

# VEX IQ Robotics Competition - Nelson Team Grants

## Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What are Nelson Team Grants?

**Nelson Team Grants** seek to enable LAUSD or other Title I and STEM-focused elementary and middle schools (grades 4-8) in the Los Angeles area to start teams to participate in the VEX IQ Robotics Competition (VIQRC). Our goal is to inspire students to pursue STEM degrees and careers.

### 2. Where can I find more information about Nelson Team Grants?

Information and the application are available online at the **Nelson Team Grants** website: <http://larobotics.org/NelsonTeamGrants.html>. Applications are due by the fourth Friday of September.

### 1. What information is available at the Nelson Team Grant website?

#### a. Nelson Team Grants

- 1) Introduction
- 2) Team Grants for New Schools
- 3) Team Grants for Returning Schools
- 4) Equipment Included in Team Grants
- 5) Annual Costs for First and Additional Teams
- 6) Team Grant Process
- 7) LAUSD VIQRC Leagues
- 8) Team Grants by Year
- 9) Team Grant Agreement
- 10) Nelson Team Grant Application
  - a) Includes sections 1-9 above
- 11) Never Give Up: The Journey of Bassett Robotics  
Video about one of the first Nelson Team Grant Recipients
- 12) Frequently Asked Questions and Additional Information

#### b. Recipient Schools

- 1) Regional District Maps and Lists of Schools
  - a) Map of All Regional Districts with School Index and League Hosts
  - b) Maps by Regional District
  - c) Lists of schools by Community of Schools within Regional Districts
- 2) Nelson Team Grant Recipient Schools by Year
- 3) Frequently Asked Questions and Additional Information

#### c. Leagues (by VIQRC Season)

- 1) LAUSD VIQRC League Orientation Workshops
- 2) LAUSD VIQRC Leagues
- 3) Links to Register for Leagues
- 4) Southern California Region Championships
- 5) Frequently Asked Questions and Additional Information

#### d. Coach Training

- 1) Coach Virtual Training
- 2) REC Foundation Coach Summit
- 3) Coach Hands-On Training
- 4) Coach Certification Course
- 5) For Teams That Start Late
- 6) Introductory Videos

- 7) Team Resources
- 8) Game Resources
- 9) Frequently Asked Questions and Additional Information

e. **Sponsors**

- 1) Primary Sponsors: Anita L. Nelson, MD and LeRoy E. Nelson
- 2) Additional Team Sponsors
- 3) Frequently Asked Questions and Additional Information

**3. What is the Nelson Team Grant Agreement, which is included in the application?**

If my school receives a **Nelson Team Grant**, I understand that my school will have use of the provided VEX IQ Robotics Competition (VIQRC) equipment for as long as my team fulfills the conditions listed below. A new VIQRC season starts after the VEX Robotics World Championships in late April or early May each year.

- The coaches/mentors and administration at my school support creating a sustainable VIQRC program.
- The robotics equipment will be stored in a safe, clean location.
- The robotics equipment will be used for official VIQRC events or activities each season.
- My team(s) will complete and pay team registration each season (paid by the grant the first year).
- My team(s) will register for and will attend at least one official event each season.
- My team(s) will participate in post-season surveys to assure that the above conditions have been fulfilled.

In the future, if my team(s) no longer fulfill(s) the conditions listed above, I will return the VIQRC equipment so that it can be made available to another school.

**4. What qualifications are needed to coach a VIQRC team?**

Most coaches of school teams are teachers, but administrators, other school staff members, parents, or community members can also be coaches. All coaches must complete a background check, be interested in learning about robotics and programming, and enjoy working with students to solve problems. Coaches need to have access to, be comfortable using, and know how to get software installed on one or more computers (Windows, Mac, Chromebook, or Tablet) that can be used by students to program their robots. Prior knowledge of robotics or programming is not required.

