

New Beginnings:

Supporting Young Immigrants & Refugees

Request for Proposals



About the Nellie Mae Education Foundation

The Nellie Mae Education Foundation is committed to using our power and privilege as a philanthropic institution to advance racial equity in public education. We are committed to championing efforts to prioritize community goals that challenge racial inequities and advance excellent, student-centered public education for all New England youth. We are proud to have been part of efforts over the last ten years to advance personalized, student-centered approaches to learning across the New England region. We learned that for student-centered practices to flourish, the structural racial inequities present in our education system needed to be addressed. We are focusing our grantmaking strategically on addressing structural racism and white supremacy in our education system, so that all youth have access to an excellent and equitable public education.

Background

“It is the obligation of every person born in a safer room to open the door when someone in danger knocks.”

-Dina Nayeri

Amidst the ongoing dual pandemics of COVID-19 and anti-Blackness, we continue to experience ongoing humanitarian crises—forced migration due to the ongoing pandemics, natural disasters, and oppressive systems. We believe that every human deserves safety, freedom, and opportunity to thrive.

During COVID-19, immigrants in particular have continued to keep communities afloat by providing access to healthcare, food, and other basic needs. They have tirelessly put themselves in harm’s way to support their fellow community members even as they have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic.

New immigrants and refugees bring a wealth of knowledge and experiences to our communities. They also need a range of support and resources during their transition to a new home, especially as it pertains to navigating our nation’s education system. While policymakers debate the fate of these youth and families, schools and community-based organizations are stepping up and doing all they can to provide wraparound supports.

We believe early support will provide a sense of stability, hope, and opportunities for new beginnings to the courageous youth and families seeking refuge. We also believe that early support will contribute to establishing and strengthening the bonds and relationships that are so critical in thriving communities.

The goal of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to support **organizations, schools, and districts wishing to engage in short-term projects** designed to welcome and assist young people who have been forced to migrate in the past two years from countries experiencing extreme crises and who are seeking refuge or asylum in New England. We recognize that the crises are ongoing and there is no quick fix or simple solution. We also acknowledge that those seeking refuge have long-term multi-faceted needs that are beyond the scope of this RFP. Yet, we know that *all* youth need and deserve access to an excellent and equitable public education.

Funding Priorities and Opportunities

Projects should in some way tie to the educational experience of the newly arrived youth being served. Ideally, youth and families should have a voice in the focus and design of how these resources are used, along with being appropriately compensated for their involvement in the project (e.g., through stipends or gift cards, etc.).

Requests should not exceed \$25,000. It is expected that the majority of the proposed budget will directly support a project that is specifically focused on supporting a positive education experience and transition for newly arrived youth; that said, we understand that many youth and families are struggling to have basic needs met. While it is not a requirement or expectation, budgets may include a line item for basic need supports (COVID necessities [masks, hand sanitizer, disinfectant wipes, etc.], food, clothing, school supplies, etc.) for the youth and families participating in the proposed project.

The following are some examples of projects that will be considered for funding. While not an exhaustive list, it is meant to provide a picture of the types of projects the Foundation seeks to support. Please read the Criteria and Eligibility sections carefully for more details.

- Translation/English Language support
- Family resource events that center immigrant youth and parents
- Technology support
- Supports to help navigate education systems
- Space for youth to learn where they can get help/assistance (i.e.: a resource center)
- Space for students to learn self-agency
- Mental health support (i.e., peer support groups, individual or group counseling¹)
- Activities and spaces that bring together youth native to a community with newly arrived youth for dialogue and relationship building
- Self-care kits or events that bring joy to youth
- Cross-identity (racial, cultural, ethnic, gender, etc.) dialogues

¹ While this RFP is not designed to provide operating or on-going programmatic support, requests for additional social work or professional counseling hours are eligible.

Rapid response funding will not support the following requests:

- Requests from individuals or religious groups
- Capital campaigns
- Scholarships or fellowship programs
- Debt reduction or cash reserves
- Building construction or renovation
- Operating support or on-going programs. However, staff time to manage a short-term project is an allowable expense if the project is outside the staff person's established responsibilities.

Proposal

Please respond briefly to the following on the application portal. There is a 2,000-character limit for the response to each question. (See portal access instructions in the submission section below)

1. Briefly describe the community (i.e., group(s) of youth, organization, neighborhood, and/or city) this project would impact. Describe the approach and efforts taken to welcome new immigrants.
2. Describe the immigrants and refugees your organization is supporting. Approximately how many youth and/or families is your organization supporting?
3. Describe the project. How does this project support immigrant youth and families? What would this funding be used for and what do you hope to accomplish? How are youth and/or families involved in the project design, development, and implementation?
4. How is your organization rooted within the community, and why it is in a position to lead this project at this time? How does the proposed work align with the mission of your organization?
5. If the requested amount is less than the total budget, briefly explain how the remaining budget needs will be met.

Criteria for Selection

- Grant request must respond to a time-sensitive, unanticipated event, urgent challenge, or need in communities. *This grant is not intended to support ongoing programs and projects.*
- Youth serving in leadership roles will be compensated for their time.
- Organizations have an established focus on providing support for educational success.

- Population organization serves is at least 50% people of color. Organizations serving BIPOC youth will be prioritized.
- The project must be completed within six months of receiving the rapid response grant.

Eligibility

- This RFP is limited to community-based organizations, public schools, and districts. Higher education institutions are not eligible.
- The project takes place within New England (MA, RI, NH, VT, ME, or CT)
- Communities have at least one Title 1 school. (Schools in which children from low-income families make up at least 40 percent of enrollment are eligible to use Title I funds to operate schoolwide programs that serve all children in the school in order to raise the achievement of the lowest-achieving students. Local Education Agencies [LEAs] also must use Title I funds to provide Title I services to eligible children enrolled in private schools. More information about Title I and other ESSA programs is available [here](#).)
- Organizations must be directly serving youth enrolled in K-12 public education.
- The Foundation funds 501(c)3 educational organizations that fall under the tax designation 509(a)(1) or 509(a)(2) and have an education focus, as evidenced in their articles of incorporation. Due to the Foundation's tax status, private foundations (described in section 509 (a) of the Internal Revenue Code) and supporting organizations (described in section 509 (a)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code) are NOT eligible grantees.
- Organizations that received a previous Rapid Response Fund grant are eligible if the project that was funded has been completed and per the grant agreement a brief final report has been received by the Foundation.

Additional Information

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. **The deadline for proposals is Monday, November 15, 2021 at 5:00 EST or until the limited pool of resources is exhausted.** Please check our [website](#) to make sure funds are still available. The Foundation aims to review proposals, and if selected, disburse funds within three weeks of receiving the proposal.

If you need assistance submitting a proposal or have questions, please contact Stephanie Cheney at scheney@nmefoundation.org.

Proposal Submission Directions

Applications will be accepted using our [online application portal](#). Sign up for an account if you are a new user or log in if you have used our system this year. Once you are logged in, navigate to the “Grants Opportunities” tab and select the “Rapid Response Fund – New Beginnings: Supporting Young Immigrants and Refugees” opportunity to start your application.