



Guide to Launching a Donors Choose Project

A Crowdfunding Platform for Teachers

Genius Games, LLC
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Hello Science teachers,

We're well aware how tight teacher budgets can be - even for purchasing learning resources that are critical for your classroom. So, we were thrilled to find out about [Donors Choose](#) - an crowdfunding resource for teachers that can provide your students with science resources at no cost to you or your school.

Donors Choose is a non-profit crowdfunding platform where public school teachers across America can post a simple Project Page with the intent of getting essential learning resources for their students that they may not otherwise have been able to afford. (Basically, it's like a Kickstarter or Go Fund Me specifically for teachers). The public can then donate any amount to help a teacher pay for the products they dearly need in their classrooms. If you think Genius Games games could be valuable for your classroom, Donors Choose provides a way to acquire sets of game for free.

Not only does Donors Choose guide you through every step of the Project process, if your Project reaches its funding goal, Donors Choose purchases all the materials you requested, and ships them directly to your school!

Any eligible teacher can sign up for a teacher account and post a Project for free! (If you're employed full-time in a US public or public charter school, and work directly with students at least 75% of the time, then you should be eligible).

Thus far, Donors Choose has had over **3 million supporters, over 1 million projects funded, and over 28 million students reached!**

Donors Choose provides this simple estimated timeline:

(30 mins) - Entering content into project page template

(3 days) - Screening and posting of Project page by Donors Choose team

Project duration - you can choose to keep your Project up for 4 months max

(3 weeks) - (If your Project is fully funded) Delivery of materials

More info: [Teacher's Tutorial](#) (1 min read) & [Teacher FAQs](#) (3 min read)

Guide to Putting Together Your Project Page

Ok, we know how insanely busy you teachers are. Take heart. Donors Choose provides the template for your project page and we've done the research to compile a streamlined guide (and tips!) to help you get your Project Page put together during your next lunch period :-)

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About Your Students: description of the students in your classroom, usually 1-2 short paragraphs

Where Your Donation Goes: a breakdown of how the donated money would be used

Summarize What's In Your Cart: description of the project, 1 sentence

Title

My Project: description of your project and why it would be incredibly helpful, usually 2-4 short paragraphs

Subject Areas: choose from available options

Project Activity: section where people who donate to the project can comment

Project End Date: project must be fully funded by this date for you to receive your requested materials

Project Picture: image that is displayed next to your project

3. Spreading the Word About Your Project

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1. Before Setting Up Your Project Page

If you're new to Donors Choose, begin by [registering for a teacher account](#). Donors Choose will walk you through this brief (and free) process step by step.

Then, check out [Donors Choose - Guide For Creating A Stellar Project](#). This well-organized article is full of info like project picture restrictions, tips on writing a compelling project description, and how to select your requested resources.

We also strongly suggest reading through the short article [Teacher Responsibilities When Using Donors Choose](#).

If you still have questions, [Donors Choose - Registering or Creating a Project](#) is a helpful resource with articles on specific questions that may arise as you put together your Project Page.

For inspiration - some fully funded (and pretty cool) STEM Donors Choose Projects:

[Prioritize Meaningful STEM Lessons](#)

[Let's Go Lego to Create and Explore](#)

[Engineers in the Making!](#)

[Recess: A Time to Relax, to Play, and to Learn](#)

2. Templates and Tips for Your Project Page:

Following are a few quick facts, tips, and templates for creating your own Project Page specifically for requesting our science games for your classroom. Feel free to adapt any or all of the content below as a springboard to use as a starting place and a template for your own classroom.

Project Type

Choose your your type of project - either Standard, Student-led or Professional Development.



Welcome

What type of project would you like to create?

Standard

Student-led

Professional Development

Start here to request classroom materials or experiences for your students. You'll create a project for supplies, a class trip, or a visitor.

NEED INSPIRATION?

[View some A+ projects](#) · [Find match offers](#)

Let's go!

[Apply a campaign code](#)

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About Your Students

Enter some brief info about your students!



About your students

Tell prospective donors who your students are and why they're special.

Age group

Which grade level(s) will benefit from this project?

Select all

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-K	<input type="checkbox"/> Kindergarten	<input type="checkbox"/> 1st	<input type="checkbox"/> 2nd	<input type="checkbox"/> 3rd	<input type="checkbox"/> 4th	<input type="checkbox"/> 5th	<input type="checkbox"/> 6th
<input type="checkbox"/> 7th	<input type="checkbox"/> 8th	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 9th	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 10th	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 11th	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 12th		

Number of students

How many students will benefit from this project this year?



Where Your Donation Goes

You must choose your requested resources from a Donors Choose vendor. You'll find Genius Games under the vendor **Amazon Business**.

Tip: Smaller donation requests are more likely to achieve their funding quickly. [According to Donors Choose](#), projects under \$200 have a 90% chance of reaching their funding goal!

You're doing great!

Review your cart below (or continue shopping for more) and write a brief summary.

