



MASS IDEAS

Request for Learning Planning Grant

Cohort One

Released September 17, 2018

Updated September 26, 2018 with a new section: Stakeholder Support for Grantee Teams' Work

Applications Due by 5:00 p.m. ET on November 5, 2018

All applications should be submitted via the [online application form](#).

All RFL materials are available on the [Mass IDEAS website](#).

Any questions related to the RFL should be submitted via email to info@massideas.org.

About Mass IDEAS

All Massachusetts students deserve great schools. Mass IDEAS was created to help the people of Massachusetts reimagine public schools and design and launch innovative, high-quality school models for their communities. Mass IDEAS is designed to build on the good work of local Massachusetts communities, the lessons learned from more than 150 Next Generation Learning Challenges grantees across the nation, and the full range of public school governance models available in the Commonwealth. We envision schools emerging from new startups, redesigns of existing schools, and potentially clusters of schools within districts seeking to undertake a district-wide transformation, in order to create the great schools our students deserve.

Every student is unique and deserves a personalized pathway to success. As families, students, educators, community leaders, businesses, and others who care about the future of learning in communities across the Commonwealth, we know we can do more to help our kids succeed. More information is available at massideas.org.

Mass IDEAS is an initiative launched by [Next Generation Learning Challenges](#) (NGLC) with generous support from the [Barr Foundation](#) and the [Nellie Mae Education Foundation](#).

About Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC)

Next Generation Learning Challenges (NGLC) is a community of forward-leaning educators who are working with their communities and together as a network on the most urgent challenges in public education today. An initiative of the non-profit EDUCAUSE, NGLC was founded in 2010 with the understanding that, while we all have a role to play, it is educators who should lead the transformation to next gen learning because they are closest to the students and the learning. Funding for NGLC to fulfill its mission has been provided by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, Eli & Edythe Broad Foundation, Michael and Susan Dell Foundation, Oak Foundation, Barr Foundation, Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, and others.

Next Generation Learning Challenges' network of K–12 grantees likely represents the largest set of thoroughly reimaged schools in the nation. The organization's funding and network support efforts have resulted in nearly 150 innovative schools; lessons from grantees have informed Mass IDEAS' design and implementation strategies.

Overview of the Request for Learning Planning for New K–12 Public School Design or Whole-School Redesign

Mass IDEAS is issuing a Request for Learning (RFL) for planning grants for whole-school redesign and new school creation. Over 15 months, grantees will receive funding and support to catalyze the outer edges of school design and to fundamentally “rethink school” by reinventing current public schools and creating new ones. We are looking for courageous leaders from communities across Massachusetts who want to create the great schools our students deserve.

RFL vs. RFP

We are redesigning the traditional Request for Proposal (RFP) approach into a Request for Learning (RFL) in order to signal the innovative thinking, growth mindset, and action we will expect from grantees throughout the grant period. The planning grant will support well-designed local efforts that have capacity to inform changes in school design across Massachusetts. To do this effectively, we are looking to work with grantee teams that genuinely welcome formative feedback and are open to refining their models in consultation with the learning community. We also expect that grantees will share lessons learned and best practices, in order to improve learning for students throughout the Commonwealth, not just those students in their individual schools. We are also connecting this grant with other efforts in the Massachusetts education ecosystem to share knowledge and strengthen our collective efforts.

The Opportunity: Funding + Supports for New School Design and Whole-School Redesign

This RFL is the first one released as part of Mass IDEAS’ overall strategy to catalyze schools that will productively disrupt the traditional landscape and collective mindset in order to create high-quality, innovative learning experiences for *all* of the Commonwealth’s students. In order to foster development of schools that will provide innovative, high-quality educational experiences, Mass IDEAS will need to provide supports that will (1) develop stakeholders’ understanding of why different learning models are necessary to ensure success for all Massachusetts students; (2) build stakeholders’ capacity to create new and significantly redesigned school models; (3) coach stakeholders through the planning of their school models; and (4) strengthen their implementation to ensure positive student outcomes. We cannot expect learning to look

different across the Commonwealth unless stakeholders' needs across these four areas are addressed.

