Partnership Agreement
For Participants in
SHOW ME THE MONEY: Rural Communities, Rural School Funding in NY, and How to Write a Grant Proposal
August 1, 2021 – December 31, 2021

Background

The course "SHOW ME THE MONEY: Rural Communities, Rural School Funding in NY, and How to Write a Grant Proposal" was developed in response to the needs expressed by:
- Rural schools in NYS seeking a variety of supports to obtain external funding,
- Cornell students seeking engaged learning experiences and instruction in identifying, match-making, and applying for grant funds,
- The Rural Schools Association of NYS seeking to build value for its members,
- Engaged initiative at Cornell University seeking to build courses where "…teams of faculty, staff, students and community members address global issues and help build a more sustainable, just and collaborative future" (https://oei.cornell.edu/resources/community-engaged-learning/)

The goals for this course are for students and school teams to learn:
- How to find and apply for large and small grants in support of local district priorities and initiatives;
- How political, economic, cultural forces define, shape and constrain rural communities and schools, and how these impact community capacity to serve youth;
- How Cornell graduates can continue to engage in community partnerships across rural communities.
- How to prepare successful applications for two grants to support programming at participating rural districts.

To achieve this, ***we will meet bi-weekly (Tu-Th 2:45-4:15) beginning Thursday August 26, 2021, through Tuesday December 7, 2021*** to learn content specific to public school funding, rural community economics and demographics; project management skills; ecological systems theory; capacity assessment; grant seeking, match making, and writing; initiating and maintaining community partnerships; community and district profiles; and other topics deemed important for course completion.

Student-district teams will write a submission-ready application for a small ($2500 or less) project to a local funder. Teams will also prepare a larger ($5000 or greater) state, federal, or private foundation application "kit" consisting of some common components required of such grants, such as district and community profiles, monitoring and evaluation plans, logic models, timelines, etc. along with one or more funding opportunities to which the district can apply.

To accomplish these, a group of 3-4 students will be paired with 3 staff from a participating district to work on these projects together as a team. Students are expected to attend all

classes; district participants are expected to attend all Tuesday sessions (13) except the last Tuesday. Attendance at any and all additional classes is optional and open to district participants.

This is an experimental course, and our first time offering it. As such, we are open to feedback and making adjustments along the way and ask for your patience and commitment to helping us make it the best it can be.

<div align="center">Our guiding value is "win-win"</div>

Purpose
The purpose of this MOU is to outline roles and responsibilities of the faculty team, students, and the participating districts for this course in order that we can have successful outcomes for all.

The parties to this agreement each have different roles to play, and the benefits for each are also different.

Partners include:
- Faculty Team (Cornell faculty)
- District Participants   Project
- Student Participants   Teams

Roles and Responsibilities
Faculty Team
This is truly a group effort, as no one person is teaching the entire course. As such, it is the responsibility of the Faculty Team to facilitate an experience that is mutually beneficial for all groups and individual members, to the greatest extent possible. Our first priority is to make sure everyone understands the uniqueness of local rural contexts and how to find grant funding and apply for it **with consideration for their local context**. Our very close second priority is to make this course richly engaging and enjoyable for all participants. To achieve this, we will be
- Assessing needs and interests of all participants and work to incorporate as much as possible.
- Creating and grading assignments.
- Asking for frequent feedback on your individual and group experience and progress
- Helping to work through snags
- Making small changes throughout the course to meet course goals and participants' learning desires as much as possible
- Assessing student learning

<u>District Participants</u>

Districts will need to compose a team of 3 to participate in this course. The 3 District Participants need to be very familiar with the school district, as well as the community in which it is situated.

- Districts will need to ***prepare and deliver a presentation on two projects, one small and one large*** for your project team to work with. Each needs to describe a serious project that you will undertake if funding is received. We are committed to working on real-life issues. This is the biggest piece of work districts will need to do – prepare a presentation and ***present your projects to the class*** in the beginning of the semester (Tuesday 8/31) so we can match interested students to your team.
- ***Districts MUST meet with the class Tuesdays weeks 2-14 (8/31- 11/30***), or your project will be delayed and students will not be able to get their work done on time. Students will lead these meetings using an agenda they've developed with an assigned framework and standards, and had approved by the Faculty Team.
- ***Cooperate with students' meeting agendas.*** which will include reflecting deeply on how a variety of economic, political, historical, cultural, etc. issues impact your local district and its community (we are going to ask about the larger community in which the district reside – district team members must be familiar with these). There will be time to report out on progress made since the last meeting, what the next steps should be, who will do them, and by when. These details will all depend on the projects you propose, the funding options available, the capacity of the team you send, and other factors we may not have anticipated.
- ***Give constructive feedback*** to students and Faculty Team.
- ***When conflict arises, first attempt to address it within your group and inform the Faculty Team***. We will provide some training on this. If issues persist, let the faculty team know and we can create a response together.
- ***Accept tasks and complete them on time***.
- ***Be reasonably available to students between sessions***. During your first team meeting you will determine when and how students can reach out to you between sessions; there will be other opportunities throughout the course to make adjustments to this as needed.
- ***Complete end of course assessments***. The Faculty Team is responsible for assessing student learning, however we will be asking you to assess how the process went, team management and participation, overall value, and confidence in your proposals, and other process-related items.
- District participants, while required to attend Tuesday sessions, may opt to attend any or all other class sessions as well. We understand districts may want to utilize this course as an opportunity to build more enduring capacity by sending staff who can learn how to find, match, and write for more grants in the future.
- ***You will not be assigning tasks or work to students***. If you feel something additional is needed, please discuss with Faculty Team.

- o   We are interested in partnering with District Participants as teachers as well, so if there is a relevant topic you feel you may be uniquely qualified to talk to the class about, please propose this to the Faculty Team!

<u>Students</u>

Students are responsible for meeting all course expectations and assignments on time in a professional manner, including all written work, as outlined in the course syllabus. Not only will you be students in this course, but you will also be acting as consultants, and project coordinators/leaders. As such, professional behavior is expected at all times.

- o   ***Attendance is vital*** here, since you are working on a team that makes weekly progress contributing to your overall grade. Teams of 3.
- o   ***Respectfully and effectively manage your team***: come prepared, follow agenda, behave professionally, make sure everyone contributes.
- o   ***Give constructive feedback*** to each other, districts, and Faculty Team.
- o   ***When conflict arises, first attempt to address it yourself and inform the Faculty Team***. We will provide some training on this. If issues persist, let the faculty team know and we can create a response together.

<u>Project teams</u>

- o   Teams must work together for this course to be a success; school members need to help students access relevant information & student members need to be prepared & communicate clearly what they need from districts.
- o   Conflict will happen. Please keep track of and manage your own emotions and expectations before jumping in; ask questions for clarification; use "I" statements, work toward win-win solutions. ALSO – please keep Faculty Team apprised of all situations **as they begin** to get sticky. We encourage you to communicate to us as a team and individually so we can get all perspectives and be ready should you need assistance in managing conflict.
- o   Timelines and due dates – ideally, every team member will have a task each week. We are trying NOT to burden school members with weighty tasks, and if their team is well-constructed, we can avoid this, but we will need schools to take on some tasks.

I agree to the above expectations for my role so all can experience a successful course:

_____   _____
   Signature   Print Name

Role [check one]:   [ ] Faculty team   [ ] School District   [ ] Cornell Student