



## **Call for Concept Papers School Improvement Initiatives in Boston Deadline: Tuesday, October 19<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 pm**

### *Introduction*

EdVestors is pleased to issue this Call for Concept Papers for school improvement initiatives to drive change in Boston schools. **With a single, three-page concept paper, applicants can apply for consideration for a two-year grant for the 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years. This begins the selection process for inclusion as a grantee in EdVestors 2011 Investment Portfolio, including those invited to present at the annual Urban Education Investment Showcase.** Following the concept paper submissions, a smaller number of applicants will be invited to submit full proposals due in early January 2011. We expect to award up to 10 two-year grants of roughly \$100,000 (\$50,000 per year). Grant awards will be announced in June 2011.

The focus of this Call for Concept Papers is as follows:

**School-based capacity-building initiatives aimed at strengthening teaching and learning in urban schools, with a focus on improving student academic outcomes through professional development, classroom instruction, or student support programs.**

General Eligibility: Proposed initiatives may involve one or more schools in Boston, Massachusetts. Proposals may be led by the schools themselves, district offices, or by nonprofit organizations working in close collaboration with one or more school partners. Schools may be public (district, pilot or charter), independent or private schools serving a significant percentage (at least 50%) of students from low-income families in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12.

### **INFORMATION SESSIONS**

We will offer an information session in Boston to answer questions about this Call for Concept Papers. **Please sign-up in advance by RSVPing to Jamie Abraham, EdVestors Executive Assistant at [abraham@edvestors.org](mailto:abraham@edvestors.org) or by calling (617) 585-5740.**

**Tuesday, September 21<sup>st</sup>, 9:30 - 11:00AM  
YWCA, Kuumba Library, 140 Clarendon Street, Boston**

## EdVestors Call for Concept Papers, Page 2:

**Grantmaking Focus:** *School-based Capacity-building Initiatives to Accelerate School Improvement in Boston*

This Call for Concept Papers welcomes applications from schools and nonprofits that address key issues in urban education and have the potential to drive school change, including:

- *Increasing Academic Rigor & Effective Instruction*, including professional development for teachers that leads to more effective instruction and engaged student learning
- *Reducing Barriers to Learning*, especially for English language learners and students with special needs, or other high-need student populations
- *Building Strong School Communities* through student engagement, family involvement and positive school climate.
- *Strengthening School Leadership and Teacher Ownership*

Applications may outline school-based programs or services that are solidly grounded in best practice research regarding what works in urban education, and that pilot, implement or expand effective models for improving student academic outcomes. Applicants may propose district-wide or multi-school initiatives that impact students or educators in more than one school or setting, as well as single-school projects. Start-up projects as well as more established initiatives are welcome to apply.

### **Special Interest:**

While much recent attention has been on the state and district-designated turnaround schools, EdVestors encourages other struggling or underperforming schools with a solid plan or innovative idea for school improvement to consider submitting a concept paper. *This does not preclude turnaround schools from applying as well.*

**Please note:** *Proposals seeking general operating support for after-school programs do not fall within EdVestors grant-making focus and will not be considered for funding.*

### **Grant Ranges**

Normally, grants from EdVestors range between \$100,000 and \$120,000 over a two year period (\$50,000 to \$60,000 per year) with some variation possible depending on the nature of the project. Applicants should contact EdVestors if they have questions about the grant request amount.

### **Selection Criteria & Review Process:**

The Education Review Panel consists of front-line educators, policy experts, nonprofit and philanthropic leaders who help to recommend finalists for the EdVestors Portfolio, by reviewing concept papers and full proposals with EdVestors staff support. Applicants selected for the Portfolio are likely to share key features:

- ❖ Propose school-based activities that support whole school improvement aimed at improving student academic outcomes in one or more urban schools;
- ❖ Build school capacity to strengthen teaching and learning;
- ❖ Align with the school's primary teaching and learning goals and reform initiatives in the school district;
- ❖ Target a key issue in urban education;

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- ❖ Utilize approaches of promising (based on research) or proven (based on outcomes) effectiveness that enhance the learning environment for children and improve educational results;
- ❖ Describe a well-thought out and organized plan for implementation;
- ❖ Articulate intended outcomes and a strategy for tracking and documenting them;
- ❖ Benefit from strong and effective leadership, and, if applicable, strong collaboration between a group of schools working together or between schools and their nonprofit partners;
- ❖ Implement models or strategies that can be shared with other educators as best practices or lessons learned, expanded in the current setting, or replicated in other schools or settings.

#### *Key Dates & Process:*

<b>September – December 2010:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Optional information session offered at 140 Clarendon Street, Boston on <b>September 21<sup>st</sup>, 2010, 9:30 – 11:00AM</b>. RSVP to <a href="mailto:abraham@edvestors.org">abraham@edvestors.org</a>.</li><li>▪ Concept papers due by <b>3:00 PM on Tuesday, October 19th, 2010</b>.</li><li>▪ Full proposals invited from selected applicants in early December.</li></ul>
<b>January – March 2011:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Full proposals due on January 11, 2011.</li><li>▪ Full proposal review and site visits occur in February 2011.</li><li>▪ 2011 Showcase Presenters notified in early March.</li></ul>
<b>April – June 2011:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Urban Education Investment Showcase takes place the second week of April 2011.</li><li>▪ EdVestors works with donors to confirm final grant decisions during May &amp; June.</li><li>▪ Final grant awards for all applicants announced in June 2011.</li></ul>

#### *Questions and Technical Assistance*

Please EMAIL questions regarding eligibility and guidelines to Associate Director Janet Anderson at [anderson@edvestors.org](mailto:anderson@edvestors.org). Applicants are also welcome and encouraged to contact Janet Anderson via email or by calling 617-585-5740 to make a phone appointment to discuss a concept paper idea in advance of submission, although this informal feedback would not guarantee funding in any way. We will do our best to respond via email or phone as quickly as possible.

