

VASE Annual Report for 2023-24

The Vermont Academy of Science and Engineering (VASE) experienced a remarkably productive FY2023-2024, having made a dynamic comeback from pandemic restrictions on programming via successful grantsmanship and fundraising efforts. I am pleased to report on the happenings and events we have engaged in since VASE's last annual report in FY2022-23.

Thanks to the generosity of the Vermont Technology Council (VTC) and to donations from an anonymous donor and the VASE Board and its membership, VASE was able to offer two rounds of grant disbursements over the past year. Both Small Equipment Grants to schools and Hands-on Science and Technology Grants to after-school programs were offered in the Fall of 2023 and again in the Spring of 2024. Altogether, \$39,930 was awarded to propel STEM education with demand exceeding our funding capacity (we received \$81,613 in total fund requests this year). At the same time, \$1,450 was awarded to K-12 participants at two science fairs and another \$1,000 was used to sponsor an event, namely the new AI Education initiative for teachers.

I'm excited to report that for the first time, a new grant opportunity made possible by the Leahy Institute for Rural Partnerships allowed VASE to offer STEM mentor stipends for educators in rural, underserved communities. VASE earned a \$10,000 seed grant which was immediately distributed to mentors specifically selected to support hands-on STEM activity in under-resourced areas throughout the state. FIRST Robotics has been an important partner in this work. We have recently been asked by the Leahy Institute to reapply for a much larger grant (+/- \$200K). VASE is currently discussing its trajectory and justification for this grant application, with an anticipated submission date of next fall, 2025.

Over the course of the past year, VASE expanded its Board of Directors to include four new additions from the VASE membership. VASE also inducted another four new professionals into the Academy this year, hailing from academia and industry. We were able to host two in-person meetings for the first time since the pandemic; our annual meeting and dinner at Middlebury College in the fall with UVM's Josh Bongard serving as the keynote speaker on the topic of AI-designed organisms, and a spring gathering at the Generator Makerspace in Burlington, VT where our newest inductees delivered presentations in their areas of expertise. At the fall meeting we also honored this year's VASE Outstanding Science Teacher of the Year awardee, Mr. Andrew Kasprisin of the Essex Middle School in Essex Junction, VT, for his significant contributions to STEM education. The fall and spring meetings were very well attended by our science and engineering professionals, and both meetings brokered compelling discussions and fruitful liaisons.

The VASE organization branded a new logo in 2023-24, generated an information pamphlet, and circulated its first newsletter. The VASE website is currently undergoing a makeover to showcase its Grants and Sponsorship programs and facilitate online donations.

VASE looks forward to another exciting year ahead. With the continuing support of the VTC, membership donations, and an eye on active grant writing, we are confident that

VASE will continue to expand its impact throughout the state of Vermont. Below please find VASE's projected budget for 2024-25.

 VERMONT ACADEMY OF SCIENCE & ENGINEERINGSM	
BUDGET (Fiscal year begins July 1)	2024-2025 Approved
INCOME	
VT Technology Council	\$ 30,000
Contributions from BOD & members	\$ 18,000
Donation to HOST grant program	\$ 5,000
Individual/ Corporate Donors	\$ 10,000
Grants	\$ 10,000
Sponsorship	\$ 5,000
Total Income	\$ 78,000
EXPENDITURES	
Fall meeting/Public Forum	
Speaker: travel, lodging, honorarium	\$1,000
Catering	\$5,300
Conference and Events charge	\$500
Science Teacher of the Year Award	
\$1000 per recipient	\$1,000
Engraved plaques	\$350
Small Equipment Grants to K-12 Teachers (SEG)	\$22,000
Hands on Science & Technology Grants (HOST)	\$22,000
Sponsorships	\$750
Administrative Support	\$20,000
VT STEM Fairs Awards	\$1,000
Spring Meeting	\$1,000
Website Maintenance	\$500
Miscellaneous expenses	
postage, tax filing	\$350
office supplies, certificates & frames	\$400
other	\$500
Directors & Officers Insurance	\$1,200
Total expenditures	\$ 77,850
BALANCE, fiscal year end	\$ 150