Mass IDEAS is providing grants to teams to plan models for both new schools and whole-school redesigns so that students across Massachusetts can attend high-quality, innovative schools focused on the knowledge and capabilities learners need to thrive in the 21st century. **Funding priority will be given to applications that demonstrate a bold vision that is supported by evidence, such as student data, stakeholder input data such as interviews or focus groups, or other evidence of the community's need for and interest in the proposed school model.**

In this first cycle, we anticipate supporting a cohort of up to six grantee teams in our effort to spark whole-school redesign or new school creation for public schools across Massachusetts, including a variety of geographies and public school governance types. This RFL is intended to support only comprehensive, full-time models, not separate programs, extracurricular or summer activities, or interventions that are limited in scope. **Through these grants, we are supporting the planning of real-life schools, not theoretical models.**

Mass IDEAS believes strongly that it is the combination of collaborative teams, grant funding, support, and community engagement that allows for effective planning and launch of school models. Redesigning a whole school or creating a new school is challenging and important work. Based on Next Generation Learning Challenges' years of experience catalyzing and supporting schools around the nation, Mass IDEAS assumes that **all** teams need support in order to plan well for their school models. In our community of planning grantees, we will establish a culture where together we can take risks, welcome mistakes as learning opportunities, accomplish goals, and participate actively in our professional learning community.

To complement grant funds, planning supports will be offered to grantee teams in a cohort, in a combination of whole group and individualized supports, differentiated for teams' different models and local communities. In-person and virtual convenings, coaching, and other supports will cover common needs for school designers, such as advising regarding Massachusetts public governance options; information around both learning model development and operational issues; guidance for engaging students, families, community members, and other stakeholders; and other topics necessary for effective school model planning.

Grant Specifics

The planning grant described in this RFL is for public school model planning.¹ Applicants are invited to submit applications for up to \$150,000 for the planning period January 15, 2019–April 30, 2020. Grant size will be differentiated by factors such as school model, number of students

¹ Schools charging any form of tuition are not eligible to apply.

to be served, grade span, whether the model is a new school or redesign, and other considerations.

Please see the **Budget Guidance** section for additional detail on grant funding.

Subsequently, in Winter 2020, Mass IDEAS will invite a select group of planning grantees to apply for an implementation grant based on their work during the planning period. We project the maximum grant size for an implementation grant to be \$375,000.

Estimated Milestones for First Cohort of Planning Grantees

Please note the following estimated grant timeline for the first cohort of planning grantees:

September 17, 2018	RFL released
September/October 2018	Support opportunities for prospective applicants
November 5, 2018	Planning grant applications due at 5:00 p.m. ET
Week of December 3, 2018	Interviews of applicant finalist teams (required for finalists)
By December 31, 2018	Planning grant awards announced
January 24, 2019	First in-person convening of Cohort 1 (required)
Winter 2020	Implementation grant invitations issued Implementation grants awarded
Fall 2020 or Fall 2021	Launch of new or whole-school redesign models

Request for Learning Planning for New Public School Design or Whole-School Redesign

Context and Theory of Change

All children deserve a motivating, challenging education that prepares them to succeed in postsecondary learning, work, and civic life. Though the United States' public education system is doing a better job of reaching more children, it is abundantly clear that we are not achieving equity and excellence for all. Despite the fact that Massachusetts is a [leader on national and international tests](#), we have not created high-quality, innovative schools for *all* of our students. Statewide data continue to show that opportunity and achievement gaps persist; we are not serving all of our learners well.

Public schools in the Commonwealth, including those scoring both poorly and well on state performance and accountability measures, are organized around traditional ideas of pedagogy and definitions of student success that were appropriate for a prior economy, day, and age, but are not sufficient to meet the demands of the 21st century. Mass IDEAS supports communities, through their school design teams, to reinvent their learning environments, understand why this transformation matters, and develop solutions for their own public schools. Because there is no one size that fits all, Mass IDEAS supports teams to create school models that are tailored to their communities' assets and needs.

