

## ABOUT THE AWARD

The International Literacy Association (ILA) Nila Banton Smith Teacher as Researcher Grant is a US\$2,000 grant given biennially to teachers who conduct research inquiries in their classrooms and show outstanding leadership in connecting theory and current research to practice in literacy instruction.

## ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION CRITERIA

- Applicants must be practicing pre-K–12 teachers with full-time or permanent half-time teaching responsibilities. This includes, but is not limited to, classroom teachers, librarians, Title I teachers, literacy coaches, specialists, and resource teachers.
- Proposals will be evaluated on the following:
  - Research question
  - Rationale for the research
  - Literature review
  - Methodology
  - Research significance
  - Clarity, cohesion, and specificity of proposal
  - Budget and timeline for project

To be eligible, all applicants (including coapplicants) must be ILA members in good standing and maintain active membership through **June 30, 2026**. Please note that candidates may apply for more than one ILA research grant but are limited to accepting only one research award per year.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications are submitted through [an online process](#). A research description and reference list, prepared in strict adherence to the guidelines below, should be uploaded as one (1) document (preferably a PDF). Budget information detailing anticipated expenses is also required.

Because of the blind review process, applications must not include any identifying information, including names and institutional affiliations, except in the applicant information section. **Failure to remove all identifying information may result in disqualification.**

## Research Description

The description of the proposed research should be as specific as possible (**up to 15 double-spaced pages, in 12-point Times New Roman, Arial, or Courier font, with 1-inch margins on all sides**) and include the following items *in the order listed below*:

*Research Question.* Identify the research question, problem, or hypothesis being studied.

*Rationale for the Research.* Provide a detailed rationale for the study. Relate the proposed research question to relevant, supporting research literature and data and indicate how previous research and theoretical frameworks inform and justify the proposed research. The rationale should address the potential significance of the research on reading research and practice.

*Literature Review.* What do you already know about the question from any professional literature and from your own experiences that will help you with the project? (Please include citations.)

*Methodology.* Describe the method to be applied and include a description of subjects, materials, and procedures where appropriate. Consider the following kinds of information:

1. Population or data resource
2. Sample methods (procedures and description as appropriate)
3. Data collection or observation procedures including instruments
4. Procedures (materials, detailed timeline, and work plan)
5. Data analysis (framework and method)

*Research Significance.* Discuss the potential impact of your work on research and practice in literacy, addressing what populations will benefit and in what ways.

## References

Please provide complete bibliographic information for all sources cited in the proposal. References should be formatted using American Psychological Association (APA) 7th edition style. To accommodate the blind review process, if the submitter's own publications are cited, the submitter should substitute the word Author in the citations (e.g., Author, 2019) and substitute all coauthor names with Coauthor (e.g., Author, Coauthor, 2019).

## Budget

Applicants may request up to US\$2,000. Anticipated expenses should be submitted along with the rationale for each line item. Please note that institutional overhead or indirect costs are not covered under this grant.

## SUBMISSION TIMELINE

To be considered for the 2025 Nila Banton Smith Teacher as Researcher Grant, **applications must be completed and all required materials submitted no later than February 3, 2025, at 11:59 p.m. ET.**

Revised/Updated July 2024

Applicants will be notified of the results before June 30, 2025. Those not selected may reapply for consideration the following year.

## **SELECTION PROCESS**

A blind review will be conducted by members of the ILA Nila Banton Smith Teacher as Researcher Grant Committee.

Because this grant program was established to honor and carry on the work to which Dr. Nila Banton Smith dedicated her academic life, proposal excellence will be a primary consideration in the selection process. Recommendations for funding will be made to the ILA Board of Directors for final approval.

The grant will be granted only in years when the committee concludes there is a high-quality application that meets the rigorous standards outlined above.

## **GRANT RECIPIENT REQUIREMENTS AND FUNDS**

Proposed projects must be completed within two years of the award date. The grant recipient is expected to provide an interim report at the midpoint of the study and a final report at the completion of the study. The format for these reports will be supplied to grant recipients no later than July 1, 2025.

Grant funds will be distributed in three payments. The first installment (45% of grant) will be disbursed at the beginning of the study; the second installment (45%) when an interim report is submitted; and the final installment (10%) upon receipt of the final report. *ILA does not support any indirect costs associated with its grants.*

Upon completion of the project, the grant recipient is encouraged to submit an article for publication in one of ILA's three peer-reviewed journals. Please note that ILA reserves first rights of refusal to publish any material developed under this grant prior to the recipient submitting to a non-ILA publication.

*Please direct any questions about eligibility, selection criteria, the application process, and/or the selection process to [ILAAwards@reading.org](mailto:ILAAwards@reading.org).*