**5. How big is a team?**

The minimum team size is 2 students. There is no maximum team size, but most teams have 2-12 students. The optimum team size for a new coach with a new team is 3-6 students. The coach and students of a small new team can have fun learning how to design, build, document, and drive the robot. A team with 6-12 students can also learn how to program the robot and/or work on Online Challenges such as the STEM Research Project. Supervising these extra activities with a new team would make the new coach's job more challenging. The coach's job is less challenging if some of the students are high functioning. Teams that start in the Spring can start small in the Spring and then add more students and more activities in the Fall. After the first year, the optimum team size is 4-10 students. Teams of this size should be able to participate in all aspects of the program.

**6. Are all members of the competition team competing at the same time together or split up?**

Up to three drivers participate in each teamwork or skills match. You can have different drivers in different matches. Each team should have three or four Teamwork Qualifying Matches at each of three qualifying sessions and up to three Driving Skills Matches, up to three Programming Skills Matches, and a Teamwork Finals Match at the final league session. Team members who are not driving can cheer for their team.

## 7. What if my team has more students than we can bring to a competition?

You could have different students participate in each qualifying session and then have the students who contributed the most and/or who drove the best represent the team in the Robot Skills Matches and/or Teamwork Finals Matches at the Championship Session.

## 8. What student grade levels can participate on teams?

VIQRC is recommended for students in grades 4-8 and for high functioning students in grade 3. Most LAUSD students in grade 9 are also eligible to participate based on age. The VIQRC robot is recommended for students of ages 8 and up.

## 9. What determines whether a team is Elementary or Middle School?

This is determined by definitions of **Student** and **Team** in the Game Manual. Here are the definitions from Version 0.1 of the Game Manual released May 3, 2024 (which are unlikely to change this season):

**Student** – Anyone born after May 1, 2009 (i.e., who will be 15 or younger at VEX Worlds 2025). Eligibility may also be granted based on a disability that has delayed education by at least one year. *Students* are the individuals who design, build, repair, and program the *Robot* with minimal *Adult* assistance.

- **Elementary School Student** – Any *Student* born after May 1, 2012 (i.e., who will be 12 or younger at VEX Worlds 2025). *Elementary School Students* may “play up” and compete as *Middle School Students*.
- **Middle School Student** – Any eligible *Student* that is not an *Elementary School Student*.<sup>7</sup>

**Team** – Two or more *Students* make up a *Team*.

- A *Team* is classified as an *Elementary School Team* if all members are *Elementary School Students*.
- A *Team* is classified as a *Middle School Team* if **any member** is a *Middle School Student*, or if the *Team* is made up of *Elementary School Students* who declare themselves as “Playing Up” as *Middle School Students* by registering their *Team* as a *Middle School Team*.
- Once a *Team* has competed in an event as a *Middle School Team*, that *Team* may not change back to a *Elementary School Team* for the remainder of the season.
- *Teams* may be associated with schools, community/youth organizations, or a group of neighborhood *Students*.

In the context of this Game Manual, *Teams* contain three types of *Student* roles related to *Robot* build, design, and coding. See <G2> and <G4> for more information. *Adults* may not fulfill any of these roles.

- **Builder** – The *Student(s)* on the *Team* who assemble(s) the *Robot*. An *Adult* cannot be a *Builder* on a *Team*. *Adults* are permitted to teach the *Builder(s)* associated concepts, but may never work on the *Robot* without the *Builder(s)* present and actively participating.
- **Coder** – The *Student(s)* on the *Team* who write(s) the computer code that is downloaded onto the *Robot*. An *Adult* cannot be a *Coder* on a *Team*. *Adults* are permitted to teach the *Coder(s)* associated concepts, but may never work on the code that goes on the *Robot* without the *Coder(s)* present and actively participating.
- **Designer** – The *Student(s)* on the *Team* who design(s) the *Robot* to be built for competition. An *Adult* cannot be a *Designer* on a *Team*. *Adults* are permitted to teach the *Designer(s)* associated concepts, but may never work on the design of the *Robot* without the *Designer(s)* present and actively participating.

Basing eligibility on age rather than on grade level helps to level the playing field internationally. Most LAUSD students in grade 6 are eligible to compete as Elementary School Students, and most LAUSD students in grade 9 are eligible to compete as Middle School students.

