



## CALL FOR IDEAS & PROPOSALS

### STUDENT SUCCESS IN NORTH MINNEAPOLIS

AUGUST 29, 2016

#### PURPOSE

The Foundation invites ideas and proposals that respond to its new education<sup>1</sup> grantmaking strategies in North Minneapolis:

- *The Foundation seeks to support the success of North Minneapolis students by advancing the following strategies:*
- *Create opportunities for students to shape significant portions of their educational experience to improve the relevance of their learning, their engagement with school and their educational outcomes.*
  - *Build the power of North Minneapolis parents to influence educational policies and practices.*
  - *Support great Northside school leaders and ensure a full pipeline of talented future leaders.*

**More specifically**, we are looking for innovative ideas that build upon any of these three themes. Applicants may seek funding to expand or improve work that is already being implemented; resources to implement a new idea or project; or support to plan a project that is currently only in the conceptual stage. This is not an opportunity to apply for ongoing support to sustain longstanding efforts.

Grants made through this process will have a maximum term of twelve (12) months. Shorter project timelines are welcomed. The Foundation plans to use this round of grants to quickly test several ideas, and then expand funding for those that seem most promising.

Even as we grow support for some efforts, the Foundation will remain open to new proposals and ideas that advance its goals to improve student success in North Minneapolis. We ultimately seek to develop a web of long-term funding relationships that can collectively influence educational systems to provide a rigorous, relevant and sustainable educational experience for North Side students.

**Current Grantmaking Pool:** Approximately \$350,000. The Foundation plans to make a number of grants from this initial pool. We intend to significantly grow funding dedicated to this strategy goal in future years.

**Geographic Area of Focus:** We will fund efforts focused on students from North Minneapolis and the schools that serve them. Priority will be given to efforts that are

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<sup>1</sup> Please also see Phillips' *Student Success in North Minneapolis* document for information on our call for ideas that support the success of North Minneapolis students.

developed and implemented by Northsiders, or that demonstrate significant North Minneapolis community input.

***Deadline for Submission:*** Monday September 26, 2016

## SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

North Minneapolis is home to nearly 20,000 young people under the age of 18. These students attend a diverse range of district, charter and independent schools. Many choose schools in nearby cities. In this complicated educational landscape, the Foundation has chosen to focus in on the ideas and experiences of Northside students, parents and teachers. Through a series of one-on-one conversations and group design sessions held over the past six months, dozens of students, parents, teachers and educational leaders have helped us define the new education funding strategies described in this document.

In addition, this process of deep listening and co-creation has filled us with a resounding hopefulness for the future of North Minneapolis students. Yes, challenges such as achievement gaps, disproportionate discipline, and underinvestment are real and require direct corrective action. But, the North Side is also hip-deep in amazing, motivated student leaders, doggedly determined parents and passionate, talented educators. We now see that these local assets are more than a match for the challenges that confront them.

At its core, this “Call for Ideas” is aimed squarely at Northside students, parents and teachers – and those closest to these key participants in the education system. We want to hear your ideas! You may have half-baked dreams or time-tested projects to discuss. As long as you’re building on one or more of the three key themes that emerged from our community design process, let’s talk.

## EDUCATION CONCEPTS TO CONSIDER

Phillips is deeply grateful to the dozens of people who participated in our strategy design process. That effort culminated in the three “prototype” ideas described below. Each prototype responds to the perceived needs of one of our key stakeholder groups: students, parents, and teachers.

Prospective applicants are encouraged to use these concepts as inspiration, not as a prescription for what you should propose. This “The Call for Ideas” aims to generate a diverse set of responses to the three core needs described here.

- ✓ **Students as Co-Designers of Their Own Education:** In our conversations with students, the Foundation repeatedly heard frustration about the disconnect between what they were learning in school, and what really mattered to them. This “relevance gap” was described both in terms of the inflexibility of the curriculum and frequent experiences with teachers who didn’t “get them”. Despite these frustrations, students also expressed a deep desire to make their education more relevant and engaging, and a heartfelt appreciation for the educators who nurtured their development.

