



## Georgia Reads Community Award Application Sponsored by the Georgia Council on Literacy

### **About the Georgia Council on Literacy**

During the 2023 legislative session, the Georgia General Assembly passed two significant bills that address the state's literacy rates: House Bill 538 and Senate Bill 211. With overwhelming bipartisan support and the approval of the Governor, HB 538 requires kindergarten through third grade reading instruction to be based on the science of reading. The bill specifies five requirements including teacher training, universal screening of students, high quality instructional materials based on the science of reading, tiered student interventions, and new teacher instruction through the public schools of education. SB 211 was also signed into law by Governor Kemp to create the Georgia Council on Literacy, a 30-member council appointed by the Governor, Lt. Governor, and Speaker of the House.

The Georgia Council on Literacy, as mandated by SB 211, is tasked with involving communities in efforts to enhance reading skills. A community literacy approach recognizes that literacy development is a collaborative effort that involves not just teachers and schools, but also families, communities, and various stakeholders working together to support children, youth, and adult learning and development. Strong communities recognize literacy is an important tool for communication, learning, and personal development for children, youth, and their families. With this understanding in mind, the Council acknowledges that communities actively participating in literacy activities, and making strides in achieving reading outcomes, should be designated as **Georgia Reads Communities**.

Malcolm Mitchell, former University of Georgia football star and New England Patriots Superbowl Champion, turned author and philanthropist, has been designated as the Georgia Reads Coach. All communities, especially those seeking recognition as a Georgia Reads Community, are encouraged to participate in Malcolm's Share the Magic Foundation [Virtual Challenges](#). He will be celebrating with community partners as they are announced as Georgia Reads Communities.

### **Georgia Reads Community Award**

This award is designed to recognize the importance of community approaches that involve meaningful partnerships in achieving literacy goals. Evaluation criteria will include, but not limited to, the strength and organization of the community partnership, innovation of evidence-based community literacy approaches, sustainability, and measures of success. The award, unlike a grant, will recognize progress **already made** in literacy improvements in the last three to five years. **In 2025, ten communities will be chosen for recognition and a \$25,000 award.**

## **How is Community Partnership Defined?**

An eligible community partnership must have at least three years of documented, meaningful involvement of two or more organizations. This is not a grant for new partnership development but is an award for past partnership achievements.

Examples:

- Literacy for Learning, Living, and Leading in Georgia (L4GA) Communities
- School Systems with Community Partnerships
- Certified Literate Community Programs (CLCP)
- Mayor of City Sponsored Partnerships
- Family Connection Collaboratives
- Get Georgia Reading Campaign Communities
- Chambers of Commerce, United Ways, and School Systems

**Note** - A lead contact person and fiscal entity will need to be identified for the purpose of submitting the application and receiving the funds.

## **What Will Georgia Reads Community Award Include?**

1. \$25,000 to continue and extend work in literacy improvements and provide for an external evaluation one year after award recognition
2. Georgia Reads Coach Malcolm Mitchell's recognition of the award with a community engagement activity and visit
3. Up to 1000 books, *Hey Georgia*, authored by Malcolm and distributed to students in the lowest performing elementary school designated by the partnership during Malcolm's visit

## **Important Dates**

- Applications are due by 5 p.m., Tuesday, November 26, 2024.
- Winning partners will be notified by January 15, 2025.
- Georgia Reads Communities will be recognized at the State Capitol in February 2025 (specific date TBD).
- Malcolm Mitchell visits with Georgia Reads Communities in March and April 2025.

**Georgia Reads Community Award Application  
Technical Assistance Guide**

**A. General Tips**

- Read the entire application before starting.
- Use clear, concise language.
- Adhere to page limits and formatting requirements.
- Provide specific examples and data wherever possible.
- Ensure all required fields are completed. Program overview can be no longer than 100 words.
- The complete application should be no more than ten pages, 11 pt. Calibri font, and double-spaced.