Peptide: A Protein Building Game	6	\$95.94
Remove • \$15.99 • Amazon Business (third-party merchant)		
Genius Games Cytosis: A Cell Biology, Board Game	6	\$234.24
Remove • \$39.04 • Amazon Business		
Materials cost		\$330.18
Vendor shipping charges		\$0.00
State sales tax		\$0.00
3rd party payment processing fee		\$4.95
Fulfillment labor & materials		\$30.00
Total project cost		\$365.13
Suggested donation to support DonorsChoose.org		\$64.43
Total project goal		\$429.56
Continue shopping		

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Summarize What's In Your Cart

This 1 sentence explanation of the project (what your students need and how it will enhance their learning) is also displayed in the project thumbnail, so it should be compelling as well as descriptive and clear.

Summarize what's in your cart

Tell donors what your students need in one sentence.

★ [See some good examples](#) ★

My students need science games to introduce tough biology concepts in a playful way.

Nice!

[Save and continue](#)

Some example summaries you can adapt for your classroom:

My students need help engaging with the intimidating subject of science - help us purchase fun and accurate science games!

My students need science games to help them understand crucial science concepts and meet Next Generation Science Standards.

My students need science games to provide a tactile and memorable way to engage with abstract science concepts.

My students need a playful way to engage with chemistry to make the concepts less intimidating and more familiar. Á

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Genius Games currently available via Amazon Business are:

Ion: A Compound Building Game

Ages: 8+ Players: 2 - 7 Time: 20 - 30 mins

Science Concepts: ionic bonding, elements, atoms, charges, ions, anions, cations, noble gases, halogens, alkali metals, Alkaline earth metals, compound naming, creating neutrally charged compounds, transition metals, polyatomic ions, reactions, acids and bases

Ion is a fast paced card drafting game where players select from available ion cards and noble gas cards, with the objective of forming either neutrally charged compounds or sets of stable noble gases!

Covalence: A Compound Building Game

Ages: 8+ Players: 2-4+ Time: 20-40 mins

Science Concepts: covalent bonding, single bonds, double bonds, elements, atoms, carbon, nitrogen, oxygen, hydrogen, chemical nomenclature, stereochemistry, organic chemistry.

Covalence is a cooperative card game where players work together to build a number of secret organic molecules! One player knows what the secret molecules are and gives clues to the other players!. All other players must deduce what these secret molecules are based on the clues they receive. Players must cooperatively construct their molecules before the clues run out!

Peptide: A Protein Building Game

Ages: 10+ Players: 2 - 5 Time: 30 - 45 mins

Science Concepts: RNA to protein translation, polypeptide chains, proteins, amino acids, vacuole, mitochondria, nucleus, ribosome, mRNA, tRNA, ATP

In Peptide, players compete to link Amino Acids side-by-side to build a peptide chain! In order to build this peptide chain, players make thoughtful selections from openly available Organelle Cards which provide resources such as ATP or RNA, or allow players to build on their peptide chain!

Cytosis: A Cell Biology Game

Ages: 10+ Players: 2 - 5 Time: 60 - 90 mins

Science Concepts: cell biology, nucleus, free ribosomes, smooth ER, rough ER, golgi apparatus, plasma membrane, mitochondria, enzymes, hormones, receptors, cell detoxification, antibodies and viruses

Cytosis is a worker placement game that takes place inside a human cell! Players take turns placing workers on organelles within a cell to collect resources (such as Carbohydrates or ATP!) or take actions (such as translating mRNA into Proteins!) Players use their resources to build Enzymes, Hormones, and Hormone Receptors and detoxify the cell - all of which score health points!

Subatomic: An Atom Building Game *Łċ ħidX` DXidVZg" %&- t*

Ages: 10+ Players: 2 - 4 Time: 40-60

Science Concepts: • ~ àæ { æÁ ææ^• Ę ææ^Á @• æ Ę | [ğ] • Ę ^ ğ [] • Ę ^ | ^ & ğ [] • Ę { • Ę } • Ę | ^ { ^ } • Ę @ | ä { Ę æ { Ę ^ | ^ | ä { Ę [| [] Ę } ^ | * ^ Ę æ [^ • Á ææ^Á @• æ æ Ę æ • Ę } ^ | * ^ Á ~ ææ^ } & Á

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Title



Project details

Make your project stand out from the crowd.

Project title

Make it exciting and Capitalize It Like a Book Title.

★ [See some good examples](#) ★

2 words minimum

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This will be displayed in the project thumbnail, so choose something catchy or compelling. Be as specific as you can - focus on the kids, science, and science games!

Some example titles you can adapt for your classroom:

“Engage Kids in STEM with Board Games”

“Creatively Engaging Kids in STEM with Games”

“Introduce Kids to Chemistry through Games”

“Encourage Kids To Clamor for More Chemistry”

“Tactile Science Engagement for My Students”

“Sparking Scientific Curiosity with Biology Games”

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About Your Project

About your project

How will these materials make a difference in your students' learning?

★ See some good examples ★

Biology is a complicated subject. So much of what we ask students to learn is so small! Molecules? Ions? Proteins? ATP? We have to rely on imagination to get students to understand these abstract concepts.

