

Frequently Asked Questions

Who is eligible to apply for the State Family Engagement Innovation Challenge?

- State PTAs in good standing with National PTA's Standards of Affiliation and with active 501(c)3s are eligible.

How many states will be chosen to participate in the challenge and what will they receive from National PTA as part of the grant?

- Up to five states will be chosen to participate in the challenge
- Participating states will receive \$3,000 each to enable them to identify family engagement innovations through their landscaping plan activities
- Participating states will also receive extensive technical assistance from National PTA and networking opportunities with one another and external family engagement experts
- Participating states who meet grant requirements will also be eligible to receive up to \$8,000 as an "ultimate winner" of the challenge, which will allow them to publicize their innovations and further plan how these innovations can support their statewide family engagement roles and goals. They will also receive up to \$2,000 in funding for two state representatives to present their findings at the 2019 National PTA Convention & Expo.

What is required for a state to be considered for the State Family Engagement Innovation Challenge?

- Participation of a state PTA representative in an informational webinar: States can participate live or view the recording. [RSVP NOW](#)
- Submission of the application by 11:59 p.m. EST, Tuesday, Feb. 20. No extensions will be granted.

How will PTAs be selected to participate in the State Family Engagement Innovation Challenge and how will an ultimate winner be chosen?

- The initial award of \$3,000 each for up to five states will be determined based on the following criteria:
 - Commitment to identifying and expanding non-traditional approaches to family engagement (particularly in the realm of enabling each family to make their child's potential a reality) in local and/or district PTAs in the state
 - Clarity and mission-alignment of the state's vision and goals for family engagement
 - Strength of the state's ideas for identifying innovations in their local and/or district PTA landscape and family engagement leadership
 - Representation of the diversity of PTA across the selected cohort of states
- The criteria above will be assessed by a review team composed of PTA volunteer leaders at a variety of levels in the association and National PTA staff.

- All applications will be anonymized and reviewed using a rubric aligned to the scoring criteria.
- The “ultimate winner” state will be chosen from among the initial five states participating in the innovation challenge by a group of external family engagement experts in February 2019 based on:
 - How well the state implemented their landscaping plan
 - Strength of the state’s plan to publicize, scale and/or integrate their learning and innovations into future family engagement work
 - Number and quality of innovations identified in the state’s landscaping plan

What qualifies as an “innovative” example of family engagement?

- Family engagement programs and practices that purposefully enable parents to make their child’s potential a reality are considered “transformative” and “innovative” approaches to family engagement.
- These family engagement approaches ensure families have the connections, tools, information and confidence to do things like: navigate and guide their child’s educational trajectory; discuss and model high aspirations and future opportunities with their child; engage in and create environments conducive to learning at home and in the community; hold their child accountable and monitor their performance; encourage resilience and strong socio-emotional development; and advocate for and with their child on issues that matter to their success.
- In general, fundraising efforts and one-time events do not qualify as innovative examples of family engagement.
- In addition to the guidance above, National PTA is particularly interested in identifying innovations in three realms:
 1. Creating inclusive opportunities for diverse parents to support and advocate for their child’s needs and interests.
 2. Enabling effective parent-child and home-school communication that is centered on student learning and socio-emotional development.
 3. Engaging families (and students!) in middle and high schools with the tools and information to support and guide college and career success.

How should states develop a plan to identify family engagement innovations?

- The ideas and activities in each state’s landscaping plan is a key component of the application process.
- As part of their application, states should propose landscaping activities that are best suited to their needs and roles, while also ensuring that they can follow-through on discovering novel and impactful approaches to family engagement at the local level.
- States will determine the best methods to conduct this local landscaping based on their existing relationships, assets, and priorities—whether that is awarding mini-grants to their local and/or district PTAs, using communications channels to call for submissions of examples, hosting an event or including a convening opportunity

How many innovations should states identify as part of the challenge?

- The process of identifying innovations will not begin until May 1, 2018.
- State PTAs selected to be part of the Family Engagement Innovation Challenge should identify at least three examples of innovative family engagement in their state.
- There is no maximum number of innovative examples.

How should states document their innovations for this challenge grant?

- National PTA will provide a template for states to document the family engagement innovations they identify in their state.

What are eligible expenditures under this grant?

- Funds for the State Family Engagement Innovation Challenge can be used in a variety of ways in accordance with your state's financial policies. Funds may be used to:
 - Offer family engagement innovation mini-grants to district and/or local PTAs
 - Hold an event (or workshop/symposium within an existing event)
 - Travel to district and/or local PTAs
 - Survey, interview and/or focus group key stakeholders in your state
 - Compensate a paid consultant and/or staff member working on behalf of your PTA

How are roles distributed in this grant?

- State presidents (and president-elects, if requested or a 2018 officer transition will occur) hold an important role in providing feedback to their family engagement innovation leads and working with them to update and integrate their landscaping findings into officers' and committees' planning and discussions. Specifically, state presidents will:
 - Designate a family engagement innovation lead that will oversee the landscaping plan and manage internal and external communication efforts about its progress
 - Provide guidance and feedback to the family engagement innovation lead to ensure alignment and strong implementation of the landscaping plan
 - Ensure the State Family Engagement Innovation Challenge is prioritized among the state's workplans and meeting agendas
 - Provide leadership in determining your state's desired next steps for the state's family engagement innovations identified through this grant
 - State presidents are encouraged to involve other stakeholders (officers, partners, etc.) in the above roles, as appropriate
 - Oversee appropriate financial management of grant resources and completion of grant activities
 - State presidents (and president-elects, as relevant) will participate in the Innovation Challenge's orientation webinar and are invited to the in-person

kickoff and expert convening in March and April, respectively. There will also likely be an opportunity for state presidents to provide collective feedback on one another's early findings on innovations via a virtual convening, pending state interest.

- The state-designated family engagement innovation lead will act as a liaison with both National PTA and the rest of the state PTA leadership. In this role, they will:
 - Attend the Innovation Challenge's kickoff activities in March and April
 - Participate in monthly technical assistance calls/webinar with National PTA staff
 - Ensure submission of the grant's final report to National PTA
 - Provide regular updates to the state president (and president-elect, as relevant) on the Innovation Challenge's progress and next steps
- The state-designated family engagement innovation lead will also be the primary manager of the states' landscaping plans for identifying family engagement innovations. In this capacity, the lead's role may vary depending on the components of the state's plan, but will include:
 - Developing criteria and a selection process for recruiting and selecting examples of local family engagement innovations
 - Communicating with district/council/region and/or local unit PTAs about their family engagement work to share the purpose of the challenge and screen their suitability for being included as a local innovation
 - Managing the completion of the landscaping plan so the appropriate people are involved, internal deadlines are met and the state is ultimately successful in identifying three or more local family engagement innovations
- State PTAs may choose to augment the capacity of their family engagement lead by using existing collaborative structures (committees, task forces, etc.) or bringing in additional people with expertise or skills to help implement their landscaping plans.