**B. Section-Specific Guidance**

1. Organization/Partnership Information
  - Provide accurate and up-to-date contact information.
  - Ensure the fiscal agent is clearly identified.
2. Program Overview (no more than 100 words); the Overview will be used for the Georgia Reads Award promotion.
3. Meaningful Partnerships and Strategic Plan
  - Be comprehensive but concise in describing your partnership.
  - Clearly articulate the roles of different partners involved.
  - Use data to support your community's challenges and motivation.
  - Ensure your strategic plan is well-defined with clear goals, timelines, and target populations.
  - Provide specific, measurable success indicators.
4. Budget Justification
  - Use the provided Excel spreadsheet.
  - Clearly link each budget item to your literacy improvement goals.
  - Provide detailed explanations for cost estimates.
  - Adhere to any funding restrictions mentioned.
5. Data
  - Present data in a clear, easy-to-understand format.
  - Explain any significant trends or changes in the data.
  - If using "Other" metrics, clearly explain their relevance to literacy improvement.

## Georgia Reads Community Award Application Submission Instructions

1. Complete applications are limited to **ten (10) pages, 11 pt. Calibri font, and double-spaced**. Any application not in compliance with the above-referenced criteria will result in disqualification.
2. Complete the budget sheet, outlining how your organization plans to use the award. The budget should include \$5000 for the post-year evaluation.
3. Complete application and budget should be submitted as **one** document and emailed to [gosa@gosa.ga.gov](mailto:gosa@gosa.ga.gov).
4. Deadline for application submission is 5 p.m., Tuesday, November 26, 2024. Any applications received after the deadline will not be considered.
5. Applicants selected to receive the award will be notified by January 15, 2025.
6. All questions, comments, or concerns can be emailed to [gosa@gosa.ga.gov](mailto:gosa@gosa.ga.gov).

## Georgia Reads Community Award Application

(Application is limited to ten (10) pages, 11 pt. Calibri font, and double-spaced)

### A. Organization/Partnership Information

1. Applicant Name
2. Website (if any)
3. Community Partnership Lead Contact
  - Name
  - Email
  - Cell Phone
4. Community Partnership Fiscal Agent

The Fiscal Agent is identified for the purpose of accepting the award and tracking funds that are distributed and used. Funds should be dispersed strategically among the partners or the activities of the partnership pursuant to the budget provided with this application.

  - Name
  - Email
  - Cell Phone
5. Secondary Community Partnership Contact:
  - Name
  - Email
  - Cell Phone

### B. Program Overview

Provide a brief description of your Community Partnership (maximum 100 words). This will be used for promotion and description of your partnership.

### C. Meaningful Partnerships

1. Describe the community partnership. Identify partners involved (e.g., Get Georgia Reading Community, L4GA, CLCP, school system, mayor or local government leader, nonprofit or civic organizations, healthcare professionals, faith-based professionals, others).
2. Describe the meaningful involvement of your partners including partners' roles/responsibilities.
3. Describe the specific resources (including financial) that assisted your partnership in meeting goals.

### D. Needs Assessment

1. Describe your community's population and challenges faced. Include clear data to support evidence of need (e.g., racial composition, non-English language speakers, economic status).
2. Describe your community's motivation to focus on literacy in response to this need.

**E. Goals and Strategic Plan**

1. Describe the **process** used to identify literacy improvement goals over the last three years.
2. Provide your strategic plan.
  - Established goals for literacy improvements (e.g., focus on attendance, two-generational approaches, language development, or Get Georgia Reading’s identified factors that affect a child’s ability to read). Include Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART) goals that are in progress or successfully completed.
  - Timelines
  - Initiatives
  - Populations addressed

**F. Community Activities**

Describe the community activities that were implemented as part of your strategic plan for literacy improvement.

**G. Data**

1. How did your partnership measure success (e.g., kindergarten readiness, High School Equivalency completion, third-grade reading, other)?
2. Provide data from the last three to five years demonstrating progress. Examples may include but are not limited to:
  - Percentage of Quality Rated childcare programs in your community
  - Third, fifth, and eighth grade ELA scores and Lexile scores
  - High School Equivalency graduates from a WIOA Title II Adult Education program
  - Adult Education Program Exits for English Language Learners via the WIOA Title II Adult Education program provider
  - Attendance
  - Hearing and vision screenings
  - Other relevant data demonstrating you are meeting your goals

**H. Budget**

1. Describe how the Georgia Reads Community Award (\$25,000) will assist your partnership in **continuing literacy improvements in your identified populations?**
2. Provide a detailed budget justification and rationale for distribution of funds among partners. The budget justification should provide a rationale for each budget line item including supporting contextual information and relevant assumptions underlying the estimate.

**Use the attached Excel spreadsheet and adhere to fund use restrictions.**

**Note - \$5,000 must be allocated for an external evaluation after one year of the award.**