## **10. How does a League work?**

New leagues will begin with an orientation session for new coaches in late September or early October. Teams will typically participate in four league sessions held every three school weeks from October to January. League sessions are usually held after school at host schools reasonably close to participating schools. The first three league sessions will be Qualifying Sessions, and the final league session will be the Championship Session. At the discretion of the Event Partner, the first Qualifying Session may begin with one Teamwork Practice Match for each team followed by three Teamwork Qualifying Matches for each team. Otherwise, Qualifying Sessions will offer four Teamwork Qualifying Matches for each team. Remote Judging interviews will be scheduled and Digital Engineering Notebooks will be submitted for most leagues in mid-December prior to the Winter Recess. Remote Judging interviews will occur in early January before the final Championship Session (see next question). The Championship Session will offer each team up to six Robot Skills Matches while Judges conduct follow-up interviews followed by one Teamwork Finals Match and Awards. Participating teams must pay a \$179 league registration fee per team, preferably by check payable to the league host school, for all league sessions. This fee covers the costs of supplies, equipment, and facilities for league hosts. The fee increase from \$155 was based on the CPI change since 2021.

## **11. How does Remote Judging work?**

Remote Judging was introduced in the 2020-21 season to avoid in-person contact between teams and judges during the pandemic. Engineering Notebooks will be stored online in digital format and a link to the Digital Engineering Notebook (DEN) and the team's preferred time slots for Remote Judging Interviews will be submitted online in mid-December at the start of Winter Recess. Judges will review DENs using the Engineering Notebook Rubric. Each team will be scheduled for a 10-minute Zoom interview with a panel of judges who will use the Team Interview Rubric. Interviews will be scheduled after school or on a weekend prior to the league's Championship Session. In late November, additional details will be added to the league event posting, and contacts of teams registered for leagues will be notified by email.

## **12. What is the schedule for League sessions?**

Typical agenda for the first three league sessions, the Qualifying Sessions:

- 3:30-4:00 PM Doors open. Set up
- 3:30-3:45 PM Volunteers check in
- 4:00-4:30 PM Teams check in
- 4:00-4:45 PM Robot Inspection
- 4:45-5:00 PM Opening Ceremony/Announcements
- 5:00-7:00 PM Teamwork Practice and Qualifying Matches
- 7:00-7:30 PM Teams depart. Tear down. Doors close

Typical agenda for the last league session, the Championship Session:

- 3:30-4:00 PM Doors open. Set up
- 3:30-3:45 PM Volunteers check in
- 4:00-4:30 PM Teams check in
- 4:00-4:45 PM Robot Inspection
- 4:45-5:00 PM Opening Ceremony/Announcements
- 4:15-7:00 PM Robot Skills Matches and Follow-up Judging
- 7:00-7:45 PM Teamwork Finals Matches and Awards Ceremony
- 7:45-8:15 PM Teams depart. Tear down. Doors close

### 13. Does my team need to attend every League session?

No. Teams need to participate in at least 60% of the Teamwork Qualifying Matches to be eligible to participate in the Teamwork Finals Matches, so teams can miss one Qualifying session. If it is not convenient for your team to participate in a league, your team can participate in one or more tournaments instead. Tournaments are typically held on Saturdays between October and mid-February. The event registration fee for each tournament is typically \$75-\$150. To see what events are still available:

- Navigate to RobotEvents.com
- Select **VEX IQ Robotics Competition**
- Select your **Grade Level**
- Select **California – South** as the **Event Region**
- Look for events that are Open and that have Spots Open

### 14. How big is a League?

Leagues need at least 16 teams for the top award winners to qualify for Event Region Championships. Leagues with more than 36 teams could split into two smaller leagues to make match schedules easier to manage, or they could run two matches simultaneously. Leagues should provide two competition fields and two practice fields for up to 24 teams, three competition fields and three practice fields for up to 36 teams, and four competition fields and four practice fields for up to 48 teams. That will allow each team to play up to four matches at each league session. LeRoy will provide fields for all new leagues and for all leagues that need to add additional fields.

