

## The School Solutions Seed Fund at EdVestors

A fund to encourage innovative on-the-ground solutions  
to common challenges facing urban schools

*Through the School Solutions Seed Fund, EdVestors seeks to identify promising solutions that address current challenges facing classrooms and schools. EdVestors will award up to ten \$10,000 grants to pilot, plan or test new or known solutions in schools in Boston.*

Seed fund grants will provide an opportunity for schools to move quickly to test, plan or pilot an innovative solution or new idea, or make a mid-course correction to work already underway, to respond to an identified need or challenge in their school. Schools may work alone or with other schools or nonprofit partners. The School Solutions Seed Fund recipients will form a cohort of like-minded educators and partners that will be a source of learning for each other and other urban schools.

Following initial seed fund grants to be expended between January-May 2016, seed fund recipients may be eligible for additional funding for the subsequent school year, which will allow the most promising solutions to go deeper or test their idea over a longer time frame.

### **APPLICATIONS DUE NOVEMBER 5<sup>th</sup>**

Learn more at our upcoming Information Session on  
Wednesday, October 7<sup>th</sup> (9:00-10:30am).

[Click here](#) to RSVP!

#### ***Who is encouraged to apply?***

Entrepreneurial and problem-solving educators (teachers, principals, headmasters) as well as system and network leaders (BPS, charter, parochial, independent) looking to solve a specific, urban education problem in classrooms or schools serving high-needs students in grades PreK to 12 in Boston. We also welcome applications from nonprofit organizations partnering with schools to solve a school's priority need. Eligible schools must serve a significant percentage of students that qualify as economically disadvantaged under Massachusetts' Department of Elementary and Secondary Education guidelines.

#### ***How to apply? Tell us what you will do with \$10,000.***

Applications for seed fund grants will be due November 5<sup>th</sup> with grant decisions made by the end of December for work to occur in January-May 2016.

- Submit an application to EdVestors (no more than 2-3 pages) answering the following questions:
  - Tell us about your school or organization.
  - If partners are involved, tell us which partner(s) and why.
  - Tell us about the problem or challenge you have identified, what you plan to do with the "seed funds" and why you have selected this approach.
  - Tell us what you hope to learn. Explain how the seed fund grant will position you to continue or advance the work in the following school year (SY 16-17).

**Deadline: Thursday, November 5, 2015 at 3:00PM**

***What will a successful application look like?***

Funding will support piloting a new approach or making a mid-course correction to work underway in a school or group of schools serving a significant percentage of high-needs students in grades Pre-K to 12.

The most competitive proposals will address one or more of the following:

- Have student learning at its core.
- Build leader, teacher, and staff capacity to improve student outcomes.
- Provide opportunities for adults in a school or across schools to work collaboratively.
- Increase academic rigor and/or student engagement in the classroom.
- Personalize or individualize instruction and student support, including through the use of technology.

Some examples:

- A school's third graders are not making gains in ELA. The grade level teacher team, along with the school's literacy specialist, wish to pilot a new assessment and intervention strategy.
- A school, while relatively high-performing, has challenges reaching all students. The school is thinking about how to use its technology in new ways to individualize instruction for students. A school-level planning team wants to develop a pilot in the primary grades for the following fall.
- A district office wants to bring a program model for family engagement that has been successful outside of Boston to 2-3 Boston schools.
- A high school is looking to change how students engage with their learning and partners with a nonprofit to test a new model of creating student-centered classrooms.
- A charter management organization wishes to open a new school to serve the needs of English Language Learners and requests funds to launch a new school model.

The Seed Fund is not intended to support the following types of activities:

- Existing, on-going activities in a school or group of schools.
- Purchase of technology hardware or software as the primary focus of the grant.
- Activities that take place primarily during out-of-school time.
- Expansion of an existing program model that is already operating in schools in Boston.

