



2010 Request for Proposals

In 2010, the NYC Venture Philanthropy Fund will make one grant to a New York City non-profit working to improve education. The grant will consist of a cash grant as well as direct assistance to the grantee from VPF members.

About NYC Venture Philanthropy Fund

The NYC Venture Philanthropy Fund (VPF) is a giving circle of individuals who combine their professional skills and financial contributions to support local social entrepreneurs in New York City.

Launched in 2008, our mission is to support emerging, innovative leaders who are tackling persistent social and economic problems in New York City.

VPF seeks to create a community where passionate and committed New Yorkers can join to develop new approaches to change. We hope to help harness the vitality, ingenuity and incomparable resources of New York City for the benefit of all of its residents by raising awareness of critical issues, growing and educating a highly diverse membership about the power of collective giving, and by joining forces with thought leaders, activists and like-minded organizations.

2010 Granting Philosophy

VPF seeks to provide an effective method for identifying emerging under-funded and under-recognized organizations that embody an entrepreneurial spirit, and promise results that directly address complex and persistent social problems. VPF is especially interested in supporting startups and fledgling organizations that have not yet received significant support from major funders.

In order to focus on issues in a meaningful way, each year VPF will make a grant in one critical area, such as education, the arts, hunger, poverty, etc. *In 2010-2011, VPF members voted to support unique and innovative ideas that seek to improve educational opportunities in New York City.*

The current American public education system fails to prepare many students for college, work, and citizenship. Roughly one-third of all students do not complete high school and another third complete high school but are not equipped with the skills or qualifications needed to enter postsecondary education. Of the third that go on to postsecondary education, 46 percent are required to take remedial courses and only 6 percent of young people from the lowest socioeconomic quartile earn a four-year college degree. In today's global, high-tech economy, students must be prepared for success in postsecondary education and become lifelong learners in order to earn a living wage and realize their full potential. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 9 out of 10 jobs created in the next decade will require a postsecondary education, and less than 20 percent of those without any college education will become economically self-sufficient.

According to *Coming to Our Senses*, a 2008 report from The College Board, seven severe, chronic and interrelated obstacles stand between where we are today with our P-16 educational system (prekindergarten through college) and where we need to be in order to continue economic growth and compete in a global economy. They include: many poor and minority children arriving at kindergarten educationally well behind their peers; high attrition rates at crucial stages of the educational pipeline; shortcomings in K-12 student preparation, college readiness and lack of alignment between high school and college; disparities in the quality of K-12 teaching; significant challenges on our college campuses, including complex admissions and financial aid processes, affordability challenges and disappointing completion rates; outdated college credit and transfer practices that inhibit student mobility; and inadequate investment in adult education.

In New York City, only 59 percent of students in the public schools graduated on time in 2009 and the achievement gap between black and Latino students and their white peers is vast, at 20 and 22 percentage points, respectively. Graduation rates for students with disabilities are only 24.7 percent, while those for students who speak English as a second language are only 39.7 percent. Further, only 44.6 percent of students earned the more rigorous Regents diploma in 2009. The Regents diploma will be required for all students by 2012 and reflects the standards for coursework required for admission to most four-year colleges, indicating that the majority of graduating high school students in New York City is not ready to pursue postsecondary education.

Beyond our P-16 system, we face other challenges as well, for example: providing adequate special education support; educating the incarcerated; teaching English to recent immigrants; training and retraining workers for relevant careers; building the country's expertise in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM); and promoting the arts and citizenship through curricular and extra-curricular programs.

As a result, demand is increasing for innovative services and programs that help improve educational opportunities for New York's underserved communities and neediest constituents. Social entrepreneurs can play a unique role in improving education by focusing on the needs of individuals at the local level. In doing so, social entrepreneurs can empower New Yorkers who are in-need with tools to realize the dream of opportunity that New York City so embodies.

Sources Include: *Coming to Our Senses: A Report from the Commission on Access, Admissions, and Success*. The College Board, 2008. *Closing the Graduation Gap: Toward High Schools That Prepare All Students for College, Work, and Citizenship*. Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, April 2003. New York City high school graduation rates on the rise - but minorities lag. New York Daily News. March 9, 2010.

Grant Awards

VPF is offering a one-year grant for the 2011 calendar year. The grant includes:

1. an operational cash grant ranging from \$7,500-\$10,000;
2. in-kind direct assistance from VPF members and partners, in areas including but not limited to board development, marketing and communications, fundraising, strategic planning or finance/accounting; and
3. access to professional networks including but not limited to consulting services, donors and funding, and extended constituencies.

At this time, multi-year grants will not be considered.

2010 Eligibility and Selection Criteria

VPF invites organizations working in New York City on issues related to education to submit proposals for funding consideration in 2010-11.

Organizations with annual operating budgets of \$500,000 or less are eligible to apply. Applicants must be recognized or pending¹ as a not-for-profit organization under section 501(c) (3) of the U.S. tax code. Current VPF members are not eligible to apply for VPF grants.