Based on these observations, the Foundation and its design partners created a project prototype centered on a year-long fellowship experience for a group of 20-ish Northside high school students. This experience would focus students on analyzing their school’s current curriculum and revising it around the themes of relevance, decolonization, and healing. The Fellowship

program would also offer a professional development opportunity for teachers to learn how to facilitate student-lead learning within the context of a public high school. Over multiple years of implementation, this Fellowship program would broadly influence the school's curriculum while providing transformational learning experiences for participating students and teachers.

That's just one way to come at the challenge of making school more relevant and engaging for students. How would you build on this idea?

- ✓ **Amplifying the Voice and Wisdom of Parents:** This process surfaced three powerful understandings about North Minneapolis parents. Firstly, most parents care passionately about their kids' academic success and are actively engaged with their schools. Secondly, there is both deep pride in North Minneapolis' schools and a clear-eyed hope that they will improve. Finally, the voices of North Minneapolis parents – and parents of color more broadly- do not have sufficient influence at the district and state levels.

From this assessment, our designers suggested that a possible direction for The Foundation would be to fund current or new work that seeks to engage parents as change-agents at the school, district and state levels. While parent engagement is happening within the district, there also needs to be independent options for parents to come together and develop their own strategies to help schools improve. Additionally, there is very little organizing of lower income and diverse parents to influence district or state education policies. This could also be a gap the Foundation could address.

How would you help the parents of North Minneapolis students become a more effective force for positive change in our school systems?

- ✓ **Great School Leaders:** As we dug into the question of what teachers need to do their best work, the answer that kept popping up was great school leaders. Thankfully, North Minneapolis has many wonderful principals, associate principals and other leaders. But not every school currently benefits from strong, stable leadership, and it's not clear if district or charter schools are cultivating the kinds of future leaders the North Side needs. Specifically, and in response to the two preceding themes, are current and future school leaders ready to work with students and parents to ensure that school are relevant and responsive to their needs?

Phillips' design process yielded this concept: Current and aspiring North Minneapolis school leaders would benefit from a leadership development experience that prepared them to facilitate the complex and high-stakes conversations needed to align the vision and strengths of leaders with the expectations of the community. This skill-set is not emphasized in current professional development programs for school leaders. A new leadership development program would need to be independent of any school or district, and open to leaders from any school serving significant numbers of North Minneapolis students.

While we acknowledge that there are many ongoing programs designed to prepare and sustain good school leaders, we remain eager to hear your ideas about how to help North Minneapolis school leaders thrive.

## ELIGIBILITY & SELECTION CRITERIA

- The Foundation is seeking proposals that directly address one or more of the ideas described previously. We are looking for both existing and innovative new strategies that are generated by and originate from those who call North Minneapolis home.
- Our funding would be used to test ideas, maximize existing efforts and/or lay the foundation for new opportunities to support student success in North Minneapolis. This is not an opportunity to seek multi-year support or ongoing support for longstanding efforts.
- We will consider proposals for general operating support, direct program support, capacity building, and planning activities. We will consider nontraditional grant recipients such as businesses, government, fiscal agents, and grassroots start-ups among others. We will also consider re-granting opportunities through a coalition of recipients or through intermediaries. At this point the IRS prohibits our ability to directly fund individuals.
- We are also aware that there are likely to be more applications than our limited resources can support. We will work with community advisors to vet and fund the most promising efforts. This community advisement structure will be developed based on the kinds of proposals and opportunities that come our way.
- Where it is appropriate and reasonable, we encourage collaboration that spans and unites multiple cultural communities in North Minneapolis.

## HOW TO SUBMIT YOUR CONCEPT

We ask that all proposals, if possible, be submitted through our online grants management system. If you need assistance in accessing the system, call Tracy Lamparty at 612-623-1656 or attend a session below.

