

Thank you for your interest in Trout or Salmon in the Classroom. As you may already know TIC and its primary parent organization in many regions, Trout Unlimited, have been committed to conserving, protecting and restoring coldwater fisheries and their watersheds across the nation for over 50 years. A large part of our conservation work involves educating students about their important water resources.



**TIC is a hands-on environmental education program which enhances STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) and state learning standards in classrooms.** Students study and raise trout from eggs to fingerlings (baby trout) in their classroom aquaria. The program usually culminates with a trip to a watershed stream where each student hand delivers a baby trout into its natural habitat. By having wildlife in the classroom and allowing students to interact with a living and growing organism fish, TIC helps to spark student's curiosity in learning while introducing complex concepts such as watersheds, riparian buffer zones, and stream ecology to young students. Travel to the watershed streams allows students to experience and understand what makes a healthy stream and forest environment. Releasing the trout, which they have raised for over eight months in their classroom, creates an even deeper connection to these water resources.

Here are the basic steps to follow if you are interested in beginning a TIC/SIC program at your school.

1. **Contact your TIC/SIC state coordinator and TU Chapter**

The TIC state coordinator is a great first point of contact for anybody interested in starting a program in his/her classroom. Each state is different in what they require or provide, so finding a point of contact for your area is usually the very first step to a successful project. State coordinators mainly connect you with the right people that will help with getting eggs, permits, and all sorts of other logistics. The “right people” could be the state coordinator themselves, a state agency employee, local TU chapter volunteer, or any combination!

Find your local TU Chapter at <http://www.tu.org/connect/chapter-search>

**\*\*Releasing fish into a river or stream is a state-regulated activity and permissions and permitting requirements vary from state to state. These regulations are put in place to protect our wild fish populations from introduced threats like disease and invasive species. Your state coordinator can help you navigate this process if necessary.**

## 2. Funding and Equipment

The next step is acquiring funding for your equipment needs. Sometimes, your local TU chapter will assist with finding resources or will have equipment that you can use. [Here are some links to potential funders](#). The best way to ensure you get a tank is to come to the table with some ability to fund your tank.

Equipment costs total \$1,000 to \$1,500. It can be purchased piecemeal or in a [packaged kit from our partner, That Fish Place-That Pet Place](#). Kits that include the chiller are around \$800-\$900 and you'll also need a 55 gallon tank, stand (optional) and covers/insulation materials. [Find the equipment list here](#). Many TIC programs recommend the TradeWind Chillers. They come with a higher price tag but are very reliable—these are sold separately from the kits from That Fish Place. To order this you can call Hal at (760) 233-8888 or [twchillers@sbcglobal.net](mailto:twchillers@sbcglobal.net) (mention TIC). Estimated cost is about \$615 for this type of chiller.

## 3. Getting started: Timeline

Most programs begin with getting eyed eggs from the hatchery in the fall with release dates of their fingerling trout or salmon in the spring. Others receive eggs in the winter after Winter Break at school. Either way, before you do all that, you must prepare your aquarium for the trout! [Check out this timeline for the typical classroom](#).

## 4. Setup

[Setup information and step-by-step videos can be found on the website](#). Many TU chapters assist in setting up initially but not always.

## 5. Trout and Tank Care

It is the teacher/principal/classroom's responsibility to maintain the health of the trout and tank ecosystem. [Find daily, weekly, and monthly checklists here](#).

## 6. Lesson Plans

Once you have your tank up and running you will find that there are endless ways to engage your students using TIC in STEM subjects, art, social studies, and more!. [Here are some ideas from all over the country](#). Do you have a lesson plan you'd like to share? Please share it with TU's Youth Education Coordinator at [tgranke@tu.org](mailto:tgranke@tu.org).

## 7. Troubleshooting – what if something goes wrong?

How tight should the plastic parts be? What if I get a leak? The water in my tank is cloudy – what should I do?

These are all questions that are answered on [the troubleshooting page](#). We are working to make the page searchable in the coming years, so stay tuned. Also be sure to [join the TIC/SIC National Network Google Group](#) where you can ask the community questions about anything from pH to fungal issues to funding ideas.

## 8. Have fun!!

Connect with other schools at [www.facebook.com/ticsic](https://www.facebook.com/ticsic) and feel free to contact TU's national TIC coordinator Tara Granke at [tgranke@tu.org](mailto:tgranke@tu.org) if you need further assistance.