Assessing the Landscape

Historically, Massachusetts has been fairly narrow in its ideas of what public school models might look like, with limited examples of innovations in traditional models. However, there are examples around the nation that can provide inspiration for how we might rethink school. Prospective applicants are encouraged to do their own landscape assessment, if they have not already, to expand their thinking about what is possible in the design of high-quality, innovative school models. Doing this type of landscape assessment will help applicants respond effectively to the questions in the application. Some helpful resources include:

- [Mass IDEAS School Model Design Studio Resource Hub](#)
- [Next Generation Learning Challenges Website](#), including resources such as the
 - [MyWays Project](#) site
 - [New Designs for School](#) resources
 - [Lighting the Path to Personalized Learning: Inspiring Stories from Next Generation Schools](#) report

- [Springpoint's Resources Library](#)
- [Getting Smart's Smart Lists](#)

Design Principles for the School Models Mass IDEAS Will Support

Because we believe that all school designs should be tailored to the needs and wants of their communities, Mass IDEAS does not require that applicants use one particular model or subscribe to a specific vision in order to be eligible for planning grants. However, throughout the planning period, we will support grantee teams to plan school models aligned with Mass IDEAS' design principles:

Students at the Center

Schools are centered around student learning, student needs, and student success. Solutions are developed and decisions are made based on what is best for students.

Equitable

Schools enable the achievement and growth of learners—both students and adults—of every national origin and heritage, race, gender, sexual orientation, home language, ability, and other identities.

Learning Mindset

Schools establish learning communities in which together, all learners take risks, welcome mistakes as learning opportunities, and feel compelled to accomplish goals.

Learner-Driven

Schools support all learners to understand why learning matters, take responsibility for their own learning, and make decisions about their learning.

Personalized

Schools meet the unique needs of all learners, allowing them to learn at their own pace and to have a say in where, how, and when they learn best.

High Expectations

Schools hold high expectations for *all* learners and support them in meeting clearly defined goals, in order to prepare learners for ongoing success in work and life.

Eligibility

Mass IDEAS is investing substantial resources and support in the development of innovative, high-quality models to serve K–12 students across the Commonwealth. We look forward to receiving submissions from teams that want to rethink what schools can look like in order to serve *all* of our students well and close opportunity and achievement gaps.

Mass IDEAS encourages applicants who are planning to do one of the following:

- Open new public schools in Massachusetts
- Redesign existing public schools in Massachusetts

Note: This RFL will not fund project-level or individual student interventions or initiatives—we are looking to invest in comprehensive planning at the whole-school level. This RFL will fund single schools (not one grant for multiple schools).

Teams may request support for planning a variety of school types:

- Schools in any K–12 grade span (elementary, K–8, middle, high, middle-high, K–12)
- Any type of Massachusetts public school (e.g., district, charter, Innovation, Pilot, and turnaround)

Note: Teams creating new schools do not need to have their governance model finalized in order to be eligible for a planning grant. For instance, a team may choose to go through the process to create an Innovation school or apply for a Commonwealth charter as part of its planning work.

Teams must plan to **serve a minimum of 100 students** at the school in order to be eligible for a planning grant.

The following entities are eligible to apply:

- Local education agencies (LEAs), including districts and charter organizations
- Non-profits, including community-based organizations (CBOs)
- Teams of individuals looking to create new schools
- Partnerships between the above entities

Note: Massachusetts teams may also choose to collaborate with organizations with deep experience and demonstrable success in high-quality, innovative learning models nationally. Organizations working outside of the Commonwealth will need to partner with in-state groups or communities to secure a grant.

As part of the application, **all** named design team participants must complete specific documentation to indicate they are making a commitment to participate fully in the planning grant cohort and school design/redesign work as defined herein. Please see the **Expectations for Mass IDEAS and Grantee Teams** section below for more information.

Budget Guidance

Any budget proposed as part of a planning grant application should relate to the priorities of the grant opportunity and align clearly with the activities articulated in the narrative submitted by the applicant. **Funding priority will be given to applications that demonstrate a bold vision that is supported by evidence, such as student data, stakeholder input data such as interviews or focus groups, or other evidence of the community's need for and interest in the proposed school model.** There should be strong connections between the articulation of the problem to be solved and the expenditures included in the budget.