### 15. What forms are required to participate in a League or Tournament?

#### a. REC Foundation Participant Release Form Instructions

<https://viqrc-kb.recf.org/hc/en-us/articles/9778547067159-Participant-Release-Form>

- All coaches, mentors, and parents/guardians of students must complete the online form. Coaches need to provide parents with the EXACT team number and type of program (e.g. Team 12345A, VEX IQ).
- Participant Release Form (English)  
<https://waiver.smartwaiver.com/w/5ab2c50d92047/web/>
- Participant Release Form (Spanish)  
<https://waiver.smartwaiver.com/w/5f99b690d50ac/web/>
- Any Team Contact can check to see which coaches, mentors, and students have completed Participant Release Forms:
  - Login to [RobotEvents.com](https://www.robotevents.com)
  - Click on My Account
  - Click on the Consent Forms button for Registered Teams.

#### b. LAUSD Field Trips

<https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/2794>

- **Integrated Field Trip System:** Online Field trip request system  
<http://ifieldtrip.lausd.net/>

#### c. LAUSD Media Release Forms

<https://achieve.lausd.net/Page/4875>

- English, Armenian, Chinese, Korean, Russian, Spanish

### 16. What happens if another pandemic forces us to cancel in-person League events?

If teams are allowed meet in person but league events can't be held in-person indoors, we will explore the possibility of holding the remaining league sessions in-person outdoors. If league events can't be held in person indoors or outdoors, then we will try to convert the remaining league sessions to Live Remote events.

If teams are not allowed to meet in person, then teams will be encouraged to try **VEXcode VR** and to compete with the new **VIQC Virtual Skills in VEXcode IQ**:  
<https://www.vexrobotics.com/get-started/vex-vr-skills>.

### 17. My school received a Team Welcome Kit. How should we use it?

The 2024-25 VIQRC Team Welcome Kit ships in a 9"x12"x6" box that should arrive approximately one week after your team registration fee is paid. It includes these important items:

- a. **Two VIQC Blank Team Number Plates.** Write your team number on each plate with a marking pen and attach them to opposite sides of your robot before you attend leagues or tournaments. Your robot needs at least one license plate to pass inspection. Paper license plates can be used in an emergency.
- b. **VEX IQ Engineering Notebook (5 Pack).** Have students record their progress designing, building, repairing, programming, and testing their robot. The notebooks include sample entries and suggestions. See the **Robot Design Rubric** for the criteria that will be used to judge the Engineering Notebook for Remote Judging. Paper Engineering Notebooks can be scanned at the end of the season to convert them into Digital Engineering Notebooks.
- c. **VIQRC Field and Game Element Kit** (sample game elements). Your team can use these to practice driving the robot until you receive and open the full game kit.

### 18. My school received VEX IQ robot kit boxes. How should we use them?

Each school that receives a **New School Award, Additional New Team Award, or Additional Teams Award** should receive a **VEX IQ Competition Kit (2<sup>nd</sup> generation)** consisting of four blue storage bins shipped in two boxes:

- a. **VEX IQ Education Kit (2<sup>nd</sup> generation):** two partly-filled blue storage bins and an IQ System Bundle (2<sup>nd</sup> generation). Frequently backordered for up to 3 months, so availability could be limited.
- b. **VEX IQ Education to Competition Upgrade Kit:** two mostly-filled blue storage bins, a pair of Omni Wheels, and two motors.

Schools that receive a **New School Award** or a **Returning Teams Award** will receive an extra **IQ Robot Battery (Li-Ion, 2000 mAh)**.

To get your team started, review these online STEM Library documents:

- a. [Get Started with VEX IQ \(2nd generation\)](#)
  - 1) Get ready to use your VEX IQ (2nd generation) Kit
  - 2) Get started building
  - 3) Get started driving
  - 4) Get started coding with VEXcode IQ. [Save this until your students are ready.]
  - 5) Get started teaching
  - 6) Get started with the VEX IQ Robotics Competition
- b. [Naming Your Brain with VEX IQ \(2nd gen\)](#) Include your team number in your brain's name
- c. [Building Your First Robot with VEX IQ \(2nd gen\)](#). Build the BaseBot.

