



# GREATER ST. LOUIS AREA COUNCIL

## BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

April 15, 2023

[ADDRESS]

Dear [NAME] Foundation Trustees,

***Thank you for investing in their adventure!*** On behalf of the youth of Macon County and surrounding Decatur areas, thank you for the NAME Foundation's past support of BSA Scouting programs. You are making a difference in the lives of our area youth.

The mission of the Greater St. Louis Area Council Boy Scouts of America is to provide educational programs that build character, teach participatory citizenship, and develop personal fitness. Since 1911, the Greater St. Louis Area Council has grown to serve nearly 27,000 youth participating in Cub Scouts, Scouts BSA, STEM, Outreach, Venturing, and Exploring programs. Summer camp, high adventure camp, and day camp provide exciting activities year-round where youth use the leadership, outdoor and teamwork skills they learn in weekly meetings.

The Greater St. Louis Area Council merged with the Lincoln Trails Council (based in Decatur, IL) in January 2019. The new Council serves 63 counties in Missouri and Illinois, including Macon County. In Fall 2017, the Boy Scouts of America's national volunteer board unanimously voted to begin inviting female participants into all Scouting programs. Girls were welcomed into Cub Scouts in 2018 and then Scouts BSA (formerly Boy Scouts) in February 2019, allowing whole families to be served by the same character-building programs. ***In 2022, 4,799 girls joined the Council as Cub Scouts and 2,819 girls joined Scouts BSA – an increase of 25.6% and 27% respectively, over 2020.***

Scouting creates opportunities for learning and growth that foster and strengthen self-confidence, ethics, respect for others, academic skills, and leadership abilities. When you think of Scouting, you may think of hiking and camping, but Scouting also introduces countless hobbies, interests, sciences and even future career choices.

### ***Brief Project Description***

The Greater St. Louis Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America is submitting a pre-proposal letter for funding of a capital expense for a new Mobile STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) Invention Lab to be used throughout Macon County for not only the youth registered for Scouting, but for the youth of the greater community as well.

The BSA's STEM initiative gives Scouts an opportunity to explore science, technology, engineering, and mathematics related concepts and learn how STEM knowledge is used in everyday life and in the professional world. The aim is to expose youth to new opportunities and help them build interest in STEM-related careers that are so crucial to our future economy.

Current Mobile STEM Invention Labs serve our Southern Missouri Scouts and St. Louis Area Scouts and communities. In 2022, 3,703 registered Scouts attended STEM events where the mobile labs were present. Another 106 units reserved and enjoyed the mobile lab programs at unit meetings.

The [NAME] Foundation grant will support the Greater St. Louis Area Council securing a used sprinter-type van, retrofitting it for lab use, and filling it with necessary program supplies to satisfy the STEM Invention Lab for use in the county of Macon.



### ***Project Purpose and Narrative***

The Greater St. Louis Area Council Boy Scouts of America currently boasts three Mobile STEM Invention Labs, including two STEM Trailers and one STEM Ambulance. We pride ourselves on being innovative and remaining up-to-date with changing technologies. To provide the most relevant concepts to area youth and along with the Council STEM Committee of staff and volunteers, we review the program annually to be sure we are remaining current.

Each Mobile STEM Invention Lab is equipped with program equipment including:

- 3D pens
- 3D printer
- laser engraver
- stomp rockets
- snap circuits
- ozobots
- rover robots
- hand-held microscopes
- vortex cannons
- simple experiment equipment
- and more!

For the Decatur area, we are hoping to add a STEM Van to our offerings. Utilizing a van will allow for more storage for program equipment as well as provide enough space for volunteers and youth to stand upright and move around more freely while getting out and putting away program equipment. A van will also allow for room for bigger equipment to be carried and stored.

Through the Macon County Mobile STEM Invention Lab, we aim to create opportunities for the youth of the Decatur area to explore hands-on areas of STEM, receive support from volunteers, and expand their working-knowledge of various STEM areas for possible career exploration.

This project will be executed in three parts:

1. *Phase one* will take place in late 2023/early 2024 and will include the search for a sprinter-type van through researching, negotiating, and securing one based on the budget of the project. The Greater St. Louis Area Council will provide liability insurance, program development support and training, and support trained volunteers to execute the educational program.
2. *Phase two* will take place after the purchase of the sprinter-type van and will involve making any necessary repairs to the van, gutting and retrofitting the interior to fit the needs of the program usage, cleaning up the exterior and wrapping it with branding, and adding storage, equipment, and program materials necessary to operate. In this phase, we will also begin to market the coming of the mobile lab to the community, including the area Scout units, schools, outside youth programs (Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, Youth Leaders in Action), and the rest of the community. We will begin to train volunteers to help guide the youth through the program exploration and maintain the lab for perpetuity. STEM educational events will be planned and partnerships with local colleges will be pursued to help expand the programming offered in the lab.
3. *Phase three* involves the implementation of the Mobile STEM Innovation Lab. A reservation calendar will go up on the Council website, allowing for reservation of the Innovation Lab for area units and the public. If all goes well with phases 1 and 2, we hope to be able to begin using the mobile lab in time for summer camps in June 2024 and utilize the van at Back-to-School Scout recruiting events in the fall.

***Through this program we can shape Decatur's future workforce by bringing opportunities and experience of hands-on STEM exploration, allowing youth the ability to explore a variety of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics opportunities. This program in the Decatur area will also serve the youth of Coles and Moultrie Counties as well.***



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### ***Program Sustainability***

Users of the Mobile STEM Invention Lab pay a reservation fee to the Council to use the mobile lab. This is a small fee that would help to offset the operating cost of the van. The Greater St. Louis Area Council, Boy Scouts of America will provide annual costs associated with operating the Mobile STEM Invention Lab Van through our 2024 STEM operating budget. We are also looking into more ways to make the STEM labs available to the general public, which will help to further offset the annual operational costs.

### ***Program Budget***

<b>Capital Expenses</b>	<b>Cost*</b>
Used sprinter-type van with repairs and titling	\$ 33,000
Gut and retrofit interior	\$ 11,000
Clean up exterior and wrap with branding	\$ 8,000
Storage, equipment, and program material for the van	\$ 13,000
<b>Total Capital Expense</b>	<b>\$ 65,000</b>
<b>Annual Budgeted Operating Expenses</b>	<b>Cost</b>
Staffing and training of volunteers	\$ 5,000
Vehicle maintenance and fuel costs	\$ 5,000
Insurance and licensing fees	\$ 2,000
<b>Total Operating Expense</b>	<b>\$ 12,000</b>
<i>* Note that this is a sample budget based on the current market estimates on the cost of a used van and how much work will need to be done to it before its use.</i>	

### ***Request***

***We are seeking a grant from the [NAME] Foundation in the amount of \$65,000.*** The grant will help us to fund the capital expenses of a new Mobile STEM Invention Lab for Macon County. With the award and acceptance of this grant, the Greater St. Louis Area Council, Boy Scouts of America will release the [NAME] Foundation and its trustees from any liability in the event of accident or loss of the mobile lab.

Thank you for considering our request and for caring for the youth of central Illinois. Please contact Emily Joellenbeck at 618-207-6431 or [emily.joellenbeck@scouting.org](mailto:emily.joellenbeck@scouting.org) for more information or with questions.

Thank you - ***your investment makes Scouting possible.***

Sincerely,

Emily Joellenbeck  
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