**Timeline:**

Information Session: October 7, 2015 (9:00-10:30am at 140 Clarendon Street, Boston)

Application deadline: November 5, 2015

School Solutions Seed Fund recipients announced: late December 2015

School Solutions implementation: January-May 2016

**Be part of EdVestors' second cohort of 10 like-minded problem-solving school or system leaders, teachers and non-profit partners. APPLY TODAY!**

**Deadline: Thursday, November 5, 2015 at 3:00PM**

## **Q & A**

### ***What will EdVestors provide to School Solutions Seed Fund recipients?***

- Grants of up to \$10,000 to be used January-May 2016.
- Support from EdVestors team on strategic thinking or implementation as requested or needed.
- Meaningful cohort experiences once or twice during the spring semester.
- Potential for expansion or continuation funding in June 2016 to a number of the most promising solutions for use in the following school year.

### ***What is expected of School Solutions Seed Fund recipients?***

- Implement proposed solution in January-May 2016.
- Share learnings (what works and what doesn't) with EdVestors and the cohort.
- Attend cohort meeting(s) during spring semester.
- Participate in the EdVestors Urban Education Showcase in April.
- Submit in May a "lessons learned" final report and optional request and plan for expansion or continuation for the next school year.

### ***Questions:***

With any questions, please contact the EdVestors grantmaking team.

Alison Stevens, [stevens@edvestors.org](mailto:stevens@edvestors.org)  
Gabriel Feldstein, [feldstein@edvestors.org](mailto:feldstein@edvestors.org)  
Janet Anderson, [anderson@edvestors.org](mailto:anderson@edvestors.org)  
617-585-5740

**Deadline: Thursday, November 5, 2015 at 3:00PM**

## **SCHOOL SOLUTIONS SEED FUND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

Please submit the following:

### **Document 1** (one Microsoft Word document; no PDFs)

- ☐ A **cover page** with requested applicant information (cover page format is attached to the end of these guidelines)
- ☐ A **2-3 page application**, answering the questions on page one (under “How to Apply?”), in 11-point font or larger; include the name of the lead applicant and page numbers in the footer of each page of the document.
- ☐ An **expense plan/project budget** (sample format attached).

### **Document 2- if applicable** (PDF acceptable)

- ☐ For any significant nonprofit partners included in the application, whether they are the lead applicant or a partner to the applying school, please include the non-profit’s current year organizational budget.

## **EMAIL INSTRUCTIONS**

Please email your application to Alison Stevens at [stevens@edvestors.org](mailto:stevens@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.

When submitting the email, please write the name of the applicant school or organization in the subject line of the email. For example, “Subject: Alpha Elementary School Seed Fund Application.”

Please observe the page limit and do not send extra attachments at this time.

## **ABOUT EDVESTORS**

EdVestors is a dynamic school change organization focused on increasing the number of schools in Boston that deliver dramatically improved educational outcomes for all children. EdVestors works with all urban schools - district (traditional, pilot, innovation, in-district charters), Commonwealth charters, and private and independent schools serving a significant number of high-need students - leveraging strategic private investment, providing on-the-ground support to accelerate results, and developing and sharing knowledge to drive improvement across schools.

**Deadline: Thursday, November 5, 2015 at 3:00PM**

**EXPENSE PLAN/PROJECT BUDGET:**

In the chart below, please provide a brief description of your planned expenses and the estimated amount. Please add or delete rows as needed.

Description	Timing	Amount
	For example: January-March 2016	

**OTHER RESOURCES:**

Please describe other resources (time, human capital, other funding) that will support this work.

**Deadline: Thursday, November 5, 2015 at 3:00PM**

**COVER PAGE**

**Lead Applicant:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of School or Organization

**Applicant Contact:** \_\_\_\_\_  
Name Title

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address City State Zip Code

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number Email Address

**Project Name:**

**Brief Description of Project (2-5 sentences):**

**Number and type(s) of participants involved (students, teachers, and/or parents):**

**Fiscal Agent Name, if different from lead applicant\*:**

\* In order to receive funds from EdVestors, recipients must either be a 501(c)(3) or have a fiscal agent with tax-exempt 501(c)(3) status. In the past, many schools have used Boston Educational Development Foundation (BEDF) or the Center for Collaborative Education (CCE) as their fiscal agent.

**Deadline: Thursday, November 5, 2015 at 3:00PM**