Start recording team progress in the **Engineering Notebook**.

- a. [Get Started Notebooking](#)
- b. [VEX Digital Notebook Templates](#)

Watch the VIQRC game video at:

<https://recf.org/vex-iq-robotics-competition/>.

Read the **Game Manual for VEX IQ Robotics Competition Teams** at:

<https://viqrc-kb.refc.org/hc/en-us/articles/9754906857367-Game-Manual-for-VEX-IQ-Robotics-Competition-Teams>

Major Game Manual updates may occur at the end of June, July, January, and/or March.

Choose a strategy to score as many points as possible in a 60-second match.

Choose a team name and robot name and update your team information at [RobotEvents.com](https://www.robotevents.com).

For your second robot, the team could build and drive the **Hero Bot** for the current season. Build Instructions for Competition Kits (2<sup>nd</sup> Generation) and for Super Kits (1<sup>st</sup> Generation) are posted at: <https://www.vexrobotics.com/iq/downloads/build-instructions>

If Build Instructions for a Hero Bot are not yet available for the current season for your kit, your team could choose another robot build as its starting robot. Team members can also search for robot ideas on YouTube and design their own starting robot.

Modify the robot or your strategy as needed to improve performance. Practice driving before each competition.

## 19. My school received some VIQRC field boxes. How should we use them?

Each school that receives a **New School Award** or an **Additional Field Award** should receive this kit:

- a. **VIQC Field Kit** (ships in three large, heavy boxes). It takes a few minutes to assemble or disassemble the 6'x8' field. Be careful not to twist the tiles relative to each other when disassembling the field because the tabs can break off. Push one tile or wall piece down while pushing the adjacent tiles up from below to separate them. The two larger boxes each hold 16 tiles, 10 side wall sections, and 2 corner wall sections. The smaller box holds 16 tiles and 8 side wall sections.

Each school that receives a **New School Award** should also receive this kit:

- b. **VIQRC Field and Game Element Kit**. This box contains the field elements and game elements for this year's VIQRC game. Some assembly is required. Expect to spend 5-6 hours building the field elements. Different students can work on different sections of the build instructions simultaneously. If your work surface is smooth, cover it with a cloth or paper towels to prevent small parts from rolling away. Set up the field elements and game elements on the assembled field to develop and test your game strategy and to practice driving the robot before competitions.

Each school that receives a **Field Upgrade Award** should receive this kit:

- c. **VIQC Field Upgrade Kit**. This smaller box contains the 16 tiles and 8 side wall sections needed to upgrade an older 4'x8' field to a newer 6'x8' field.

## 20. How do I access the programming software?

We recommend that teams use **VEXcode IQ Blocks** to program your robot. VEXcode works on Chromebooks, Amazon Fire, Android tablets, iPads, Windows, and Mac. VEXcode's Block-based interface is the perfect platform for those new to coding. Students use a simple drag and drop interface to create functioning projects. Each block's purpose can easily be identified using the visual cues like its shape, color, and label. Students who have used any other Block-based robot programming software can easily switch to **VEXcode**. **VEXcode IQ Blocks** is available for download online at: <https://www.vexrobotics.com/vexcode>. An online, browser-based version of **VEXcode IQ Blocks** is also available online for Google Chrome and Chrome-based Microsoft Edge at: <https://codeiq.vex.com>

For students new to programming, we recommend starting with **VEXcode VR Blocks**, which is available at: <https://www.vexrobotics.com/vexcode-vr>. This online, browser-based platform allows students to experience all features of the VEXcode platform with a virtualized robot. No physical robot is needed! Students can learn how to program a robot at home or at school on computers or on tablets. Students can complete activities on different virtual Playgrounds, each of which is specifically designed to highlight key Computer Science skills and concepts. The full **VEX Computer Science Level 1 – Blocks Course** takes about

18 hours to complete. It is available at:  
<https://education.vex.com/stemlabs/cs>.