Even if an applicant is selected to receive a grant, Mass IDEAS reserves the right not to fund specific proposed activities if they are not allowable or not clearly aligned to the scope of work being proposed.

Proposed Budget Submission

In your application, you will use a template provided by Mass IDEAS to propose the budget for your scope of work. Please ensure that your budget has the following clearly marked:

- Activities for which you are seeking funding
- Activities for which you have already secured funding from sources other than Mass IDEAS (including the amount and source of funding)
- Activities for which you'll receive in-kind support from a district/CMO/other organization
 - Example: A team applies for funding for facilitation of parent focus groups to solicit family input into a strategy. The CMO will provide translation services for the focus groups at no cost to the team. While no grant funds would be used for this service, the activity would still be included in the template as an in-kind service.

Proposed Budget: Timeline of Activities

In your application, you will use the template provided by Mass IDEAS to identify the activities you foresee as part of your planning scope of work **between January 15, 2019 and April 30, 2020**. Please include a level of detail that will allow application reviewers to understand how you plan to execute the work.

Funding Amounts

Mass IDEAS will award grants of **up to \$150,000** to teams that are designing or redesigning schools across Massachusetts. A team may apply for any amount up to \$150,000. However, applicants are strongly encouraged to apply for the funds really needed to conduct activities necessary to model planning, not to apply up to the grant ceiling for activities only tangentially related to the work.

We are more likely to fund the maximum \$150,000 amount **for new schools** (as opposed to whole-school redesigns) **and for larger schools** (enrollment of 500+ students). Funding amounts will be commensurate with the complexity of the work proposed.

Organizations Eligible to Receive Planning Grant Funds

The following types of organizations are eligible to receive Mass IDEAS planning grant funds:

- Exempt from United States Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (the “Code”) and not a private foundation
- Exempt from United States federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Code and a private foundation
- Exempt from United States federal income tax under a section of the Code other than 501(c)(3) (e.g., Section 501(c)(4) or 501(c)(6))
- Not a tax-exempt organization under the Code
- A state, tribal, or local government unit

If a prospective applicant is not one of the organization types listed, the team would need to find an organization that qualifies as one of the types above to serve as the team’s fiscal agent for the grant. While the team would still be responsible for the planning work required in the grant, the fiscal agent would receive and hold grant funds on the team’s behalf. Mass IDEAS/Next Generation Learning Challenges is not able to serve as a fiscal agent for the planning grants.

Allowable Expenditures

Grant funds can be used for different types of expenditures. The list below provides a variety of common types of expenditures for grant funds, but other expenditures will be considered based on their relevance to the applicant’s proposed scope of work.

Stakeholder engagement: Grant funds may be used to support investments in student, family, and community engagement, and materials to support those activities, such as holding community meetings; surveying stakeholders to gauge the needs of students, families, and the community; communicating with families and the community about school status through press releases, newsletters, newspaper announcements, family and community outreach coordinators and activities; and holding open houses or orientation activities for students and families.

Professional learning: Grant funds may be used to support investments in a variety of professional learning, such as professional development (particularly for offerings to the whole staff), specific content-area learning or certification related to the school model, coaching not already provided by Mass IDEAS, and travel to visit innovative school models. Note: Middle-high and high school teams will be able to apply for [Massachusetts Learning Excursions](#) led by Next Generation Learning Challenges in School Year 2019–2020, and/or may choose to allocate funds in their budget proposals to visit additional schools.

Positions and staff time to support planning: Grant funds may be used to partially or completely fund a new position for the duration or a portion of the grant term (January 15, 2019 to April 30, 2020). Any proposed funding for positions must be accompanied by an explanation for how the position will be sustained once the grant funds have concluded or rationale for why the position won't be needed at the end of the planning period. Grant funds may also be used to purchase staff time to support planning, such as stipends for planning team members completing this work outside of their regular job duties.

Partnerships with national organizations: Applicants may choose to collaborate with organizations with experience and demonstrable success in high-quality, innovative learning models nationally, and may use grant funds to support this type of collaboration.

Other planning supports: Additional allowable activities include items such as school model design process components, consultant expertise related to specific components of the plan, meeting or travel support, and materials to support planning activities.

