



Request for Proposals
College-Community Connections, Phase VI
Fall 2018

The Teagle Foundation views the liberal arts as the cornerstone to a comprehensive undergraduate education. Through the College-Community Connections (CCC) initiative, the Foundation has supported collaboration between New York City community-based organizations and colleges and universities in the metro area to introduce students from under-resourced high schools to liberal arts content and pedagogy. The Foundation invites select grantees of previous phases of CCC to submit an application for funding. Grant amounts of up to \$300,000 for a 36-month period will be made for each funded project.

Rationale

The Teagle Foundation has long felt a special responsibility to the community within which we operate and, over the years, has contributed to a wide range of organizations that work with young people in New York City. This responsibility is coupled with the Foundation's commitment to liberal arts education. In today's digital age, the richest forms of education promote critical literacy to enable students to question how one "knows what they know" and to "learn how to learn" to be successful in any professional endeavor. Furthermore, the benefits of liberal arts education ensure that students are prepared for full participation as citizens in our democracy and meaningful reflection on achieving the good life.

In 2005, the Foundation launched the College-Community Connections (CCC) initiative to expand and deepen college access services offered through New York City community-based organizations (CBOs). Through this partnership program, CBOs and colleges and universities have collaborated to introduce high school students from underserved communities to liberal arts education. Signature components of the partnerships include participation in seminars led by college faculty and engagement with residential campus life, enriching students' notions of what college is, where they might attend, and what they might study when they arrive on campus.

Goals

The goals of the CBO and college/university partnerships are as follows:

- To enhance the college readiness among high school students from underserved communities supported by CBOs in New York City.

- To cultivate students' understanding of liberal arts education.
- To introduce students to the range of colleges and majors at their disposal, with particular emphasis on liberal arts institutions and disciplines.
- To encourage CBOs and colleges to explore ways in which such partnerships can be eventually institutionalized at their institutions.

Criteria for Project Proposals

The Teagle Foundation invites select New York City CBOs in collaboration with college/university partners who have participated in previous iterations of the College-Community Connections program to submit an application for funding. Grant amounts of up to \$300,000 for a 36-month period will be made for each funded project. For the next phase of funding, we emphasize programming that meets the following criteria:

- **Liberal Arts Instruction by Post-Secondary Faculty**

In alignment with Teagle's overall mission, the Foundation seeks to support projects that introduce high school students to an undergraduate liberal arts education. Programs may explore the humanities, arts, social sciences, and/or natural sciences and ideally be overseen by tenure-track faculty of the collaborating institution. A description of the focal discipline(s) of study and the rationale for inclusion should be articulated. The Foundation would also like to know how faculty are identified to serve as instructors as well as any available preparation for their participation in the program.

- **Preparation for the Academic Rigor of College**

Programs should simulate the college experience as a means to sharpen students' skills and enrich their understanding of academic expectations at the collegiate level. While pre-college courses may be offered, opportunities for students to participate in college-level coursework and earn credit are encouraged.

We strongly encourage programming that promotes the development of academic skills critical to post-secondary success that incorporates the following components: (1) discussion-based classrooms; (2) critical reading of college-level texts; (3) text-based argumentative writing; (4) academic research; and (5) oral presentations. Successful proposals should describe in detail the strategies that will be practiced by students. Additionally, relevant course descriptions, reading lists, and syllabi should also be included.

- **Collaboration on Student Recruitment**

The Foundation does not mandate requirements for the selection of student participants other than their enrollment in a New York City public high school and affiliation with the applicant CBO. Further, the Foundation does not seek to limit participation to the most academically-able students but rather aims to serve those who would most benefit from participation in a

rigorous out-of-school college preparatory program. We encourage partners to thoughtfully collaborate on the ideal profile and selection process for participants and to describe this within the proposal. For example, partners may wish to consider expectations for maturity and prior academic preparation that will support growth through the program.

- **Acclimation to College Campus Environment**

In order to help student participants envision themselves as undergraduates, time should be spent in the campus environment. Ideally, programs will include an on-campus residency, although regular and frequent visits to the college/university partner site will also be accepted. Additionally, partners may consider collaborative programming with other university departments such as student affairs to support non-cognitive skills development such as time management, study skills, and working in cooperative groups.

- **Mentorship by Undergraduate Students**

In addition to connecting students to faculty, proposals should consider ways to leverage the leadership and experience of undergraduates enrolled in the college/university partner. Near-peer models may take a variety of forms. They may include positions such as course teaching assistants or assigned pairings for virtual check-ins during the college application season.

- **College Knowledge-Building for Students and Families**

CBOs that have participated in past iterations of the College-Community Connections program have historically offered critical college access support services to their students such as: college visits, standardized test preparation, personal statement workshops, college application review, and financial aid advisement. We encourage the continuation of these efforts.

The Foundation also acknowledges the unique bridge CBOs can serve for families/guardians to post-secondary institutions. Proposals should describe strategies to incorporate students' families in their College-Community Connections program.

Please note college access activities beyond the scope of partnership activities should account for no more than 30% of the total grant award, or up to \$30,000 per year.

- **Assessment**

Grantees should articulate goals for the following metrics, in addition to any other goals they seek to advance related to students' preparation for a rigorous liberal arts education: (1) average number of college applications per student; (2) percentage of students graduating from high school; and (3) percentage of students matriculating to a four-year institution.

As in years past, funded projects will report annually on their progress through an online portal. Awarded programs will be expected to administer and report results on student-level data before and after their participation in CCC partnership activities using a standardized survey instrument. This tool was developed by the Research Alliance for New York City Public Schools with input from grantees in 2017-2018. Successful proposals will describe the partnership's strategy for administering the survey annually and will allocate appropriate funding to maintain access to the tool through Survey Monkey.

As with our other grant initiatives, the Teagle Foundation may wish to collaborate with grantees in an external evaluation to assess the short- and longer-term outcomes of funded projects, including follow-up studies three to five years after the conclusion of the funded projects.

- **Partnerships and Sustainability**

We invite applicants to develop and describe plans for institutionalizing their collaboration and developing plans for program continuation in the face of inevitable challenges such as leadership transitions. For example, if the partnership is primarily led by a single leader at the college or CBO, are there others who can be cross-trained on the partnership priorities and program details? We encourage partnerships to use your collective wisdom and creativity in configuring reasonable sustainability plans.

- **Dissemination Efforts**

Dissemination is important to spread the knowledge and practices developed by partners. It might take the form of presentations at conferences and workshops as well as providing materials that would support the creation of a toolkit to be developed by an external evaluator/consultant.

Submission Process

CCC proposals will be considered at the February 2019 board meeting. A working draft of the proposal will be due by December 3, 2018 and the final version will be due on January 28, 2019. Upon confirmation of the partners' intent to apply, an e-mail with instructions to access the Foundation's online application portal will be distributed.

The Foundation will notify applicants of the Board's decision by the first week of March, and for successful applicants, the first round of funding will be released in June 2019.

Foundation Contact: Please send a message to Tamara Tweel at ttweel@teagle.org if you have questions about the College-Community Connections initiative.