



Innovation Grant Information

Due to COVID-19, Special Olympics is offering a limited round of distance-only Innovation Grants. The upcoming round will provide \$500 USD to \$1,000 USD for projects that require no in-person programming.

Innovation Grants are project-based grants awarded to young leaders with and without intellectual disabilities (ID) so they can promote inclusion in their school and community. Innovation Grants will be awarded to individuals and Unified Pairs (one youth with ID and one without) to marry grit and urgency with aspiration and determination, fostering inclusion for ALL during this challenging time. These projects expand on inclusion in a variety of ways, such as:

- Create new or expand existing Unified Schools and Universities
- Engage new inclusive youth leaders
- Drive sustainability and quality in digital youth/school-based programming

The success of Innovation Grants is rooted in seeding experiments among youth and flipping the power paradigm in instituting radical social change so youth with and without ID directly drive change. Special Olympics will provide direct support and technical assistance opportunities to all grant recipients and Programs to position them to become entrepreneurs of inclusion in their school and community.

Through an informed network of inclusive youth leaders, we will create scalable solutions to end discrimination against people with ID. By engaging young people in a lifetime of inclusion and appreciation for people with differences, Special Olympics can effect change to global social norms. Young people seek to understand and embrace differences. This Unified Generation is our way forward.

Here are examples of approved former Innovation Grant projects that adapted to meet the criteria for distance-only programming:

1. Special Olympics Lithuania Youth Leaders planned to create a promotional video demonstrating how young people use art to express their unique identities. Due to COVID-19, they were unable to conduct their in-person events so they sent kits filled with activities, art supplies, and a USB to upload and share any material they create.
2. Special Olympics Romania Youth Leaders planned for their project, "Together for a Better Future," to create an inclusive environment for youth of all abilities through educational, active, and fun activities. Due to COVID-19, schools in their country have closed from March to September. Eager to continue their Youth activities, they used their remaining project funds to send facemasks, gloves, sports equipment to Youth Leaders through the mail. The Youth Leaders who received a care package joined together in a digital campaign to show how they stay healthy and safe during this challenging time.



Young people from all accredited Special Olympics Programs are encouraged to apply for the Innovation Grant.

Please keep in mind that you can start the application and then save and finish the application at another time.

Applications are due 6 July 2020.

Applicants will be notified if their project was selected by 31 July 2020.