

Great Science for Girls



Extension Services for Gender Equity in Science through After-School Programs (GSG) Request for Applications (RFA)

Introduction

The Educational Equity Center at the Academy for Educational Development (EEC/AED) is soliciting partners to join an ongoing, nationwide initiative called Great Science for Girls (GSG). Funded by the National Science Foundation, GSG aims to broaden and sustain girls' interest and persistence in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). Working through a network of intermediaries (organizations that provide training and technical assistance to after-school programs in their region), GSG builds the capacity of after-school programs to provide a learning environment for girls and boys that includes opportunities for leadership and engagement with fun, hands-on, inquiry-based science experiences. GSG provides its intermediaries with ongoing training and technical assistance, evidence-based curricula, research and resources, and support materials, which are then used to train after-school sites. The initiative's implementation and outcomes are being evaluated by an external evaluator. (For more information, please visit the GSG website: <http://www.edequity.org/gsg/>.)

In the first three years of the five-year initiative, GSG has reached about 100 after-school centers in 10 sites across the country (see enclosed list of current partners). Through this solicitation, GSG will expand the initiative to additional sites. Applications are solicited from intermediaries; direct service providers operating multiple after-school programs; school districts; and other organizations found qualified according to the criteria specified in this RFA.

Background

Why Teach Science in After-School?

Underserved groups (women, people of color, and people with disabilities) comprise a disproportionately low percentage of the workforce in STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering, and math). As a result of this failure to tap into the potential talent of all students, American students' performance in science and math is rated below those of many other industrialized nations. The same people that are underrepresented in STEM are the youth served in after-school programs. The freedom and flexibility of the after-school setting allows for learning experiences not possible during the school day. This makes after-school programs a perfect place to engage children and youth in inquiry-based, hands-on fun science activities. Such activities create opportunities for students to view science as a part of their daily lives and can involve parents and other family and community members.

EEC/AED

The Educational Equity Center at AED (EEC/AED) develops programs and materials to promote bias-free learning in school and after-school. It is an outgrowth of Educational Equity Concepts, a national not-for-profit organization with a 22-year history of promoting educational excellence for all children. AED is a nonprofit organization working globally to improve education, health, civil society and economic development. GSG Extension Services is based on EEC/AED's

extensive experience in the field of science education, gender equity, and after-school education.

Services You Will Receive

EEC/AED has a team of experts that are focused on helping intermediary organizations successfully implement programming to broaden and sustain girls' interest in science. The GSG team will provide the selected organizations with a variety of supports at no cost to prepare them to implement GSG with after-school programs, and support them after initial implementation:

- Professional Development Institutes: A two-day, on-site training for the organization and its participating after-school program staff, and community partners. Additional on-site re-boot sessions are available based on expansion plans.
- Ongoing Technical Assistance: Site visits, monthly intermediary conference calls, e-mail communication, quarterly all-site conference calls and live, interactive webinars.
- A Cross-Site Conference (by invitation) to be held in April 2010 (travel costs for key individuals from each Intermediary site location would be covered).
- Evidence-Based Curricula: Seven informal science curricula that have demonstrated success in stimulating girls' interest in STEM and building self-confidence in their abilities. Assistance is provided in selecting the curriculum/curricula that is/are appropriate for your program and planning for professional development and implementation.
- Research and Resources: Information about the latest research, access through the project website to articles and reports on after-school, gender equity and STEM.
- Support Materials: A "Tool Kit" on GSG implementation for intermediaries and after-school centers; sample lesson plans; and training tools such as handouts, sample agendas and power-point presentations. The GSG web site is a clearinghouse and archive for all program materials and resources (<http://www.edequity.org/gsg/>).
- A Listserv connecting organizations and after-school programs across the initiative as a community of learners.
- A Modest Compensation in the amount of \$2,500 is provided to offset implementation costs.

Services You Will Provide

Selected organizations will be responsible for providing the following services to after-school programs:

- Recruit and retain high-quality after-school programs to the GSG initiative.
- Conduct turn-key trainings from GSG.
- Facilitate programs' start up and implementation, including participant recruitment and retention, curriculum selection, lesson planning and direct instruction of science curricula.
- Monitor program implementation and provide ongoing feedback for continuous quality improvement.
- Collect participant-level data (i.e., demographics, program attendance) and program-level data (i.e., lessons, activity frequency).
- Cooperate with evaluation activities, including providing requested data on programs and participants.

