Teacher Creativity Fellowship Program

Renewal Project Examples

Lilly Endowment recognizes that meaningful renewal is personal in nature and can take many different forms. Accordingly, there is not one specific type of renewal project that will be viewed more favorably than others. Regardless of the project proposed, it is important for each application submitted under the Teacher Creativity Fellowship Program to address all elements and criteria described in the Request for Proposals, including clearly explaining how the applicant's proposed project will result in renewed energy, enthusiasm and fulfillment for them personally. To illustrate the breadth of possible projects applicants may propose, some examples are provided below. These examples are meant to be illustrative, brief descriptions only. Projects presented in full applications should be much more fully developed and described. Many other projects could also be compelling.

- Entering her 25th year in the classroom, an educator seeks renewal by realizing a lifelong dream of becoming a certified single-engine pilot. Inspired by a family of pilots and looking for a challenge different from her teaching responsibilities, the educator will spend 10 months attending ground school, logging flight-training hours and completing a course in aerial photography. The educator will involve her students by sharing anecdotes about preparing for flight and photos of interesting flight paths and historical sites.
- After the death of his father, an educator proposes to honor and celebrate him and his passions by completing a digital storytelling course and creating a short film about his father's life using the sounds and images recorded while traveling in Germany, the country in which his father was born. During a five-week period, the educator and his son will visit important locations from his father's life, interview close family members and enjoy one of his father's greatest pleasures, soccer. By sharing this experience, he hopes to continue to the next generation the father-son bond that his father established with him.
- As an homage to family and an inherited passion for cooking, an educator seeks renewal by spending three weeks traveling solo through Italy, taking culinary classes and visiting her ancestral homeland, culminating in a compilation cookbook of her family's recipes. As she faces a crossroads in her career and several health challenges, this experience will stretch the educator and offer an opportunity to honor her grandmother by improving her culinary skills. Prior to traveling, the educator will collaborate with a local chef to hone culinary techniques and learn more about Italian regional cuisine. Upon return, the educator hopes to sustain renewal and practice newfound skills by hosting monthly Italian dinners for friends and family.
- An assistant principal with more than 20 years in education looks to improve her fluency in Spanish and experience Peruvian culture by studying cooking, taking dance classes and exploring local sites. Spread across two summers, the educator will live with a host family and take daily Spanish language immersion classes. Afternoons will be spent visiting cultural sites and engaging in cultural workshops on topics such as dance and cooking. The educator's spouse will join her for the last week each

summer to hike Machu Picchu and explore Sacred Valley, both activities that the educator feels are best experienced with a companion for safety reasons. By improving Spanish speaking skills, the educator will better serve the growing Spanish-speaking population at her school and in her local community.

- Seeking adventure and refuge from the noise of modern life, a physics teacher, who is the sponsor of his school's robotics club, seeks renewal by spending six weeks exploring the American Southwest searching for reptiles and amphibians in several national parks. Additionally, he will attend a week-long field camp in the mountains of Arizona where he will study the diversity of amphibians native to southwestern New Mexico and southeastern Arizona. Feeling the weight of losing several close friends in recent years and continuing to deal with learning loss among students due to the pandemic, the educator will use this project to disconnect and savor extended time alone in new and interesting environments.
- A theater teacher seeks artistic inspiration, familial connection and renewal while traveling to China and Japan to visit her siblings' countries of origin. Traveling with her siblings, the educator will spend two weeks in each country exploring historic sites, visiting family members, connecting with her sisters' heritages, and experiencing culture and customs through theatrical performances. Upon returning, the educator will use her experiences to teach students about Asian performance theater.
- A school psychologist seeks renewal by hiking the Camino de Santiago from southern France across northern Spain for a total of 477 miles. During the six-week pilgrimage, the educator will explore historical and religious sites, practice Spanish and deepen his Catholic faith through prayer and worship. Prior to embarking on the hike, the educator will complete spiritual reading, study significant pilgrimage sites and participate in a 12-week training program to build sufficient endurance and stamina to walk 12 to 15 miles a day. Upon returning home, the educator plans to sustain renewal through maintaining a fitness and walking routine.
- After successfully earning a master's degree and administrator's license, an educator who is looking to pursue personal renewal and boost her morale plans to engage in creative arts and crafting. By transforming her utility shed into a craft studio, filling it with supplies, and taking classes and workshops to learn new skills, the educator will increase her ability to make items for school events and to celebrate her colleagues with crafted tokens of appreciation. This dedicated space provides an outlet for creating art that will offer the educator continued renewal, clarity and peace of mind.
- Seeking a reprieve from the daily tasks of teaching and the additional stress of supporting students who are experiencing heightened mental health challenges, an educator seeks renewal by revisiting a childhood passion. He plans to visit 15 European theme parks and ride more than 100 roller coasters. During the course of two months in the summer, he will start in England and work his way through continental Europe, documenting and sharing the experience online with friends, students and other educators.
- Combining her love of research, writing and travel, a high school English teacher seeks renewal and healing by visiting and writing in places important to Ernest Hemingway. Spread across several school breaks, the educator plans to travel to locations where Hemingway lived and wrote. While there, she intends to research and study Hemingway's mental health struggles, culminating in teaching a Hemingway course and facilitating a suicide survivors' support group.

- A math educator seeks personal renewal by reengaging with music. Having not taken music lessons since he was a teenager, the educator plans to purchase a professional-grade digital keyboard and take a year of private piano and composition lessons with professional musicians. The project will culminate in a recital at a local venue for friends and family where the educator plans to play a mix of classical, popular and original pieces.