after receiving FSIG funds**. The final report assures the AMA that the project was completed and that all grant funds were used for the purposes described in the original application. Furthermore, the final report is stored for auditing purposes, thus the AMA must receive a report from every grant recipient. During the 12-month grant period, the AMA reserves the right to request updates from clubs via email or phone about the club's progress, the status of the project, and the projected completion date.

Furthermore, within 30 days of completing the improvement project, the club must submit their final report to the AMA, which should include a short project reflection; a finalized budget of expenses and receipts; and before and after photos of the project. All grant awardees will receive additional information at the time of their award notification about writing up the final report. **Please note:** clubs who complete their improvement project well within the 12-month timeline must still submit their reports within 30 days of completing the project. For example, if a club receives grant money April 15, 2025, they officially have until April 15, 2026, to complete their project; the final report would be due 30 days following, or no later than May 15, 2026. If a club completes their project, for example, September 2, 2025, they would have until October 2, 2025, to submit their final report.

Clubs who received retroactive FSIG grant funds for projects already completed *do not* need to submit a progress or completion report. The grant application submitted by the club serves as their completion report, assuming they submitted all the grant application materials (receipts, photos, etc.).

If a club determines that their project cannot be completed within a 12-month timeframe, a written explanation must be submitted to the Deputy Director, indicating the project's status and anticipated completion date. If the completion date exceeds 18 months of the receipt of the grant, the AMA reserves the right to request the entire amount of the grant be returned. **Also, please note: the project and final report must be completed and submitted *prior to the next year's application deadline* in order for the club to be eligible to apply again for FSIG funds.**

Questions?

Please direct all questions to
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