

2027 ProStart JumpStart Grant FAQs



What is the 2027 JumpStart Grant and Event Program?

The National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF) JumpStart Grant Program provides an opportunity for ProStart students to participate in an immersive restaurant and foodservice educational experience centered around the National Restaurant Association Show (the “Restaurant Show”) in Chicago, IL, a premier showcase of foodservice innovation, industry trends, and professional networking.

This experience is designed to launch and support successful careers within the restaurant and foodservice industry by:

- Exposing students to diverse career pathways
- Providing access to real-world industry environments
- Supporting career exploration and goal setting
- Inspiring students through experiential learning

The selected school will identify up to twelve (12) students and three (3) chaperones to attend the JumpStart event in Chicago, IL, May 21–24, 2027. Participants will have the opportunity to engage in:

- Guided exploration of the Restaurant Show floor
- Career-focused educational sessions and networking
- Engagement with leading companies and industry professionals

As part of the grant, NRAEF will cover select travel, lodging, and registration costs for eligible participants from the selected school. Additional funding will be provided to the awarded school to help cover incidental expenses incurred by its participants while attending the JumpStart event. **Additional terms apply.**

How does the JumpStart Grant Program work?

Schools with existing ProStart programs must apply for the grant to attend the JumpStart event and the Restaurant Show. If selected:

- The school will have approximately one month to complete and submit all required documentation and agree to the associated terms and conditions.
- The school will work directly with the designated travel agent to coordinate travel.
- All traveling students and chaperones must meet all applicable legal requirements for travel, which may include having a REAL ID at the time of the event.
- The school will work directly with NRAEF staff to finalize logistics.
- The school will be required to participate in a post-program survey and follow-up.

Who can submit an application?

Applications must be submitted on behalf of a ProStart school by an authorized representative of the school, such as a ProStart educator, family and consumer sciences teacher, school administrator, or other approved school representative who is authorized by the school to apply on its behalf.

Before applying for the grant, the school should obtain any necessary authorization from appropriate school officials to accept the grant award and its associated terms and to travel with students to attend the JumpStart event.

What are the eligibility requirements to apply?

The applicant school must:

- Have an active ProStart program.
- Have at least eight (8) students, age 16 or older, who are interested in and available to attend the JumpStart event.
- Have enough chaperones available to maintain a minimum ratio of one (1) adult chaperone for every four (4) students attending, up to a maximum of three (3) chaperones.
- Agree to participate in a post-program survey and virtual follow-up.

What does the 2027 JumpStart Grant cover?

The JumpStart Grant covers certain travel expenses and other costs associated with sending the award recipient's selected group of up to fifteen (15) participants, including up to twelve (12) ProStart students and three (3) chaperones, subject to available funding, school proximity, and other factors.

Covered expenses include airfare, if applicable; hotel accommodations; registration fees for the Restaurant Show; and registration fees for any other required events for selected school participants who attend. These travel costs will be paid directly by NRAEF to the hotel and travel agent, as applicable.

The recipient school will also receive funding of up to \$2,500 to cover select incidental expenses that the school and its participating students and chaperones may incur while in Chicago for the JumpStart event, such as meals, local transportation, supplies, or other incidental expenses.

The exact amount of such funding may vary based on group size, location or proximity to the event, available funding, and other factors. **Additional terms apply.**

What is the timeline?

- **Application period:** October 13–November 13, 2026
- **Notification of award:** By December 1, 2026
- **Acceptance deadline:** January 10, 2027

Selected schools must complete all required documentation, including required agreements and consents, by the applicable deadline. Failure to do so may result in forfeiture of the grant award.

How are grant recipients selected?

Applications will be reviewed by an impartial panel using a defined rubric based on the purpose of the grant and the selection criteria outlined below. The eligible ProStart school that receives the highest combined overall score from the judging panel will be selected as the grant recipient.

Applications will generally be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- The anticipated impact that participation in the event and exposure to industry opportunities will have on students and their career goals within the restaurant and foodservice industry.
- The strength of the applicant's anticipated preparation and planning for students attending the JumpStart event and the Restaurant Show.
- The applicant's clear plans for applying learnings from the experience within the ProStart classroom.

Who selects the participating students and chaperones?

Depending on available funding, school proximity, and other factors, the selected school will be asked to identify a minimum of eight (8) and a maximum of twelve (12) ProStart students, ages 16 and older, and the number of chaperones necessary to maintain a ratio of one (1) adult chaperone for every four (4) students, up to a maximum of three (3) chaperones.

The selection of students and chaperones is at the sole discretion of the school and must be made in accordance with the school's established policies, guidelines, requirements, and processes, including any existing vetting processes for students and chaperones participating in school field trips or similar outings.

Students who are under the age of majority in their state of residence (18 in most states) must have written permission from a parent or legal guardian to participate in and attend the JumpStart event.

For questions, please contact scholars@nraef.org.