#### *About the Urban Education Investment Showcase & Investment Portfolio*

The Showcase, tentatively scheduled for the second week of April 2011, is an opportunity for EdVestors donors to choose their own grantees from the high-quality education initiatives selected as finalists for the EdVestors 2011 Investment Portfolio. At the Showcase, project leaders present their cases for support directly before likely and potential donors. Following the Showcase, EdVestors works closely with participating donors to confirm their individual grant commitments. *Because participating donors choose their final grantees, selection as a Showcase presenter does not necessarily guarantee grant funding.*

For a description of the initiatives funded through the EdVestors 2010 Investment Portfolio, please visit our website at [www.edvestors.org](http://www.edvestors.org).

## EdVestors – Call for Concept Papers, Page 3:

### *About EdVestors*

#### **EdVestors drives change in urban schools through smart, strategic private investment.**

EdVestors seeks to accelerate change in urban schools by identifying and shaping the most effective initiatives, partnering with donors to invest in these efforts, and supporting project leaders with hands-on expertise. Since its launch in 2002 by a group of philanthropists and business leaders, EdVestors has directed more than \$9 million to strategic school improvement efforts in Boston and Lowell, Massachusetts.

#### In addition to the innovative **Urban Education Investment Showcase & Investment Portfolio**,

EdVestors also coordinates the **BPS Arts Expansion Fund**, part of a multi-year strategic initiative to expand arts education across the Boston Public Schools, in partnership with Superintendent Carol R. Johnson and collaborating donors. EdVestors also awards the annual **\$100,000 Thomas W. Payzant School on the Move Prize** to one of the most improving Boston Public Schools. In 2010, EdVestors awarded over \$1.7 million in grants through all three funding opportunities.

## APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Please EMAIL your application including attachments as one combined Microsoft Office document to:  
[anderson@edvestors.org](mailto:anderson@edvestors.org).

If you have any difficulty emailing your application, please contact us at (617) 585-5740.

*Please do not fax or hand-deliver applications.*

*Please submit:*

- 1) A cover page with requested applicant information (can take more than one page if needed);
- 2) A 3-page concept paper in 11-point font or larger; include the name of the lead applicant and page numbers in the footer on each page of the document;
- 3) A project budget for 2011-12 and 2012-13 school years, listing both expenses and expected sources of revenue (a sample project budget will be available on the EdVestors website at [www.edvestors.org](http://www.edvestors.org));
- 4) For nonprofits serving as the lead applicant, a current year operating budget for the organization;
- 5) A list of board members, if applicable.

When submitting the email, please write the name of the applicant organization or school in the subject line of the email. For example, "Subject: Alpha Elementary School Concept Paper." Email your application including attachments as one combined MICROSOFT OFFICE document, if possible.

Please observe the page limit and do not send extra attachments in the concept paper phase.

*In the concept paper, please:*

- Describe your organization or school(s) and any key partners.
- Explain the need or problem this initiative plans to address, including those who will be served.
- Outline your initiative and the plan for implementing it.
- List the expected outcomes of your activities, including any available baseline information and your target goals.
- Describe how this initiative aligns with the school's overall teaching and learning priorities, and the school or district's reform initiatives.
- Briefly describe the education research or strategies that inform your approach.
- If this is an existing initiative, please summarize program accomplishments, including baseline data prior to the start of the initiative and progress to date.
- Include a brief description of key personnel (paid or volunteer) involved in the initiative.
- Briefly describe what this initiative is likely to look like in Year 2 (2012-13 school year) and additional funds needed.

These grant application instructions are also available on-line at [www.edvestors.org](http://www.edvestors.org). Please EMAIL questions regarding this Call for Concept Papers to Associate Director Janet Anderson at [anderson@edvestors.org](mailto:anderson@edvestors.org) or by calling (617) 585-5740.



**EdVestors**  
**Concept Paper Cover Page**

Please include the following information as a cover page to your concept paper, in this order. You may use this page as a template. **Please include it in the same Word document as your narrative.** The cover page information requested may take up more than one page, and does not count for the 3-page concept paper limit.

- 1. Name of Applicant Organization:
- 2. Contact Information (name, title, address, phone, fax, email):
- 3. Target population and number to be served (e.g., 70 middle school students, 4 teachers, 25 parents):
- 4. Please list participating school(s):
- 5. Percentage of low-income students (eligible for free/reduced meals) in each school:
- 6. Brief description of project or initiative (2-3 sentences):
- 7. Expected outcomes (2-3 sentences):
- 8. Please specify the 501c3 fiscal agent for your grant request, if funded:
- 9. Grant amount requested for Year 1 (2011-12): \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Grant amount requested for Year 2 (2012-13): \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. Total project budget for Year 1: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- 11. Total organizational or school operating budget for lead applicant: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Note on Fiscal Agents**  
*Schools and school district applicants will need to designate a fiscal agent for receiving grants. For example, in Boston this may be the Boston Educational Development Foundation (BEDF) or another nonprofit of your choosing. The fiscal agent must be a tax exempt, non-profit organization described in Sec. 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.*

**EdVestors**  
**140 Clarendon Street**  
**Boston, MA 02116**  
**617-585-5740**  
[www.edvestors.org](http://www.edvestors.org)

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