

Climate Science in Theological Education Cohort 3 Application Process FAQ

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Proposal Framework, Event, & Faculty

What institutions are eligible to apply?

These grants are intended for institutions that train future and current religious leaders who will be serving local congregations or communities. This may include institutions at both graduate and undergraduate levels as well as those that provide dedicated training for future and current religious leaders. Please contact us at doser@aaas.org if you have questions about your institution's eligibility. For non-US institutions, some restrictions may apply, so please contact us to confirm eligibility before submitting an application from a non-US based institution.

Is my institution eligible for this grant if it has previously been awarded a grant from DoSER?

Yes! If you have received any previous DoSER grant, including through our Climate Science in Theological Education project, this opportunity is open to your institution. However, institutions who have been awarded grants previously will need to demonstrate a significant and substantial difference between previous grant projects and proposed activities under this new initiative.

For my project title in the application, do I need to include the words “climate change” or “climate science”?

No, the project title does not need to include the words “climate change.” We understand that applicants come from a diversity of contexts and cultures where conversations around climate change are framed differently. However, we do suggest that the title you propose is complementary to the work that you plan to accomplish in your project.

What are examples of project activities that serve to (a) build capacity, (b) engage courses, and (c) support applications to ministry and leadership?

- a) Capacity building activities enable institutions to nurture a foundation of thoughtful engagement with climate change and related scientific areas. Capacity building can provide the opportunity to expand on work that's already being done by faculty at the institution. Examples of this area include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Create a working group with local scientists who would advise on incorporating climate-related science in your curriculum and/or campus life
 - b. In a faculty book discussion group, either pre-existing or created for this grant, focus on relevant scientific literature (i.e., books, research papers, etc.) to boost climate science literacy among faculty
 - c. Host a workshop series for faculty to provide them with pedagogical insights on climate-related science incorporation in their own coursework
 - d. Provide resources for your library and have a spotlight series on specific books added to the library's collection
 - e. Provide grants for interested faculty to do research and scholarly work with the end goal of incorporating that scholarship into their own coursework

- b) Course engagement is the revision or development of one or more courses in the theological education program in the fields of scriptural studies, theology, ethics, pastoral care and counseling, religious history, and others. If course engagement is the major focus of your project, at least one course must be a core/required course; however, any additional courses may be electives. Successful course engagement projects host a meeting with project faculty and science advisors to plan and develop course revisions, identify climate science or other relevant scientific resources to include in the course, and platform scientist(s) to guest lecture or present their research to course participants. Here are some examples of areas previous projects incorporated climate science in course curriculum:
- a. Paleoclimatology, Migration, and the Hebrew Bible
 - b. Creation Care, Justice, and the Prophets
 - c. Indigenous Communities, Land Justice, Agriculture, and Biblical Texts
 - d. EcoWomanism, Justice, and Environmental Degradation
- c) Ministry/leadership activities will focus on providing space and resources for students, alumni, and community religious leaders to thoughtfully engage with climate science within a ministerial context (congregational leadership, spiritual formation, religious education, pastoral vocation, etc.). Ministry and leadership focused projects should assist current and future religious leaders in thinking critically about climate change and its impact on the communities they lead. Examples of this type of project activity include:
- a. Providing mini-grants to local congregations to provide climate change focused sermon resources or host community service projects focused on engaging congregants.
 - b. Create or integrate climate science or relevant scientific field into a continuing education/lifelong learning course.
 - c. Work with local non-profits to provide internship opportunities for students interested in addressing climate change topics in their own vocation.
 - d. Develop and present climate change scriptural study/adult education resources at a denominational or theological conference.

You can find descriptions of the projects and activities carried out by previous grantees at ScienceforSeminaries.org/schools.

If I am planning a faculty/student workshop, do I need to have names of attendees or a topic/theme of the event?

You do not need to have the names of attendees listed in your application. However, it would be helpful for reviewers to have a sense of expected attendees and the general theme/title of the workshop. Additionally, listing goals and any follow-up actions to the workshop are beneficial to include as well.

What is the expected number of participating faculty per institution?

Projects may have one or more project leaders. To promote impact and sustainability of the project, we encourage the project leadership to include at least one core or permanent faculty member with input and responsibility for curriculum. If that will not be the case for your project, please make sure that your project description and institutional letter of support addresses how this project will be supported and sustained by your institution. Other participating faculty may also be included in the application. Should your project be selected, each school must name at least one point of contact in addition to the project leader should the project leader be unable to finish the project or be unable to be contacted for important communications from AAAS DoSER.

Do the proposed participating faculty need to be identified now?

Proposed project leaders must be named in the application in addition to the project activities they plan to accomplish and the scientific areas that will be focused on in the grant. However, the details of the project activities, including additional participating faculty, may continue to be developed by funded institutions over the academic year. We also acknowledge that during project development and activities, new leadership may be recruited into or join an ongoing project.

What kind of events are you looking for?

The type, style, and number of events is very flexible. The application must include a detailed proposal for at least one campus-wide event, but this may take the form of a conference, a series of community-engagement lectures, an Earth Day event, a community field trip, etc.

Areas of Science

Are any specific scientific fields preferred for potential project activities?

The main focus of this grant is topics and issues related to the changing climate. Applicants can focus on a number of scientific areas that are relevant, like climate science, geospatial science, environmental science, anthropology, public health, food and agriculture, and many others. You should prioritize areas that will be relevant and meaningful to your students and to the communities that they serve. Be creative, thoughtful, and concise with how you are bringing science into project activities.

