

# SeaPerch Sustainability Guide

Legacy SeaPerch Resource

[www.seaperch.org](http://www.seaperch.org)

In today's world of shrinking budgets and diminished funding, we are often asked, "Where can I find the funding to start or continue a SeaPerch program?" In response to this question, we have developed this Guide to provide some ideas for finding or raising funding on your own.

To help you approach potential funders, we have prepared a letter template (found on page three of this Guide) that you can customize with your letterhead and program information to present to interested funders.

*This is only a resource and is not intended as a commitment to, partnership with, or endorsement of these organizations.*

## Grants

Conduct an Internet search for "STEM grants," "STEM funding," or "STEM Education" along with the name of your state. A site that routinely popped up in our research is <http://stemgrants.com/>. Among other things, the site provides:

- a free STEM Funding Guide
- information about STEM grants, scholarships, fellowships, and competitions
- tips for writing grant proposals
- a comprehensive guide to STEM funding opportunities

During your research, look for like-minded funders who care deeply about your mission. You will most likely need to establish a group of funders to sustain your SeaPerch program since no one source will be able to provide complete support.

When you find a good match, visit the funder's website and carefully study their application guidelines. Most grant makers ask for some basic information, such as:

- Name and address of the program
- Type of program (4H, afterschool, Boy Scouts, Girls Scouts, etc.)
- Details of any events planned in connection with your program
- Program start and end dates
- Number of leaders involved
- Number of students involved
- Executive Summary of Program - a brief description of your program and implementation plan, including goals and objectives
- Detailed Plan - specific details and a timeline showing how you will implement the program and what topics you will teach. Describe any activities you will use that will help teach the concepts.
- Program Evaluation – Describe any evaluation tools you will be utilizing to measure the impact your program has on the participants.

Having this information researched and ready ahead of time will speed the process along. Additionally, it is very important to be mindful of any submission deadlines and to follow the funder's specific instructions exactly to increase your chances of an award!

## Sponsorships

- Research any companies in your area doing STEM-related work such as defense contractors, engineering firms, technology/ computer businesses, or marine technology organizations. Ask if they would be willing to sponsor SeaPerch kits for your classroom. For approximately \$2,000, a company could sponsor ten kits and one tool kit, enough to accommodate 30-40 eager students.
- Contact civic and social organizations in your town such as the American Legion, Knights of Columbus, Lions Clubs of America, Rotary International, VFW, and Kiwanis International who may have funds available.
- Ask your Parent Teacher Organization for funding.
- Reach out to local chapters of professional STEM-related organizations such as American Society of Naval Engineers, Society of Women Engineers, Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers, Freshwater Biological Association, Society of Hispanic Professional Engineers, National Society of Black Engineers, Marine Technology Association, or Women in Defense, just to name a few.

## Fundraising

Getting students involved helps them take ownership in the project and have some "skin in the game." Individuals are more likely to donate when they see that students are motivated and committed to the cause. Think of creative solutions to fundraising during times of social distancing, such as:

- a virtual dance challenge
- a virtual run, bike or walk - athon
- a virtual trivia night
- an online auction or raffle
- a virtual movie night
- a virtual game night
- a virtual karaoke night
- a virtual costume contest
- organize an email, social media, or text-to-give campaign

## Other Helpful Websites:

- <http://www.stemconnector.org/>
- <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/home.html>
- <https://learning.candid.org/>
- <http://www.classwish.org/>
- <https://www.grantstation.com/>

## Donor Letter Template

Dear Business XXX:

Although STEM workers drive our Nation's innovation and competitiveness, U.S businesses say there not are enough of them. In fact, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that, through 2020, employment in STEM occupations will grow by 18.7%, compared to 14.3% for all occupations.

I am writing today to ask for your support as we seek to implement/continue a highly successful STEM program, SeaPerch, at (name of school). SeaPerch is an innovative underwater robotics program that equips teachers and students with the resources they need to build an underwater Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) from a kit comprised of low-cost, easily accessible parts. Students learn best by doing, and SeaPerch exposes students to engineering principles, problem solving, teamwork, tool safety, design, and competitions. Additionally, SeaPerch provides students with the opportunity to learn about the need for a future STEM workforce, and gives them the opportunity to see themselves in that role.

An investment of approximately \$2,000 could enable up to 30 students to experience this hands-on, "minds-on" activity and help create the next generation of critical thinkers and innovators. However, a donation of any amount is greatly appreciated and will go a long way in helping us achieve our goals.

Consider the following testimonials from a few educators who have used SeaPerch in their classrooms:

"Kids were more excited to come to class during the project. There were many sparks of interest related to STEM topics ... and many had glimpses of what a fun and challenging career might be. Many of my students can't imagine even leaving the county, so a project like this really opens a door to the world - especially when the kids start noticing all the robotic applications in the news every day."

"As a dedicated educator and a science lover, I have to say that the SeaPerch Program is giving me and my students the opportunity of a lifetime. The program facilitates the learning of a wide variety of skills and gives science teachers a powerful tool to turn the learning experience of the students into an active, challenging and highly engaging one. In my past eight years as a science teacher, I had never experienced so much fun and excitement inside and outside my classroom."

Partnering with the Office of Naval Research (ONR), SeaPerch is managed by RoboNation. To learn more, please visit [www.robonation.org/seaperch](http://www.robonation.org/seaperch).

Support for our SeaPerch program from local businesses like yours will enhance our community and country as a whole. Thank you for considering our request and please contact me at (phone/email) with any questions.

Sincerely,

Signature

Typed Name

Title

School / Organization