## 21. How can I view the match scores and rankings for my team?

During most league sessions, match scores are uploaded to the league event on [RobotEvents.com](https://RobotEvents.com) and cumulative rankings are updated after each match. After all league sessions, final results and cumulative rankings are uploaded to the league event on [RobotEvents.com](https://RobotEvents.com). After the final session, skills rankings, teamwork finals results, and awards are also uploaded to the league event on [RobotEvents.com](https://RobotEvents.com). Navigate to a league event on [RobotEvents.com](https://RobotEvents.com) by host school name or by using one of the links available at <http://larobotics.org/NTGLEagues.html>.

After you find your event, click on **Results** and then **Division 1** to see **Match Results** for the most recent session and cumulative **Teamwork Rankings**.

You can also view the team list, team match schedule, team match results, event match schedule, event match results, cumulative rankings, skills results, skills rankings, and awards by downloading the **VEX Via** app to an Android or Apple smartphone or tablet from:

- [VEX Via - Apps on Google Play](#) or
- [VEX Via on the App Store - iTunes - Apple](#)

The Apple version allows you to search for events by name or city and for teams by number, team name or city. Or find events by selecting Nearby Events and then scanning the list for your event by the start date (date of first session). After you find your event or team, click on the star at the top of the screen to add it to the Favorites list for quick access later.

## 22. Are there any other Apps for VIQRC teams?

Download the **VIQC Hub** app to view or search the latest version of the Game Manual, a score calculator, and a match timer. This app is very helpful for team meetings and practice sessions:

- [VIQRC Hub - Apps on Google Play](#) or
- [VIQRC Hub on the App Store - iTunes - Apple](#)

## 23. What should I do if an old NIMH robot battery won't charge?

When you place a NIMH robot battery in the robot battery charger and plug it in with the power cord to recharge the battery, the charger LED should quickly change to solid red and later change to solid green when the battery is fully charged. If the charger light flashes red, the battery voltage is too low for the charger to recharge it. Try the procedure in the following video to restore the battery:  
[How to fix VEX IQ Flashing Light or No Charge Battery Issue](#)

If the robot charger LED still flashes red, the robot battery needs to be replaced.

## 24. What should I do if I need VEX IQ Technical Support?

Email your technical support question to [support@vexrobotics.com](mailto:support@vexrobotics.com) or call 833-297-6268 for customer & technical support. For competition support, email [support@robotevents.com](mailto:support@robotevents.com).

## 25. Can I change the team name or other team information?

Yes, you can make changes to your registered team information whenever you want:

- Log into [RobotEvents.com](https://RobotEvents.com). If you do not see your **Registered Teams**, click on **My Account** at the top of the screen.
- Click on the **Edit Team** button to the right of your team.
- Edit any of the team information fields.
- Scroll to the bottom of the screen and click on the **Save** button.



## 26. Can I change team contacts?

Yes, you can add, remove, or change team contacts by using this procedure:

- Log into [RobotEvents.com](https://RobotEvents.com). If you do not see your **Registered Teams**, click on **My Account** at the top of the screen.
- Click on **My Teams** on the left side of your screen.
- Click on the blue **Manage Contacts** button to the right of your team.
- Click on the green **Add Contact** button at the bottom of the screen to add a new contact.
- Click on a red **Remove** button at the bottom right of the screen to remove a contact.
- Click on the Financial Contact or Secondary Coach fields at the top of the screen to select a different contact from the drop-down list.
- I should always be the Organization/Administrative/District Contact.
- Click on the blue **Save** button.

If you need to change the Primary Coach, please contact your [Regional Support Manager](#) (RSM). Our Regional Support Manager is Bill Cahill, [Bill\\_Cahill@recf.org](mailto:Bill_Cahill@recf.org), 747-767-4539.

If you add a new team contact, the system will send an invitation to the new contact to join your team. The new contact will not receive access to your team information until the invitation is accepted and the new contact registers or logs into an account on RobotEvents.com.

## 27. What are the annual costs for schools that received Nelson Team Grants?

New schools are required to register and pay for each team to attend an official event (preferably a league).

