



Investing in Girls Alliance
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Mini-Grant Guidelines and Application February 5, 2009

TO INCREASE THE INNOVATIVE APPROACHES AND BEST PRACTICES IN TERMS OF PROGRAMMING FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRLS IN THE GREATER WORCESTER AREA

Overview

The Investing in Girls Alliance formed as an advocacy group in 2006 to address the needs of Worcester area middle school girls, girls ages 10-14. Over thirty different youth-serving agencies came together to learn to “improve services for middle school girls in central Massachusetts through research, education, advocacy, and collaboration.” The mini-grant initiative is one way we can help local agencies better serve girls. We believe that more resources need to be available to middle school girls; especially ones that mimic federally recognized best practices. Please contact the Alliance for a copy of the best practices document. The mini-grant initiative will allow agencies to implement more girl-centric and gender-sensitive programming, encouraging innovative approaches and new frameworks.

The Alliance realized that in order to effectively serve middle school girls it would have to first listen to them, to understand their challenges. After conducting a needs assessment in 2007 the Alliance had a more concrete idea of the issues local adolescent girls face. The report outlined five main challenges local middle school girls face. The challenges included: education, health, sexual health, relationships, and violence/safety. The Alliance also chose to focus on data about girls and program effectiveness. The full version of this report is available on the IIG website, www.investinggirls.org.

Middle school girls face specific issues, ones that are deeply gendered, and unique from their male counterparts. It is important to remember that girls are their own experts. Because gender issues are not monolithic we aim to help finance programs that take a creative approach to these challenges.

Mission:

Through mini-grants the Investing in Girls Alliance hopes to create a citywide culture that caters to the specific needs of middle school girls in the Greater Worcester area. Our research shows that girls have particular needs; their voices tell us that we need to listen to them carefully. The mini-grant initiative hopes to provide the financial means necessary to create a city of people and providers that respond to girls and their challenges.

Goal:

The IIG mini-grants will fund new programs that take an innovative approach to working with middle school girls. Although we expect that most of these programs will occur out of school, this is not a constraint, we welcome any and all programs. By funding programs that truly work with middle school girls to respond their needs, programs that are girl-centric and gender-sensitive, we hope to create a culture where girls' voices are of the utmost priority.

Guiding Principles- Outcomes:

It is the hope of the Investing in Girls Alliance that by funding new girl-centric and gender-sensitive programming we will achieve our long-term outcomes for middle school girls in the Greater Worcester area. The outcomes stem from the needs assessment research conducted by the Alliance.

Those outcomes are the guiding principles for this mini-grant initiative:

- For girls to feel empowered, that they know how to be agents of change and how to access support to implement that change
- For girls to feel that education is not an insurmountable barrier, for girls to thrive in school and feel in control of their education
- For girls to feel in control of their health, physical, mental, and sexual
- For girls to live in a city, a home, a school where they feel safe and violence is not a threat or a re-occurring theme.

Gender-Sensitive and Girl-Centric Guidelines- Strategies:

- Space that is physically and emotionally safe and provides girls with opportunities to address their needs and desires
- Opportunities for girls to talk and voice their idea, feelings, and challenges
- Opportunities to learn how to develop and maintain healthy relationships (modeling behavior of program staff and peers)
- Opportunities for empowerment and self-growth beyond the experience of victimization
- Education about women's health including development and sexuality
- Opportunities for girls to understand their culture and appreciate and respect the culture of others
- Mentors who share experiences that resonate with the realities of girls' lives and who exemplify survival and growth
- Adequate funding for providing comprehensive programming across the continuum of care
- Adequate data to be able to state the case for girls and consistent date to be able to measure effectiveness (added by IIG)

- Source: Principles adapted from the Valentine Foundation's Report: A Conversation with Girls from the Rhode Island Girls Coalition (1990)

General Eligibility:

Any agency serving or looking to serve middle school girls, ages 10 through 14, in the City of Worcester.

Funding Details:

Mini-grants will be rewarded up to \$5000. The funding is meant to assist an agency in implementing a program in summer or fall of 2009.

Grantee Responsibilities:

One of the main focuses of the Investing in Girls Alliance is effectiveness in terms of programming and truly serving middle school girls. To this end we prioritize evaluation and internal programmatic reflection. Grantees of the IIG mini-grant process will be expected to carry out evaluations on their programs and submit a final report to the Investing in Girls Alliance at the end of the funding period.

Application Process:

The Investing in Girls steering committee will be reviewing the submitted proposals. Here is the application timeline; late materials will not be accepted.

Information Session: February 5, 2009

Proposal Submission: March 5, 2009

Applicant Notification: April 5, 2009

Please contact Erica Richmond if you have any questions, you can reach her at erichmond@investingingirls.org or at 508-757-5631 ext 204

Part I: Organizational Overview

Organization name:

Mailing address:

Telephone #:

Fax #:

Website:

Executive Director:

Contact for this grant (*Name & Title*):

Year(s) of service with organization

Telephone #: _____ Email: _____

Name of program applying for IIG funding:

Program Director/Manager for proposed IIG program (*Name & Title*):

Telephone #: _____ Email address: _____

This program is a: gender-sensitive, co-ed program or girl-centric, girls only program

Program goal(s) focuses on advancing which of the following for girls?

Education

Health, Mental and Physical

Sexual Health

Violence

Healthy Relationships

Advocacy, Leadership Development

Proposed total number of girls served in the proposed program

Days & hours of proposed program: _____

Part II: Program Overview: *(This narrative section should not exceed 4 pages)*

Program Description- Please provide a narrative describing an overview of the program and how it is in line with the Investing in Girls mission. Please also include a description of your organization's capacity to deliver the proposed program.

Needs of Girls - Please describe how this program will address the specific needs of girls in your community, what are those particular needs and what is your proposed programmatic solution?

Girls' Voices- The Investing in Girls Alliance prioritizes the voices of girls, please describe how your proposed program will incorporate girls into the planning and implementation aspects of your program. Please describe how your program will help cultivate a new local culture that truly supports girls and enables them to be agents of change.

Best Practices- Please link the proposed program to the current best practices, is the proposed program evidence-based? Has this program promoted gender sensitivity in the past, how do you propose it will do so now?

Evaluation- Please describe how your proposed program will address the outcomes, listed on page 2, put forward by the Investing in Girls Alliance. Please also describe how you will measure those outcomes.

Budget- Please describe how the IIG funding would be used.

Part III: Finances and Proposed Program Budget

Amount requested for proposed program: _____

If this is not a 501(c)(3) organization, please provide name, contact person, and address of the nonprofit organization serving as the fiscal agent:

Please provide the following for the proposed program only:

A budget for the proposed program indicating the following:

Revenue

How much of the total revenue has been secured or committed?

Expenses