

THE HEINZ ENDOWMENTS

HOWARD HEINZ ENDOWMENT • VIRA I. HEINZ ENDOWMENT

Request for Proposals: Creative Learning Network Anchor

Overview

The Heinz Endowments' **Creative Learning initiative** is a coordinated, cross-programmatic strategy to cultivate an equitable creative arts and cultural learning network, improve access to transformative learning experiences for young people, and support meaningful professional opportunities for teaching artists in Pittsburgh's out-of-school-time (OST)* ecosystem. For the purpose of this initiative, **creative learning** will be defined as high-quality arts education in OST settings, with equitable access for the social, emotional and creative development of children and youth.

The Endowments aims to support the work of existing and new grantees in this space; improve their effectiveness; and create a more powerful network of programs, organizations and teaching artists. Creative Learning grantees will go beyond arts exposure to inspire deeper, generative, transformational and participatory learning for young people with an emphasis on racial equity in the learning ecosystem.

The Endowments' core strategies for this work are:

- Support provider organizations that work directly with young people.
- Support intermediary organizations that improve conditions for providers, teaching artists, and young people.
- Support teaching artist field-building and professional development.
- Support young artists.
- Center equity in terms of race, resources and reach.

Effective intermediary organizations will share responsibility with the Endowments — whose direct grantmaking also will influence grantees — for ensuring that the network improves grantee practices and success. To focus these efforts, **the Endowments will direct significant funding and other support towards the development of a Creative Learning Network Anchor** for the region.

Through this request for proposals, the Endowments is looking for a **lead organization or coalition of partner organizations** with a mission focused on creative arts learning and a track record of managing collaborations; leading professional learning for educators; and increasing equitable access to creative learning for young people through research, policy and implementation. Recognizing that there are existing intermediaries operating in the region already, the Endowments is interested in new approaches and partnerships that can amplify Creative Learning goals.

Eligibility and Qualifications

In addition to meeting The Heinz Endowments' standard [eligibility criteria](#), the ideal organization(s) will have demonstrated experience in:

- Improving the connectivity and effectiveness of regional youth-serving nonprofit network(s).
- Organizing and delivering professional learning for organizations and practitioners.
- Promoting continuous learning and improvement through the use of data.
- Identifying, implementing, and evaluating changes in policy and practice.

For essential context, candidates for this RFP are strongly advised to read and interpret the University of Pittsburgh's recent [Creative Learning in Pittsburgh](#) report.

*We use the abbreviation "OST" as shorthand for the field of practice that is alternately referred to as out-of-school-time, expanded learning, informal education, enrichment and after-school. Creative Learning in the Pittsburgh region will support an ecosystem of OST providers and teaching artists focused on [creative youth development](#) — with programming delivered to children and youth in a variety of settings, including community learning centers, cultural spaces, arts facilities, parks, museums, libraries and schools.

Capacity-building Grant Support

The selected organization(s) will receive grant funding to build their capacity across three key areas:

- Supporting networking, communication, and collaboration among creative learning providers and teaching artists.
- Improving professional learning and field-building for creative learning providers and teaching artists.
- Increasing equitable access to creative learning for young people by providing guidance and resources for adopting, implementing, evaluating, and sustaining changes in policy and practice.

In consultation with the Endowments, development of an agreed-upon detailed scope of work to achieve results in these areas will be one of the first activities supported by the grant. Over a longer timeline the anchor will be expected to account for new opportunities in the creative learning network as they emerge.

How to Apply

Organizations interested in this opportunity must **submit a concise narrative** stating interest in and qualifications for the role of Creative Learning anchor in the Pittsburgh region by **Friday, Jan. 10, 2020, at 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time**. In the narrative, applicant organizations should consider the following questions:

1. How does your organization's mission fit the Endowments' vision for a Creative Learning network? How might other aspects of your organization's current values and strategy align with this vision?
2. What is your organization already doing in the fields of arts education, creative youth development, and/or early childhood learning?
3. Are there other organizations you want to work with on a collaborative approach to anchoring the network? What might these partnerships look like?
4. What do you anticipate needing to be effective as the Creative Learning anchor? How would you structure your approach in terms of staffing, partnerships, and budget?
5. What excites you about Creative Learning? What do you see as an area of improvement or an important aspect of the Endowments' Creative Learning vision that may have been overlooked? What would you need to learn more about in order to commit to being the anchor?

The narrative must be submitted using the online form [here >>](#). You also have the option to upload a formatted .pdf of the narrative in the form at the time of submission.

Decisionmaking and Next Steps

Following a review of letters received by the January 10 deadline, The Heinz Endowments will contact applicants with a decision and news about next steps. Funding will be made available and the early stages of implementation are anticipated to begin in March, 2020.

For questions concerning this request for proposals, please contact Cindi Stueber, program assistant at 412-338-2693 or cstueber@heinz.org to request an appointment.