

EXEMPLARY APPLICATION #2

This document is an actual grant proposal that was submitted to SEF for the 2019-20 grant application year. Our sincere thanks to Ann Lattinville of the Scituate Town Library for her willingness to share her work with future SEF applicants. This work is the property of Ann Lattinville and Scituate Education Foundation and may not be copied or resubmitted by another applicant.

Please note that SEF makes minor changes to its application from year to year and that the current application questions may differ slightly from this example.

Application #1809

Proposal Title: Tinker Tots: A Tinkering Program for Preschoolers

Name of Applicant(s): Ann M. Lattinville, M.L.I.S.

School(s)/Department/Organization Represented: Scituate Town Library

Applicant's title or role within organization:: Head of Children's Services

Primary Contact Name: Ann Lattinville

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For SPS Teacher Applicants, have you discussed this proposal with your school Principal or Department Head? For non-SPS Applicants, have you discussed this proposal with your organization's President or other Board of Directors member? : Yes

Date Submitted: 3/30/2018

If you answered "yes" to the question above, please provide that individual's name and contact information below.: Jessi Finnie, Library Director; jfinnie@scituatema.gov; Scituate Town Library, [85 Branch Street, Scituate, MA](#); 781-545-8727

1. Proposal Title: Tinker Tots: A Tinkering Program for Preschoolers

2. Proposal Summary: The Scituate Town Library (STL) Children’s Department seeks \$300 to expand a recently developed “tinkering” program for preschoolers called Tinker Tots. The STL proposes to expand Tinker Tots to a four-week series that can be offered multiple times a year.

While STEM-based activities have long been a part of library programs, librarians’ professional literature has increasingly focused on “tinkering” in early childhood, its benefits, and what it could look like in a library setting. “Tinkering” is closely related to “making” and, ultimately, to engineering. When children tinker, they learn what specific materials do and how certain tools work. Children who are encouraged to tinker also develop fine motor skills.

Tinker Tots is currently a two-part pilot program, based on ideas from the Boston Children’s Museum’s Tinker Kit Educator’s Guide. The purpose of this program is to provide preschool-aged children the opportunity to explore everyday materials to build life-long skills and to show parents and caregivers what can be done with easily accessible household materials and tools to encourage “tinkering.”

The pilot programs were titled: Keep It Together and Take It Apart and Move It and Mark It. At the beginning of each program we read stories about “making” and perseverance. We asked caregivers/parents to ask questions of the children while exploring materials, e.g.: “What can I do with this?” and “How does this work?” Our tools and materials included paperclips, cotton balls, screwdrivers and wrenches, clothespins, masking tape, scissors, and more. For example, we titled one station “Attach It” and provided:

- Paper clips and chenille sticks to make a “train”
- Nails in wooden boards and wire for the children to wrap around the nails
- Playdough and wooden sticks

At each station we offered a series of “juicy” words, such as horizontal, twist, or construct, to promote discussion—a basic tenet of early literacy practices. Research in early literacy demonstrates that the more robust language children hear in early childhood, the better literacy outcomes are.

3. Grade level(s)/Ages of targeted participants:: This program is intended for preschoolers ages 3-5. We do welcome younger siblings because it can often be difficult to find additional childcare in order to allow participants to attend programs.

4. Total number of participants expected:: 20

5. What is the goal or desired outcome of your proposal?: The desired outcome of this program is to demonstrate to families a different way of looking at using materials. Rather than focusing on “product,” the emphasis of this program is on how to provide tinkering opportunities by modeling experiences and ideas that can be replicated with easy-to-find household items and materials. We would like to reach more participants by increasing the number of children at each session from 10 to 20.

6. Below are SEF's Mission and Vision Statements. Please describe how your proposal supports our mission and vision. Please limit your response to 500 words.: Encouraging tinkering from a young age promotes the development of life-long skills and concepts, including experimentation, problem solving, tool usage, collaboration, communication, creative thinking, and perseverance. Tinkering can be the foundation on which more complex making and engineering is based, and laying this foundation early has lifelong benefits.

Opportunities to connect this type of play and exploration to the five major early literacy practices (talking, singing, "writing", reading, and playing) are numerous and can serve to promote a strong start in pre-literacy skills acquisition (vocabulary, print motivation, print awareness, narrative skills, letter knowledge, phonological awareness).

7. How will you measure the success of the proposed project? Please be as specific as possible.: A successful series is one where we are able to offer it multiple times a year, on different days and at different times, in order to reach a wide audience. Because we record attendance statistics for state reporting purposes, we are able to keep an accurate record of the number of people reached through our programs. We propose to survey participants after the series to gauge participants' satisfaction and to make improvements to the programs based on their feedback.

8a. Total funds requested:: \$300

8b. If SEF is unable to fully fund your proposal, would you accept partial funding for this proposal?: Yes

8c. If your answer to 8b is YES, please briefly describe how reduced funds would change your proposal, e.g. it would be offered to fewer participants, certain materials would not be purchased, etc.: We would scale back our purchases by ordering half of the number of tools and limiting the number of stations at each session.

9. Please provide an itemization of expected costs, including substantiation for all costs. (Please do not provide website links. Should you need to provide supplemental information, including screenshots, please share documents via Dropbox): We propose to source materials from general department stores, e.g. Wal-Mart, as well as selected web-based children's educational materials suppliers. The estimates below are based on average retail prices researched by Children's Department staff.

4 measuring tapes	\$7
4 mini pliers	\$20
4 sets measuring cups	\$20
4 child-sized hammers	\$36.00
threading spools and buttons	\$13.00

4 stubby screwdrivers \$10
8 safety goggles \$95.00
pool noodles \$10
4 clear storage bins \$65
miscellaneous nails, nuts, bolts \$24

Total request: \$300

9a. If you wish to provide documentation to support your answer to question 9, please use Dropbox and provide a link for us to access files in the space below. Please do not provide any files except those which are directly related to the cost of your proposal. :

10. Have you identified any sources for co-funding this project? (e.g. internal budgets, PTOs, Private Grants, etc.) If yes, please provide details and indicate if those funds are readily available, i.e. already committed, to this project.: We have a successful and ongoing partnership with the Friends of the Scituate Town Library. This organization is supportive of the Children's Department's ongoing programs as well as any innovative ideas the department develops. We will seek funding in the amount of \$50 from the Friends of the Scituate Town Library for smaller items needed to run the program on an ongoing basis, such as play-dough and construction paper.

11. Agreement: I understand that by submitting this application and, if SEF approves it, by receiving a grant award that I must use all awarded funds in a manner directly reflective of this application. Funds may not be used in any manner other than that specified in this application. I also understand that I will be required to complete a post-project evaluation. Grant award recipients may also be invited to share their post-project evaluations at an SEF Board of Directors meeting or other community event. Additionally, I agree that SEF may use content from this grant application and from any post-project evaluation as part of its marketing and/or fundraising efforts.