



# UNITED STATES DRESSAGE FEDERATION™

**USDF**

## **GMO Education Initiative Event and Grant Guidelines**

The primary objective of the **GMO Education Initiative** is to create and support new and affordable events to engage members. GMOs hosting GMO Education Initiative Events can be confident they are delivering high caliber instruction and educational content consistent with classical principles of dressage and the Pyramid of Training. Events are USDF University accredited and members who attend automatically earn education credits.

GMOs hosting approved events are also eligible to apply for a **GMO Education Initiative Grant, for up to \$1,000 to help cover event losses.**

### **Step 1: Determine Event Type and Instructor**

The GMO Education Initiative has four event formats. Each event format has specific criteria for the selection of the instructor or judge; additional instructors may be brought in as needed.

Please use the filters on this [Instructors and Officials List](#) to help you find an instructor. For any type of event, USDF Certified Instructors and USDF L Graduates are considered current if they have completed their USDF continuing education requirements and Safe Sport training.

**GMOs may apply to utilize an instructor or judge that does not meet the criteria listed below but an exception request is required (Step 1B).**

**USDF membership of any level is required to participate as a rider in these events.** There is no membership requirement for auditors or participants in the unmounted sessions. Riders of any age are eligible to participate in a GMO Education Initiative Event.

**1. Clinics/Symposiums:** Includes traditional riding clinics and those with a more focused curriculum, offering a variety of experiences to riders of all levels.

*Requirements:*

- Instructor must be a current USDF Certified Instructor, Honorary Instructor, USDF Instructor/Trainer Examiner, current USEF Licensed Judge or FEI Licensed Judge.
- Instructor and Rider Selection must be done in a manner that ensures that the schooling level of the riders will not exceed the certification level of the instructor.
- Instruction must be in the discipline of classical dressage.

**2. Ride-a-Test Clinics:** Provide riders an opportunity to receive a judge's feedback in a non-competitive environment. Beneficial to all, these clinics provide competitors an opportunity to improve their dressage test scores and provide non-competitors an opportunity to receive feedback from a perspective they might otherwise miss.

*Requirements:*

- All judges must be a USDF L Program Faculty Member, current USEF Licensed Judge, FEI Licensed Judge or current L Graduate

- All tests ridden must be USDF/USEF/FEI dressage tests.
- Tests ridden may not exceed the level of the judge's qualifications as indicated below:
  - L Graduate: Second Level
  - USEF "r": Second Level
  - USEF "R": Fourth Level
  - USEF "S": All Levels
  - FEI: All Levels

**3. Camps:** Provide riders and auditors with an opportunity to immerse themselves in a "horse vacation" and participate in a variety of activities over the course of a few days. Activities such as, but not limited to, private lessons, group lessons, lectures, demonstrations, and social events, are all appropriate for this type of event.

*Requirements:*

- At least one instructor must be a current USDF Certified Instructor, Honorary Instructor, USDF Instructor/Trainer Examiner, current USEF Licensed Judge, or FEI Licensed Judge
- Instructor and rider selection must be done in a manner that ensures that the schooling level of the riders will not exceed the certification level of the instructor. All instructors for camps are required to complete the Safe Sport Training.
- A minimum of one riding session per day, in the discipline of classical dressage.

**4. Unmounted Events:** Allow GMOs to offer members an event that does not include a riding opportunity. The GMO and Instructor will determine the curriculum.

*Requirements:*

- Instructor must be a current USDF Certified Instructor, Honorary Instructor, USDF Instructor/Trainer Examiner, current L Graduate, USDF L Program Faculty Member, current USEF Licensed Judge or FEI Licensed Judge.

**If you know which event type you are going to plan and if your instructor is on our approved list, move directly to step 2. Otherwise move to step 1B.**

**Step 1B: Submit an Exception Request if not using a pre-approved instructor.**

**\*\*\*Please be advised:** Organizers of GMO Education Initiative Programs requesting an Instructor Exception and receiving a GMO Education Initiative Grant will have the additional responsibility of submitting post program evaluations as an additional requirement of final grant fund disbursement. **While it is our goal to receive evaluations from 100% of participants, responses from a minimum of 80% of riders and 50% of auditors is required and it shall ultimately be the organizers responsibility to ensure compliance.** Evaluation responses will help the review committee determine if the instructor is a good candidate for future exceptions. It is critical that organizers and participants understand their contribution to ensuring the quality of instruction and education being presented.

**Minimum requirements for Instructor Exception:**

- the instructor or judge must have experience in teaching the proposed material or event
- must have references available
- must have successfully taught an event for USDF or a GMO in the past
- must be current with Safe Sport training

Instructor exception requests are not guaranteed and will be approved only on a case-by-case basis. Approval of an instructor is for an individual event only. Subsequent requests will be reviewed upon

submission. Approval of an instructor does not constitute USDF endorsement. **It is best to get your exception request approved before you plan much further.**

Send an email to [education@usdf.org](mailto:education@usdf.org) that contains the following information:

**Your Name**  
**GMO Name**  
**Proposed event type and description**  
**Instructor Name and Complete Bio**  
**List of events for a GMO or USDF the Instructor has taught**  
**Contact information for GMO event organizer**

## **Step 2: Complete the GMO Education Initiative Event Application**

Hosting GMO or Chapter must submit a completed [Event and Grant Application](#) at least 60 days prior to the event date. There is a \$65, non-refundable, administrative fee due with the application. Applications submitted less than 60 days but more than 30 days prior to the event may be accepted with an increased administrative fee of \$95. Applications submitted 30 days or less prior to event will not be accepted.