Limits on Specific Types of Expenditures

Please see below for limits on certain types of expenditures.

Technology: The proposed budget must allocate no more than 10% of proposed funds to technology hardware and no more than 10% of proposed funds to software. Note that a compelling case will need to be made for why the proposed technology expenditures are necessary to the planning scope of work.

Indirect: The proposed budget must allocate no more than 10% to indirect/overhead costs.

Expenditures That Are Not Allowed

While this grant offers considerable flexibility in the use of funds, the following types of expenditures are not allowed:

- Capital expenditures
- Facilities
- Furniture
- Ongoing operating costs of a school or program
- Contract buyouts

Description of Grantee Teams

Historically, school design has often been viewed as something that the powerful impose on those with less power; school design is seen as something “done to” schools and communities, instead of co-led in partnership with stakeholders of the schools. As with our other activities

and strategies, a goal of this planning grant opportunity is that people and groups who have been excluded historically in school design efforts are not just included, but are empowered to participate fully. We believe that true transformation in the design of high-quality, innovative schools will only come when school designers of diverse roles and identities—including students—collaborate to develop the school models that are aligned with their communities' wants and needs.

We are looking for diverse teams from communities across the Commonwealth. We believe strongly that teams that include diverse stakeholder roles and members bring a variety of assets that enhance their school design work. To this end, grantee teams will include a combination of students*, parents/family members from the school community*, educators, district/CMO staff, school support organizations, local businesses, funders, and/or community members. Please note that while educators play very important roles in school design teams, applications from teams comprised solely of educators will not be accepted. In addition to members' roles, we encourage team diversity along multiple axes of identity, including gender, race, age, sexual orientation, nationality, and other identities.

Note: Teams **must include among their members at least one parent/family member of a student at the school (for all grade spans) and/or one student (for high schools). This requirement was recommended by past participants in Mass IDEAS programming who felt strongly that including these important school "end users"/stakeholders would maximize the design experience for teams. **Teams that include both family members and students are welcome and encouraged.***

Team Size

The average team size will be three to five members, with at least two and no more than five members. Teams are encouraged to include additional stakeholders in their planning work in their home communities.

Designated Team Leader & Dedicated Time

Teams must designate at least one leader who can devote the time necessary to serve as project manager and keep the team's work on track between Mass IDEAS convenings. Because planning a new school model or a whole-school redesign is a significant scope of work, we strongly recommend that team leaders dedicate **at least 30%** of their time to this work throughout the planning period. Note that the team leader does not need to be the school leader; in fact, it is likely that current school leaders would have difficulty serving as the team leader unless their time can be freed up for this work. Some teams may choose to designate a person to focus on their planning work full time. Planning grant funds may be used to pay for staff time. Please see the **Budget Guidance** section for more information.

Mindsets of Effective Teams

Effective school design teams will have members who embrace the following mindsets:

- They are passionate about transforming learning by redesigning existing Massachusetts schools or creating new ones at the whole-school level.
- They have been inspired by their communities, schools inside and outside the Commonwealth, and other influences to create a vision of a high-quality, innovative school model.
- They believe we can and should rethink school in Massachusetts, because we are not serving all of our students well—achievement and opportunity gaps persist.
- They want support to turn their visions into reality, and are the first to say that they don't have everything figured out.
- They know that their designs will be improved and amplified by feedback from diverse stakeholders, and they seek out input as a critical source of learning.
- They are entrepreneurial leaders who will participate actively in Mass IDEAS' professional learning community by learning from each other, sharing ideas, and turning great ideas into great schools.

Planned Supports and Expectations for Mass IDEAS and Grantee Teams

The goal of this grant is to support teams from communities across Massachusetts to develop public school models that will be implemented; **this is not an academic exercise**—in the future, the funded models will become schools that Massachusetts students will attend. The supports and mutual expectations articulated below are designed to make the grant term a productive planning period leading toward this outcome.