Application Submission

Proposals should include:

- A completed application form.
- Résumés of key personnel who would be responsible for implementation of GSG, stating what role they would play in GSG. If no current staff would be responsible for GSG implementation, attach job descriptions instead.
- Letters of support from two after-school programs stating how the applicant has assisted them with professional development or technical assistance.

Please contact Maryann Stimmer at 212-367-4574 or mstimmer@aed.org if you have any questions about this RFA.

Applications should be e-mailed to Maryann Stimmer at mstimmer@aed.org no later than January 15, 2010.

Timeline

Proposal acceptance would be announced by February 15. Implementation would begin with technical assistance over the phone and a professional development institute in Spring 2010. GSG curriculum/program implementation in after-school centers will begin in Summer or Fall 2010.

Current Partners

1. Alternatives, Inc., Hampton, VA
2. Chicago Area Project, Chicago, IL
3. DC Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation, Washington, DC
4. MCCOY Inc., Indianapolis, IN
5. MHC After3, Martinsville, VA
6. New Haven Best Initiative/The Consultation Center, New Haven, CT
7. Partners in Out-of-School Time (POST), Charlotte, NC
8. San Francisco School District, San Francisco, CA
9. The After School Corporation (TASC), New York, NY
10. The After School Institute (TASI), Baltimore, MD

APPLICATION

Organization's name: _____

Contact Person:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Mailing address: _____

Telephone: _____

e-mail address: _____

Alternate contact person:

Name: _____

Title: _____

Mailing address: _____

Telephone: _____

e-mail address: _____

Please briefly address the following areas:

A. Organizational Capacity

1. State why teaching informal science in after-school programs is important to your organization.

2. Describe how this work would be related to or benefit from other ongoing projects and partnerships.

3. List financial and community resources and partnerships with other organizations that may support this project.

4. Discuss how the project would be sustained even if the lead person on the project leaves your organization.

B. Successful Relevant Organizational Experience

1. Indicate the number of after-school programs or centers you worked with in the last two years: _____.
What evidence do you have of these programs' quality (e.g., retention and participation rates, anecdotal evidence of quality, external evaluations)?

2. Specify the approximate number of staff from those programs or centers that you provided professional development/training to: _____.
What is the nature of the professional development/training provided (e.g., turn-key or customized workshops, what curriculum or topical area?).

3. Describe how your organization collects and analyzes program data (e.g., participant attendance, staff performance) and how you use it for quality improvement.

C. Successful Relevant Staff Experience and Qualifications

1. Identify the lead staff member(s) who would be responsible for implementing GSG, their experience and qualifications (please also attach résumés or job descriptions).

2. Specify the number of staff you currently have available to provide technical assistance and professional development, their experience and qualifications (please also attach résumés or job descriptions for the key staff providing technical assistance and professional development).

D. Your Approach to Service Delivery

Describe how your organization intends to provide the following services for GSG:

1. Recruiting and retaining high-quality after-school programs, including number of programs and approximate number of participants.

2. Facilitating programs' start up and implementation, including strategies for recruitment and retention of participants.

3. Monitoring and feedback for continuous quality improvement.

4. Conducting turn-key and customized trainings.

E. Data Collection Capability

1. What software package/s do/es your organization, or after-school centers you support, use to collect data on participant demographics and attendance information?

_____.

2. Do you collect information on the following participant variables?

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Date of birth | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| Grade in school | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| Gender | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| Ethnic/racial background | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| Daily attendance | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| Attendance in specific activities | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes |
| Program outcomes | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, Which? _____ |
| Other variables | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes, Which? _____ |

3. Is each participant assigned a unique identifier? No Yes

4. Can participants be tracked from year to year? No Yes

5. What is the frequency with which attendance data are entered into the system?
 Daily Weekly Bi-weekly Monthly Other, which? _____

6. What quality control mechanisms are in place to ascertain the data's reliability?