Completed applications must include:

- A clearly defined refund policy.
- A clearly defined rider selection procedure if mounted opportunities are available.
- A marketing plan that openly promotes opportunities to USDF members and others in the local equine community and promotes the attendance of auditors.
- A clear budget of expected expenses and revenue

The organizer of the event will receive an email confirmation when the event is approved or will be contact by USDF if the event is not approved. Event hosts may not advertise that events are a part of the GMO Education Initiative until they are approved. Instructor exception requests will be reviewed with the application and are not guaranteed.

*USDF University Education credits are automatically awarded to participants of this program upon USDF receipt of the event attendance roster.*

*PLEASE NOTE: GEI events cannot be as a Continuing Education in Dressage Judging Program or a USDF University program. For questions, please contact the USDF office before submitting the application and application fee.*

## **Step 3(Optional): GMO Education Initiative Grant Application**

**Hosting GMOs or Chapters must submit a completed GMO Education Initiative Event and Grant Application to the USDF office at least 60 days prior to the event date. Late applications may be accepted but additional fees will apply. See Step 2.**

Grants are a maximum of \$1,000.

Grant consideration criteria will include, but will not be limited to, demonstration of financial need, event affordability, local need and accessibility for members who have limited access to instruction in the sport of dressage and providing both riding and auditor opportunities. Grants will be awarded with regional/geographical representation considered.

Funds for approved grants will be dispersed as follows:

- If requested, up to 50% of the approved grant amount can be dispersed to the GMO or chapter prior to their event to help cover upfront expenses.

- All early dispersal requests must be made a minimum of 30 days in advance of the date the funds are needed for administrative purposes. USDF cannot guarantee an early dispersal will arrive by the requested date without at least 30-days advance notice.
- If the event generates a profit, the GMO or chapter will reimburse USDF for funds distributed prior to the event, up to the break-even point.
- Only an amount up to the documented loss will be granted, not to exceed a total of \$1,000.00.

Additional funding support through outside sponsorship and additional grants will be allowed and encouraged.

All grant applications will be reviewed for eligibility and to ensure regional/geographical diversity in the allocation of funds, seeking input from individual Regional Directors when needed.

USDF can assist GMOs or chapters in completing grant applications and meeting grant requirements. Only GMOs or chapters hosting an approved GMO Education Initiative event are eligible to apply for a GMO Education Initiative Grant. A GMO with multiple chapters may receive more than one grant per fiscal year but no more than one grant per chapter per year. Applications must be submitted by the individual chapters. Failure to comply with program guidelines will disqualify the GMO from grant eligibility.

#### **Step 4: Implementation of the Approved GMO Education Initiative Event**

Once the organizer has received confirmation that the event has been approved the GMO or chapter can begin to facilitate the event.

##### **Responsibilities prior to the event**

- All GMO Education Initiative events must obtain at least \$1 million of liability insurance coverage, naming USDF as an additional insured at least 30 days prior to the event start date.
- The GMO/Chapter will, contact instructor(s), organize, promote locally, and facilitate all aspects of the event.
- When selecting riders, the GMO/Chapter will adhere to the rider selection policy as stated in its application. **All riders must be USDF members.**

##### **Responsibilities at the event**

- All participants, instructors, organizers, auditors, and volunteers must physically sign a state specific waiver of liability for USDF. USDF will supply organizers with a digital file of this form upon application approval.
- If you applied for an instructor exception you must submit the provided evaluation forms which will be sent digitally. Remaining grant funds will not be dispersed unless these evaluations are returned to USDF within 14 days of the end date of the event.
- The organizer will compile a legible roster of all attendees and volunteers. A digital file of the USDF Sign-in Sheet will be provided.
- The organizer will provide the Instructor with the evaluation form provided digitally by USDF and collect the completed form at the end of the event
- For any event that includes a component that is live streamed for online viewers, viewers will only be given USDF University Credits if the GMO tracks online attendance and viewers are logged in for the entirety of the livestream.

### **Responsibilities after the event**

- A complete roster of attendees, completed evaluations, all signed waivers, and a final profit/loss statement must be sent to the USDF office within 14 days of completion of the event. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in loss of grant funding for this event and a suspension of eligibility for one year.
- Organizers are encouraged to submit photos and an event recap for possible publication on USDF's *YourDressage.org*
- If the event generates a profit, the GMO or chapter will reimburse USDF for grant funds distributed prior to the event, up to the break-even point.

### **USDF Support:**

- Promotion: Marketing assistance will be provided via eNews, social media, and twice annually in a GMO Education Initiative ad in USDF *Connection*. All events will also be listed on the USDF website under Education Programs and Events and on the National Education Calendar and Map.
- Retrospectively, GMOs may submit photos and a brief re-cap of their event for possible publication on USDF's *YourDressage.org*
- Planning, organizational, and implementation guidance
- Educational materials
- Participants in approved events will automatically receive USDF University credits
  - USDF members (riders, volunteers and auditors) automatically receive USDF University credits, upon USDF receipt of attendance records from organizers.

*PLEASE NOTE: GEI events cannot be approved as a Continuing Education in Dressage Judging Program or a USDF University program. For questions, please contact the USDF office before submitting the application and application fee.*

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