Planned Supports

Mass IDEAS holds high expectations for our own work and that of the school design teams we support, so together, we prepare *all* Massachusetts students for ongoing success in work and life. Therefore, Mass IDEAS has planned a variety of strategies to support grantee teams during the grant term. These include convenings hosted by Mass IDEAS, convenings hosted by grantee teams, virtual convenings, coaching, and other supports. Prospective applicants should consider the proposed schedule of supports, listed below, as they are making a commitment to this work. Grantee teams are expected to participate in all support strategies. Following the first convening in January 2019, logistics such as timing and location of these supports will be established in collaboration with planning grantees to determine the schedule that works best for teams. **Coaching will be provided to grantees throughout the grant period.**

Proposed Dates for Grantee Supports

*January 24, 2019	Mass IDEAS-hosted convening
February 2019	Virtual convening
March 2019	Virtual convening
April 2019	Team-hosted convening
May 2019	Virtual convening
June 2019	Team-hosted convening
July, August 2019	<i>No convenings; ongoing coaching</i>
September 2019	Mass IDEAS-hosted convening
October 2019	Team-hosted convening
November 2019	Virtual convening
December 2019	Team-hosted convening
January 2020	Virtual convening
February 2020	Team-hosted convening
March 2020	Team-hosted convening

*This date is confirmed; all planning grantee team members will attend this session.

What Grantee Teams Can Expect from Mass IDEAS

- A grant award of up to \$150,000 to support planning work for the school model
- Advising regarding public school governance options (e.g. charter, Innovation, other processes)
- Assistance with financial/budget planning and best practices on family and community engagement
- Sharing of best practices from research and other grantees, and other assistance with defining student success, curriculum, instruction, teaching, and learning
- Ongoing coaching of teams throughout the planning period
- Convening and supporting a professional learning network of other grantees across the Commonwealth
- A grant agreement document articulating the terms of the grant

What Mass IDEAS Will Expect from Grantee Teams

- Active team participation in the planning grantee cohort's professional learning community, including Mass IDEAS–hosted, team-hosted, and virtual convenings of the grantee cohort
 - *Note: The first convening of the planning grantee cohort will be held on January 24, 2019, and all grantee team members **must** attend.*
- Host at least one, potentially more, cohort convening(s) in your home school or community, with support from Mass IDEAS
- Active engagement in coaching and advising provided by Mass IDEAS staff, coaches, and other experts on governance, finance, operations, and curriculum and instruction
- Progress updates to home district/CMO and Mass IDEAS and sharing lessons learned
- Financial reporting on grant funds²
- A fully executed grant agreement confirming the terms of the grant

As part of the application, all members of the team will review and sign an “Expectations for Teams” document that includes the expectations above.

Stakeholder Support for Grantee Teams' Work

The support of stakeholders in teams' home communities will provide a critical foundation for planning a new school model or a whole-school redesign. As such, Mass IDEAS requires teams to engage stakeholders immediately. In the application, teams must describe the support they have received from stakeholders and upload signed statements of that support. (The statement template is available in the application platform.)

Required Statements of Support

Stakeholder engagement will be an important step in the school design process that Mass IDEAS and planning grantees will discuss throughout the grant period. However, without the support of some stakeholders, school model planning work cannot even begin. Mass IDEAS has required Statements of Support from these stakeholders; more information about required statements is provided below. Applicants with questions about required Statements of Support can join an office hours session or email Mass IDEAS. Please see the **Application Support Resources** section for additional information.

Whole-school redesigns: For teams applying for a planning grant for their work on whole-school redesigns, Statements of Support from the school leader and the district/CMO leader are required.

² More detailed instructions for reporting will be provided at the time of award and included in the grant agreement.

New school models with confirmed locations: For teams applying for a planning grant for their work on a new school model, where the location for the school is confirmed, Statements of Support from the school founders are required. If a team already has a board or umbrella organization for its new school model, statements from these stakeholders are also required.

New school models with locations to be determined: For teams applying for a planning grant for their work on a new school model, where the location for the school is yet to be determined, Statements of Support from the school founders are required. If a team already has a board or umbrella organization for its new school model, statements from these stakeholders are also required. In addition, teams with a school location yet to be determined will identify at least one stakeholder organization in each of the two communities identified in their application pre-work to complete the Statement of Support. Please see the **Application Pre-Work** section for additional information.