- Please log-on to <https://phillipsfamilymn.smartsimple.com>.
- If you have an existing account, use your log-in credentials. If you have forgotten them, contact Tracy Lamparty at 612-623-1656 or [tlamparty@phillipsfamilymn.org](mailto:tlamparty@phillipsfamilymn.org).
- If you do not have an account, press “Register” and follow the steps to set up an account in our system.
- See separate PDF for detailed instructions found on the foundation blog: <http://phillipsfamilymn.org/foundation-blog/>.
- Then attach your proposal. This can be a Word document, a PDF document, a video, or some other format that addresses the following in a narrative and order that makes sense to you:
  - ✓ Describe your concept and how it does or will function, including how you engaged with representatives of the community in its design.
  - ✓ Describe how it fits with the grantmaking area of “Student Success in Minneapolis” as described in this Call for Ideas and Proposals.
  - ✓ Explain why you believe this is the right idea for North Minneapolis at this time.
  - ✓ Explain where the concept is in its development (i.e. An undeveloped concept, an existing program that needs capacity to grow, a successful idea from elsewhere that you propose importing to North Minneapolis, etc.)
  - ✓ Identify the key partners and staff and their roles
  - ✓ Describe how you might measure your impact (this does not have to be fully developed, as funded concepts will work with the Foundation to develop mutually agreed upon outcome measures)
- Please make sure the name of the submitting organization and a contact person and info are included on the first page or at the beginning of your proposal.
- You will also need to attach a proposed budget for this concept, including how much you are requesting from the Foundation.

## HOW FUNDING DECISIONS WILL BE MADE

- After proposals are received by the Foundation and the September 26<sup>th</sup> deadline has passed, Foundation staff will begin reviewing proposals working alongside a group of community leaders and representatives.
- Given our limited resources, we anticipate that we will pursue only the most promising and relevant proposals that are submitted as determined in consultation with our community advisors.
- If your proposal is selected for further review, you will be contacted for additional discussion and follow up. These conversations will allow for further articulation of the proposed concept and to determine if this is the right partnership at this time.
- Final decisions will be made by our board of trustees around November 1, 2016.
- If selected, we will work with you to submit any additional required documentation. At this point you only need to complete the narrative as described above.

## COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE SESSIONS

The Foundation staff will be available to assist you as you think through a concept for submission. We will be available in the following ways:

1. We will be available for drop-in one-on-one's at the following location and times:
  - ~ **Thursday September 8, 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM**
  - ~ **Friday, September 9, 2:00-5:00 PM**
  - ~ **Monday, September 12, 3:00-6:00 PM**

**All 3 sessions will be at Avenue Eatery (1101 W Broadway Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55411) – Just drop by and chat!**

2. We will conduct 2 large group sessions as follows:
  - ~ **Tuesday September 13, 5:30 – 6:30 PM @ Emerge Career and Technology Center – 1834 Emerson Avenue North, Minneapolis, MN 55411 (optional one-on-one time from 6:30 – 7:30 PM)**
  - ~ **Wednesday September 14, 9:30 – 10:30 AM @ North Regional Library – South Half Meeting Room - 1315 Lowry Avenue North, Minneapolis, MN 55411 (optional one-on-one time from 10:30 – 11:30 AM)**

## FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please contact me directly during regular business hours:

- ~ Joel Luedtke – [jluedtke@phillipsfamilymn.org](mailto:jluedtke@phillipsfamilymn.org) or 612-623-1651

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## ABOUT THE JAY & ROSE PHILLIPS FAMILY FOUNDATION OF MINNESOTA

*The Jay & Rose Phillips Family Foundation of Minnesota was founded in 1944 by its namesakes to “address the unmet human and social needs of individuals, families and communities that have the least access to resources.” You can learn more about the Foundation on our website [www.phillipsfamilymn.org](http://www.phillipsfamilymn.org).*

*The Foundation has a long history of supporting organizations and initiatives in North Minneapolis. Indeed, this is the community where Jay and Rose lived for many years. Our current Call for Ideas reflects a shift at the Foundation to direct a significant majority of our annual grantmaking, as well as our human and social capital towards North Minneapolis, and to do this in ongoing partnership with neighborhood residents.*

*The Foundation has identified two main themes for its future work in North Minneapolis: Supporting student success, and building financial power and resilience. We intend to pursue these issues for at least the next five years, and to maintain our current practice of enlisting neighborhood residents as co-creators, decision-makers, guides and grantees.*

**We are grateful** to all the students, parents, educators, business owners and community supporters who took the time to meet with us and share their hopes, dreams and experiences of your community. What you have taught us has shaped this grantmaking focus. We will continue to nurture these relationships and look to you to continue guiding our work. This is just the beginning of what we hope will be a long and fruitful relationship to support your efforts to strengthen your community.

You can **read more** about the Foundation's process and decisions on our blog at <http://phillipsfamilymn.org/foundation-blog/>.

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