Returning schools are required to pay team registration and event registration and should budget for additional robot parts for each team each season. They also should order a Full Game & Field Element Kit for each field. A [Team Registration Fee Waiver](#) may be available for schools that registered more than six teams in current and previous seasons.

Annual Costs	New Schools	Returning Schools	
	Each Team First Year	Each Team	Each Field
VIQRC Team Registration	Paid by Grant	\$200.00	N/A
League Registration	\$179.00	\$179.00	N/A
Additional Robot Parts	N/A	\$100.00	N/A
VIQRC Full Game & Field Element Kit	Paid by Grant	N/A	\$139.99
Shipping + Tax + Credit Card Fees	N/A	\$38.81	\$44.51
<b>Estimated Total Cost</b>	<b>\$179.00</b>	<b>\$517.81</b>	<b>\$184.50</b>

## 28. How can I get an invoice for a team registration or event registration?

To access an invoice on RobotEvents.com, any Team Contact can

- Login to [robotevents.com](https://robotevents.com)
- Click on **My Account** (top of screen)
- Click on **My Orders** (left side)
- Click on **View** (right side) for the Order for which you want an Invoice
- Click on **Invoice** (top right)
- Print or save the Invoice PDF.

## 29. Can my school add additional robotics teams so more students can participate?

Yes. Schools can have up to 22 teams with the same base team number and different suffix letters. Teams can also have multiple base team numbers.

### 30. How can my school purchase additional kits or parts?

VIQRC robot kits and parts can be ordered from VEX Robotics at:

[https://www.vexrobotics.com/catalogsearch/result/?q= empty &vex\\_classroom=IQ&vex\\_site=product\\_hits](https://www.vexrobotics.com/catalogsearch/result/?q= empty &vex_classroom=IQ&vex_site=product_hits)

All VEX products ship from Greenville (near Dallas), Texas. Availability of robot kits and some parts has sometimes been a problem because of chip shortages and supply chain issues because most parts are manufactured in China and shipped to Greenville through clogged ports in Los Angeles.

### 31. Are any funds available for additional teams or robot equipment?

If your robotics team needs financial assistance, your coach and/or robotics team could try these websites, which other teams have used to raise funds:

- Returning schools are eligible for one or two **Additional Teams Awards** each year. Returning schools could also be eligible for **Returning Teams Awards**, **Field Upgrade Awards**, and/or **Additional Field Awards**. See the **Nelson Team Grants** website: <http://larobotics.org/NelsonTeamGrants.html>.
- How to use DonorsChoose.org:  
<https://roboticseducation.org/documents/2018/10/how-to-use-donorschoose-org.pdf/>
  - Teachers should include “STEM” in the project title, because technology companies have occasionally funded all STEM projects in California.
- Funds and Grants for Robotics Programs: <https://www.vexrobotics.com/grants>
- <https://www.piggybackr.com/>

### 32. What is the procedure for parts that are broken and/or lost?

Each school is responsible for replacing broken and/or lost parts. LeRoy Nelson and/or Stephen Stein attend most league sessions, and they often have spare brains, batteries, and motors available to debug and/or replace parts that are not working.

### 33. Do the Robot Kits need to be solely used for students that will be competing?

No. During the VIQRC league season (August through January), the students on the school’s VIQRC team should have primary use of the robot kits, but parts can be shared with other teams. The kits can be used for other purposes outside of the league season.

### 34. Should teams do a STEM Research Project?

The STEM Research Project was originally required, but it is now an optional video to be submitted as an Online Challenge at <https://challenges.robotevents.com/>. It is not judged at leagues or tournaments.

We recommend that small teams (2-6 students) skip the STEM Research Project and other Online Challenges their first year. The STEM Research Project is a great optional activity for larger teams and for experienced teams. Designing, building, driving, coding, testing, and documenting a robot introduces students to **engineering**. The STEM Research Project introduces students to **scientific research**.