Can applicants propose their own advisors to help with the project?

Yes. We recommend that seminars propose external theological content advisors to be a part of the project planning team. Content advisors should be established theologians/theological faculty who have extensive experience in implementing climate science or other relevant scientific fields into their own curricula or scholarly research. Should you encounter challenges, DoSER staff will be happy to assist in identifying and recruiting content advisors once the grant awardees have been selected.

For local science advisors, while AAAS will be primarily responsible for working with project institutions in choosing local science advisors, we recognize that many applicants already have good relationships with local scientists, and their names can be included in project applications. Local science advisors should be established in their respective fields and would preferably have experience in public engagement through religious institutions (such as churches, synagogues, mosques, etc.), educational institutions, museums, etc. *Applicants are not required to propose science advisors.* AAAS is more than happy to help recruit scientists as needed once the cohort of grantees is selected.

Local science advisors and content advisors will need to be accessible throughout the year to advise on planning and implementation of the revised curriculum. Once the grant has been awarded, all advisors must be approved and confirmed by AAAS.

Can applications include a partnership with another institution?

Yes. Applicants are welcome to draw on whatever resources would best help them complete the project goals and partnering with another institution (such as another college/university or a college/university that the theological institution is part of, a local environmental organization, etc.) may be a useful way of doing this. While grants will be awarded to the primary institutions alone, applicants can include expenses to partnering institutions in their project proposals. Please keep in mind that the goal in such a partnership should be to channel resources from the partner organization to the grantee institution to further the grantee's participation in the project, not to fund separate objectives for another institution.

Please include a brief letter of support from someone writing on behalf of any partnering institution.

Funding & Grant Details

Do proposed budgets need to include honoraria and travel expenses for advisors/mentors?

For each awardee, AAAS plans to fund honoraria for up to two local science advisors *separately* from the applicant budget proposals. Honoraria provided by AAAS will be \$500 per local science advisor.

If applicable, applicants *will* need to include travel expenses, food, and lodging for any on-campus project planning meetings or other in-person obligations in their proposed budget. Virtual project planning meetings are acceptable. If project leaders want to recruit more science advisors or offer honoraria to theological content advisors, these additional costs should be included in the budget proposal.

What are the meeting and travel expectations for project participants at each institution?

At least one project leader from each institution is expected to participate in the virtual kickoff meeting (Thursday, August 20, 2026, 1-3pm ET) and two-day online workshop (Wednesday-Thursday, September 16-17, 2026, 12-5pm ET).

In addition, we encourage project leaders to participate in at least one relevant scientific meeting over the course of the grant. In addition to the grant funding, DoSER will cover registration costs for one project leader to attend the AAAS Annual Meeting (February 18-20, 2026 in Chicago, Illinois) or provide comparable funding for registration for a local or online scientific meeting. Project leaders will be responsible for travel, lodging, and meals as needed for any in-person meeting attendance.

Can indirect costs/overhead be included in the budget proposal?

Yes, but we prefer that overhead costs not exceed 15% of the total grant request amount so that the grant funds are primarily used to support project activities. If this overhead limit places an undue restriction on your institution's ability to apply, please let us know.

Can applicants' proposals include funding for _____?

Typically, the answer is "Yes," whether talking about funding for speaker honoraria, funding faculty participation in a conference or course in science, books, student contests, media, etc. Our goal is to give applicants extensive latitude in deciding how best to achieve the project goals, provided that the resources and expenses planned are clearly connected to the main goals of the project (integrating science into core courses, holding campus-wide activities, etc.). For example, expenses for an environmental course/conference would be welcome for a professor planning to include these topics in their coursework. Funding a field trip to a research site (if relevant and cost-efficient) would be welcome if it informs and enriches the science being integrated into a project activity. Whatever the specifics, applicants should clearly articulate how their specific proposed expenses and activities aid the project's primary goals in an important, efficient, cost-effective way.

You can find descriptions of activities undertaken by previous grantees at ScienceforSeminaries.org/schools.

Application Process**When will the final decisions about funding be announced?**

We plan to inform applicants of funding decisions the week of August 10-14. A public announcement will be made once all grant agreements are signed.

Which individuals need to write a letter of support for inclusion in the application proposal?

Applications should include brief letters of support from an institutional administrator (at the dean level or equivalent). If you are including another institution in a partnering role on your project, please include a letter of support from a representative of that institution.

What is the review process for the proposal?

Proposals will be reviewed by an external committee of scientists and theological faculty. Following this evaluation, the final selection will be made by AAAS in consultation with additional advisors as necessary. Please keep in mind that some reviewers may be unfamiliar with the theological community and its relevant topics or issues. As such, proposals should be addressed to AAAS and written with a broader audience in mind.

Will applicants have an opportunity to talk with DoSER staff during the application writing stage?

Yes. DoSER will be holding FAQ sessions on Monday, May 18 and Thursday, June 11 at 1pm ET to help answer any questions or concerns you may have during the proposal process. We encourage you to attend at least once to help ensure the strength of your application, and you're more than welcome to attend more than once.

These sessions will be recorded and posted on [ScienceforSeminaries.org](https://www.scienceforseminaries.org). To register for the May 18 FAQ, click [HERE](#). To register for the June 11 FAQ, click [HERE](#).