With games, however, students not only get to compete with their classmates, they also gain insight into how this microscopic world functions! Genius Games is living up to their name by offering genius games that help students understand this complex world of chemical interactions. I would love to have class sets of "Cytosis: A Cell Biology Game" and "Peptide: A Protein Building Game" for my students to play during class. Hopefully they will have so much fun that we can host sessions before and after school as well. Our kids are so wrapped up in electronics, that it is my goal to get them back to face-to-face interactions through the use of board and card games such as these.

Nice!

Specifically name some of the resources you chose for your project and give concrete examples of how they will be used.

Make your essay easier to read by splitting it up into 2-3 paragraphs.

The first sentence of your second paragraph will get special emphasis.

This should highlight specifics of how and why this project would benefit your students! Be honest and tell your story in a moving way!

Paragraph 1 tips:

Why do your students need these science games?

How will these science games help your students learn?

What science concepts will these games introduce your students to?

Paragraph 2 tips you can expand on:

These games will encourage my students to interact with the science content and become critical thinkers, rather than just memorizing facts.

My students will have the opportunity to interact with each other over the following concepts covered in these games....

These games provide an accessible, memorable way I can help my students develop love for science early on.

Help my students say “this was the best day of chemistry class ever!”

Some insightful quotes. Consider including one on your page, or finding your own.

Neil deGrasse Tyson - “Science literacy is the artery through which the solutions of tomorrow's problems flow.”

Neil deGrasse Tyson - “There is no greater education than one that is self-driven.”

Albert Einstein - The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing.”

Marie Curie - “Nothing in life is to be feared, it is only to be understood. Now is the time to understand more, so that we may fear less.”

An example of a My Project section that you could adapt for your classroom:

As Neil deGrasse Tyson aptly said “Science literacy is the artery through which the solutions of tomorrow's problems flow.” I want my students to be an integral part of the solutions of the next generation! Part of the immediate obstacle my students face is that science is so often associated with difficulty, confusion, or rote memorization.

These games will give my students the opportunity to explore chemistry in an engaging way that will help spark a lifelong interest in science. Having “Ion” in my classroom will help my students engage with abstract concepts like positively and negatively charged ions, neutrally charged atoms, and common molecular compounds in a tactile way! Not only will my students be exposed to these concepts, they’ll be interacting with the concepts in a way that encourages them to talk to each other about what they’re learning. This dialogue encourages students to become critical thinkers rather than just memorizing and spitting content back to me. It’s so important to me that my students develop an early love for science - please help me do that by providing them with these engaging and accurate chemistry games!

Tip: The first sentence of your second paragraph will be highlighted in a larger italicized format option!

Subject Areas

Other info you'll need to select that will show up in the sidebar of the Project Page:

Subject areas

Which subjects are the best fit for this project? Choose up to two.

Applied Learning▼

Health & Sports▼

History & Civics▼

Literacy & Language▼

Math & Science▲

Applied Sciences

Environmental Science

Health & Life Science

Mathematics

Music & The Arts▼

Special Needs▼

Warmth, Care & Hunger▼

Save and continue

Review

Once you've entered all your information, you'll have the chance to preview and review your entire project before you submit to Donors Choose for screening!

Almost done!

Just review everything below and submit your project for screening.

Project page Search results Mobile devices

Sparking Scientific Curiosity With Biology Games

My students need science games to introduce tough biology concepts in a playful way.

My Students

We have an awesome group of students who are ready and willing to learn more about the world around them. Living in one of the most diverse zip codes in the country, many of our students come from working families that struggle to make ends meet. In an effort to break the cycle, we provide career-minded education that puts them on the path to college and the workforce. We are proud to have at least a 93% day-to-day attendance rate and an over 95% graduation rate. Our students are on a path to success!



Change photo



Ms. Segovia
Grades 9-12

More than three-quarters of students from low-income households

3. How to Spread the Word About Your Project

While putting your Project Page together, it's time to spread the word about what you're doing! Some traffic will come from the Donors Choose site, but it's important to get the word out yourself!

Tip #1 - Share on your social media

Your friends will be curious what's going on in your classroom! A week or two before your Project Page goes live, let your Facebook and Instagram friends know what you're up to in your classroom, when your Project Page will go live, and how they can help. Friends will often jump at the chance to share your FB post or spread the word for such a good cause.

In your post, share a link to your teacher profile on Donors Choose, which gives a quick look at your current project and gives people the option receive updates on your classroom.

Tip #2 - Invite some friends to donate Day 1

See if 10-20 friends would be willing to commit to giving a small amount (even \$5-10) the day your project goes live!

Tip #3 - Tell your local media

Finding innovative ways to teach and engage students in STEM is currently a hot topic. Try sending a brief email to at least 10 of your local media networks to let them know how your working to bring innovative STEM learning to your classroom and ask if they'd consider helping you and your students out by covering your project.

Tip #4 - Tell your community

Consider asking your PTA if they'd include a link to your project in their communications. Let a small business you have a relationship with know about your upcoming project.