

The Ontario Justice Education Network/Law Foundation of Ontario

Mock Trial Fund

2024-25 School Year

Application Guide



1. Overview of the OJEN/LFO Mock Trial Fund

The Mock Trial Fund was established in 2008 by the Ontario Justice Education Network (OJEN) and the Law Foundation of Ontario (LFO) to provide financial support to high school mock trial programs across Ontario. Each year, \$15,000 is available to be granted across the province. OJEN also develops and updates mock trial case scenarios and supporting materials, and OJEN staff are available to provide advice and guidance on starting and running a mock trial program.

2. Application Process

a) Timelines

Application deadline: January 10, 2025

- Following receipt of your application, we may have follow-up questions to help us make a final decision on your application.

Grant decisions made: February 10, 2025

- Applicants will be informed of a decision by email on February 10, with a grant letter and cheque to follow in the mail for successful applicants.

b) Filling out the Application

Follow the links on ojen.ca/mocktrialfund to fill out the application form.

The application form requires you to identify one person as the “applicant” and provide their contact information. That person must be willing and able to administer granted funds, and will become OJEN’s point of contact, should your application be successful.

You will also need to download the budget form and email it to mocktrialfund@ojen.ca. **Your application can only be considered when both your application form and your budget have been received.**

3. Program Criteria

a) Basic Criteria

All programs seeking a Mock Trial Fund grant must meet the following basic criteria:

1. Be designed for Ontario secondary school students (or youth of equivalent age)
2. Include justice sector volunteers

3. Promote inclusive access to justice education
4. Demonstrate financial need
5. Take place during the 2024-25 school year
6. Programs should include students from at least four schools (or community organizations)
 - Exceptions may be made where appropriate (e.g., rural and remote areas where geographic distance will be a factor).
 - This criteria will be analysed based on a program's grant report for the previous year and reasonable forecasts for this year's program.

b) Additional Guidelines

Beyond the basic criteria, the following will be important guiding factors in our funding decisions, with due regard to the circumstances of each case:

1. Registration fees are discouraged in the interest of ensuring fair access for all youth. Schools will typically fund supply teacher costs, but registration and transportation fees often fall to the students. These fees can act as a deterrent to new participants becoming involved. OJEN has found that many mock trial programs across the province are able to operate free of registration fees by seeking sponsorship and donations from their local legal communities. If you are interested in learning more about this, please feel free to contact the OJEN provincial office.
2. To ensure an equitable provision of funds across the province, grants will not generally be made to new programs in the same geographic area as existing programs serving the same potential audience.
3. Programs should take reasonable steps to ensure that all schools in their geographic area are made aware of their program and have an equal chance to register and participate (although we recognize that limited space and resources may require caps be placed on the number of participating schools and students). OJEN can facilitate communication to teachers in publicly-funded schools through contacts at school boards. Exceptions to this guideline a (e.g. a program only open to First Nations schools, ESL students, etc.) are possible, depending on the circumstances.
4. Programs can be competitive or non-competitive, participatory (e.g. students play the roles of lawyers and witnesses) or demonstrative (e.g. students observe justice sector volunteers demonstrating a trial process).

4. Funding Criteria

a) Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

Only certain expenses are eligible for funding by the Mock Trial Fund:

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES	INELIGIBLE EXPENSES
- Catering/refreshments	- Supply teacher costs
- Equipment rental	- Gifts or compensation for volunteers or staff
- Space rental	- Monetary awards/bursaries
- Administrative expenses under \$100 (e.g. printing, deliveries, logistics, etc.)	- School buses or transportation
- Awards and prizes for students	- Any other costs not listed as “eligible”
- Some deficits carried over from previous years (depending on how the deficit was accrued)	

The aim of the Mock Trial Fund is to support programs with the basic and essential costs of running a mock trial program or event. Primarily, these are refreshments for participants and volunteers, and reasonably-priced awards for student participants. Monetary awards, bursaries, and any gifts for volunteers are not funded. School buses and transportation are considered items that schools and school boards can contribute toward these programs. Administrative expenses such as printing, photocopying and logistical expenses, can be covered up to \$100. Please specify the types of administrative expenses that you expect to incur in your budget to help us assess your program’s specific needs.

Underlying these criteria is the fact that the number of programs seeking Mock Trial Fund support has grown exponentially in recent years, while the funding available in the Mock Trial Fund remains fixed. Therefore, Mock Trial Fund grants need to be limited to the core costs of all mock trial programs.

b) Funding Formula

We take a number of factors into consideration in determining grant amounts. However, in the interest of ensuring reasonably equitable and rational allocation of our limited resources, we consider the following formula when assessing grant applications:

Starting point: \$6.50 per student participant + 1 teacher per school (based on an assessment from previous years report, where applicable, and this year’s application)

The base amount of \$6.50 per student is based on researched and reported average costs of providing a simple meal, snacks and awards for student participants.

Depending on the number of applications received in a given year, the amount granted per student may be less than \$6.50.

Grant amounts will be based upon the number of students anticipated at this year's event, but significant increases in projections from one year to the next should be clearly explained by the applicant. (For example, if you anticipate eight schools this year and last year had four, why do you expect such an increase?)

Additionally, financial need and potential other sources of funding will continue to be taken into account when making decisions on grant amounts.

c) Submitting Your Budget

We ask applicants to report all anticipated expenses, including those which are ineligible for funding under the Mock Trial Fund, so that we can assess the financial need of your program in comparison with all applicants.

In the budget form, you will see tables for a) your anticipated income; b) your anticipated expenses; and c) your anticipated sponsorships. We consider sponsorships to be separate from your regular income and expenses, so enter in this table all items, e.g. bursaries, cash awards, etc., that will be paid for directly by third parties rather than being paid for by the general funds you receive for the event.

If you have a large amount of expenses that are ineligible for Mock Trial Fund funding, it is a good practice to have these sponsored and paid for directly by third parties, e.g. law firms, law associations, etc., rather than paid for out of the same general fund as items that the Mock Trial Fund covers.

5. Contact for Questions

Please send an email to mocktrialfund@ojen.ca