### 35. What should coaches of VIQRC teams do at the start of each season?

- Check to see if your school is eligible for a **Nelson Team Grant**:  
<http://larobotics.org/NelsonTeamGrants.html>
- Review the latest version of NTG **Frequently Asked Questions** (this document):  
[http://larobotics.org/Documents/NTG\\_FAQ.pdf](http://larobotics.org/Documents/NTG_FAQ.pdf)
- Login to RobotEvents.com, Log into [RobotEvents.com](https://robotevents.com). If you do not see your **Registered Teams**, click on **My Account** at the top of the screen. If you do not see a green checkmark next to **Background Check** on the left side, click on **Background Check** and follow the instructions to complete your Background Check.
- Read the five documents that you will need to confirm that you have read and agree to when you register new teams or renew team registrations:  
 I have read and agree to the [RECF Code Of Conduct](#) [4 pages]

- I have read and agree to the [RECF Student Centered Policy](#) [6 pages]
- I have read and agree to this season's [Game Manual](#) including the sections on the age requirements of participants [1 page; see FAQ #9]
- I have read and agree to the [Team Contact Definitions](#) [3 pages]
- I have read and will abide by the [Commitment to Coach Excellence](#) [2 pages]
- Renew team registrations at: [RobotEvents.com](#)
- Pay team registration fees (\$200 per team).
  - One or two teams paid by Nelson Team Grants the first year for new schools only.
- Order the new Field and Game Element Kit:
  - 2024-25 VEX IQ Competition “Rapid Relay” Full Game & Field Element Kit (\$140 + shipping + tax = \$192) at: <https://www.vexrobotics.com/228-8893.html>
  - Paid by Nelson Team Grants the first year for new schools only
- Review REC Foundation Library for VIQRC at: <https://viqc-kb.recf.org/hc/en-us>
- Coaches and students review the RAPID RELAY game video and read the Game Manual at: <https://recf.org/vex-iq-robotics-competition/>
  - Current version is 0.1. Major scheduled updates:  
Version 1.0 June 25; Version 2.0 Sept 3, 2024; Version 3.0 January 28, Version 4.0 April 2, 2025
- Review additional game documentation as it becomes available.
- Students develop game strategies.
- Students can learn about Engineering, Notebooking, Coding, Competing, Code of Conduct, VEX Library, REC Library for Teams, Student Resources, and Scholarships in the RECF and VEX Libraries at: <https://viqc-kb.recf.org/hc/en-us/articles/9711501146007-VEX-Students-Start-Here>
- Students can learn introductory coding with a virtual robot playing the current game using **VEXcode IQ** and compete in **VIQC Virtual Skills**: <https://www.vexrobotics.com/get-started/vex-vr-skills>
- Advanced students can learn more about coding with a virtual robot using **VEXcode VR**: <https://www.vexrobotics.com/support/get-started/vexcode-vr>
- Register your teams for a league in September or early October:
  - For info on leagues, including links to register, see <http://larobotics.org/NTGLEagues.html>.
  - Select **Pay Later** as the **Payment Method** at **Checkout**.
  - Have your school issue a check for \$179 per team payable to the league host as indicated on the event website General Information and in the event registration confirmation email.
- Attend **Coach Virtual Training**, attend **Coach Hands-On Training**, and/or complete **Coach Certification Course** in June- September: <https://larobotics.org/NTGTraining.html>
- New coaches attend **League Coach Orientation** in June, August, or September.
  - For locations, schedules, and links to events, see <http://larobotics.org/NTGLEagues.html>
- Students build the Hero Bot as a starting robot for the current game. <https://www.vexrobotics.com/iq/downloads/build-instructions>
  - Separate instructions for older Super Kits (1<sup>st</sup> generation) (when available) and newer Competition Kits (2<sup>nd</sup> generation)
- Complete required forms discussed in Q&A #15.
- Bring event registration check in the amount of \$179/team payable to the league host (per the event website General Information and the event registration confirmation email) to the first league session, usually in October.

### 36. What if I have a question that is not answered here?

Contact LeRoy Nelson via email at [LeRoy@LARobotics.org](mailto:LeRoy@LARobotics.org) or call him any day between 10 AM and 9 PM at 310-529-4637.