Recommended Statements of Support

Above, we have provided information about support needed from required stakeholders. However, this is a minimum level of support for teams' planning work. For both whole-school redesigns and new school models, we strongly encourage teams to engage students, parents and other family members, community members, teachers, other school staff, school leadership, local business partners, and others in their work. We encourage teams to submit Statements of Support from these additional stakeholders in the application as well.

Plan to Engage Additional Stakeholders

In the application, Mass IDEAS asks applicants to identify any additional stakeholders from whom they will need support for their work and to describe their plan for engaging them during the grant period.

Grant Terms and Conditions

The grant terms and conditions have been developed by Mass IDEAS specifically for the planning grants and are not negotiable. You are advised to be sure that your organization can accept these terms and conditions at the time you submit an application. If your application is selected for funding, you will be provided 10 days after the notification of award to accept the grant and return the award letter with an appropriate institutional signature.

Application Submission

All applications are due by 5:00 p.m. ET on Monday, November 5, 2018.

Application Pre-Work

As the foundation of their applications, prospective applicants will complete pre-work to learn more about what their communities want and need from their schools. Teams that have already completed some of this empathy work for other purposes are welcome to use the data they have previously collected as part of their pre-work. All applicants must complete the pre-work assignment and submit their work as part of their application packages.

Application Review Process, Required Interviews for Finalists

Mass IDEAS will screen submissions to ensure applications address grant requirements described in the RFL. Applicants will be notified if their applications are excluded during the screening process.

Mass IDEAS, in consultation with partners, will review all eligible applications. To identify and avert conflicts of interest, reviewers will not be permitted to review applications from organizations for which they have identified the presence of or potential for such conflicts. These initial applications will be considered on their individual merits. Mass IDEAS may contact the authors of some applications with clarifying questions. Any teams that do not move forward to the finalist round will be notified.

For finalist teams that move forward beyond the application reviews, Mass IDEAS will conduct required interviews. ***Interviews will be scheduled during the week of December 3, 2018.*** Teams must ensure that team members are available during those days; Mass IDEAS will work with selected teams to determine convenient times and locations for interviews. As part of the invitation to interview, Mass IDEAS will conduct a due diligence review to ensure that the potential grantee is an eligible recipient of funding. Please see the **Budget Guidance** section for additional information about eligible funding recipients.

Notification of grant recipients will take place by the end of December 2018. Grantees will receive their initial grant payments after all grant documents have been executed.

Application Support Resources

Prospective applicants are encouraged to engage in the following application support opportunities:

Webinar

Mass IDEAS will host a webinar to share lessons learned by school designers in the field with prospective applicants. A panel of school designers from Massachusetts and around the nation will discuss their successes, challenges, and strategies and respond to questions from participants. This webinar will be held Tuesday, September 25, 3:45–5:15 p.m. [Advance registration is required.](#)

Office Hours

Mass IDEAS will host six applicant support office hours by phone to provide opportunities for potential applicants to learn about the planning grants and to ask any questions they may have about the application. Applicants may join a call at any time during the call window. No advance registration is required.

- Thursday, September 20, 12:00–1:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, September 26, 10:30–11:30 a.m.
- Tuesday, October 9, 4:00–5:00 p.m.
- Monday, October 15, 3:00–4:00 p.m.
- Monday, October 29, 3:30–4:30 p.m.
- Thursday, November 1, 10:30–11:30 a.m.

Please use the following dial-in information for all of the conference calls:
866-662-4001, passcode 6595344#

Applicant Writing Support Sessions

Mass IDEAS will provide two opportunities for applicants to receive support in writing their applications. Each session will include both general information about the application, opportunities for one-on-one feedback, and responses to questions about the application content. **Advance registration is required for these events.**

- Wednesday, October 3, 3:00–7:00 p.m. in Norwood, MA. [REGISTER](#)
- Wednesday, October 24, 3:00–7:00 p.m. in Springfield, MA. [REGISTER](#)

Questions

All questions related to the RFL should be submitted by email to info@massideas.org.

Responses to frequently asked questions are available on the [Mass IDEAS website](#).