The strongest applicants will:

- Introduce a highly innovative, well-planned and scaleable model for tackling issues related to improving educational opportunities;
- Incorporate principles of social justice;
- Have the potential to demonstrate measurable results;
- Boast a professional leadership team with the appropriate experience and expertise to enable the organization and its programs to succeed; and
- Have a Board with a strong contribution record.

VPF does not fund:

- Unaffiliated individuals
- Publications
- Scholarships, capital projects, or endowments
- Schools
- Hospitals and medical facilities
- Political parties and/or their related activities
- Governmental organizations and agencies
- Sectarian entities (religious, political or ideological in nature) whose services are limited to a particular sect or who require recipients to adhere to a specific dogma, political point of view or religious practice in order to receive services
- Intermediary funding agencies

¹ If you have not registered as a 501(c) (3), we need to see evidence of actions taken to obtain 501(c) (3), status. Such actions include formation of a board, codification of bylaws and mission statement, or other such processes.

Monitoring & Reporting

VPF is committed to collaboration and transparency, and we seek to work with grantees in respectful, strategic partnerships. A final report will be due at the conclusion of the one-year grant period on January 31, 2012. To clarify shared expectations, VPF's Project Management Committee will work with grantees to articulate goals in the following key areas as part of the formal grant agreement:

- Building Capacity – VPF will work with grantees to assess their current organizational capacity, develop strategies to strengthen key areas, and provide technical assistance as appropriate.
- Networking with Community Members – VPF will provide access to professional networks and potential additional sources of funding and will promote grantee events to its members, colleagues and partners whenever possible. Grantees will occasionally be required to participate in VPF events.
- Mapping and Learning from Results – VPF will work with grantees to develop mission-based performance benchmarks and assessment systems to strengthen organizational effectiveness over time.

2010 Grants Timeline

1) Proposals Due	<u>September 17, 2010</u>
2) Finalists Announced	<u>October 8, 2010</u>
3) Finalists' Pitch	<u>October 26, 2010</u>
4) Winner Notified	<u>November 10, 2010</u>
5) Award Party	<u>November 17, 2010</u>
6) Kickoff Meeting with Project Management Committee	<u>January 2011</u>
7) Regular Meetings with Project Management Committee	<u>January 2011-December 2011</u>
8) Final Report Due	<u>January 31, 2012</u>

The VPF funding decision will be made in the fall of 2010, after a due diligence process is completed. The grant year for NYC Venture Philanthropy Fund is January 1, 2011 – December 31, 2012. Payment of the grant award will be made in full upon receipt of a signed grant agreement by January 31, 2011.

Application Procedure

VPF recommends that any organization considering applying for a grant first complete the pre-application questionnaire on our website, www.nycvpf.org, to determine if they are a suitable applicant.

To apply, applicants should prepare a short application according to the guidelines below. A limited number of applicants will be selected as finalists and asked to "pitch" their idea at a gathering of the entire VPF membership in late October 2010.

Application Guidelines

To be eligible for VPF funding, prospective grantees must submit a cover form (see below), applicant's statement, and supporting documentation as outlined below.

Applicants' statements should be no more than 6,000 words and should address the following:

1. A brief description of your organization's history and its mission.
2. What is the specific problem in New York City related to education that your organization wants to address, and why is it important? How does your organization plan to tackle this problem?
3. What specific new or innovative solutions or mechanisms for change is your organization proposing? What other organizations are doing similar work?
4. Excluding funding, what would you identify as your organization's three most pressing needs within the next year?
5. Where do you see your organization five years from now?
6. Please list all partnerships or collaborations that your organization has forged, and describe the nature of those partnerships. What types of partnerships have been most successful for your organization?
7. How will funding from VPF assist your organization in meeting its goals?
8. What kind of direct assistance from VPF members would be most helpful to your organization at this time?

Supporting documentation necessary for a complete application include:

1. An application cover form (see below).
2. An applicant statement, as described above.
3. A copy of your most recent IRS letter indicating your organization's tax-exempt status, or, if not available, an explanation.
4. An organization chart of your staff. Please indicate if employees are full or part time and if they are paid or volunteer.
5. A short bio of each member of your leadership team.
6. A list of your Board of Directors, with their affiliations.
7. A list of your other funders.
8. A copy of your most recent financial statement, or a three-year projected annual operating budget, including a listing of all revenue streams (if applicable).
9. Two references (with contact information) who can attest to your organization's work and/or leadership. We reserve the right to contact supplied references.

All requested materials **must be e-mailed** to VPF at grants@nycvpf.org by **SEPTEMBER 17, 2010**.

Inquiries

Questions about 2010 VPF Grants process should be directed to grants@nycvpf.org.

NYC Venture Philanthropy Fund 2010 Grant

Application Coversheet

Organizational Information

Name of Organization:		
Project Name (if applicable):		
Primary Contact Person:	Title:	
Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Tel:	Fax:	Email:
Name of Executive Director (if not listed above):	Website:	
How did you learn about the VPF Grant?		

Proposal Information

Please provide a two sentence description of your request for funding:	
Total organizational budget (for current fiscal year):	Total organizational budget for 2009 fiscal year:
Dates covered by this budget:	
Is your organization tax-exempt? If so, please list your Federal Tax ID number.	
If no, please list fiscal sponsor with tax-exempt status:	