

ROBIN HOOD

ACHIEVING THE MILESTONE

SUPPORTING ALL STUDENTS TO EARN
A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

A REQUEST FOR PROPSALS (RFP)

Application Link: [Application Form](#)

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Proposals Due: May 17, 2024

ACHIEVING THE MILESTONE: Supporting All Students To Earn A High School Diploma

Robin Hood envisions New York City as a beacon of hope and opportunity where every individual, irrespective of their background, can ascend the ladder of economic mobility and live a life free from the constraints of poverty. We firmly believe that your starting point should not define where you end up and we help elevate New Yorkers out of poverty by funding, supporting, and collaborating with high-impact community organizations, partnering with government and advocating for what works so that New York City can be an engine for upward mobility for all.

Robin Hood has long recognized that a high-quality education is essential to put young people on a path to economic success – an education that ignites curiosity and allows students to discover their passions and talents while ensuring that they master the academic, social-emotional, and career-relevant knowledge and skills to be prepared for postsecondary success and lifelong learning. However, far too many children don't have access to high-quality schools or learning experiences. This is especially true for high school-aged students who are overaged and/or under-credited and therefore off track to graduate.

ROBIN HOOD'S EFFORTS TO SUPPORT OVERAGED AND UNDER-CREDITED STUDENTS

Achieving a high school diploma is an essential step towards achieving economic mobility. A diploma enables young people to access additional postsecondary education, credentialing, job training and future employment. Unfortunately, a significant number of students, who are disproportionately low-income, are at severe risk of not obtaining a high school diploma because they are overaged and/or under-credited.

New York City has been a national leader in supporting students who are off track to graduate by developing a set of 56 alternative high schools called Transfer Schools that serve more than 13,000 students. These schools serve students, who are disproportionately Black or Latinx (86 percent), that have not been adequately served in a traditional district school setting. Transfer schools are small, personalized learning environments designed to support students in overcoming institutional and personal roadblocks that enable young people to develop a meaningful relationship with schooling and a sense of educational purpose. They offer more self-paced learning and a focus on the development of skills necessary for college and careers so students have the opportunity to achieve postsecondary success. To achieve this aim, transfer schools incorporate the support of community-based organizations (CBOs), including the NYC Public Schools' (NYCPS) Learning to Work (LTW) program, which allows for additional staffing to support students' academic and social-emotional growth. These partnerships allow for deeper adult-to-student relationships, paid internships, in-depth job readiness and college and career exploration activities.

A report by Eskolta¹ cited that students who were two years behind when entering their first year of high school at a transfer school saw a 16 percentage-point increase in their six-year graduation rate compared with students who enrolled at non-transfer schools (62 percent vs. 46 percent). Students who were two years behind when entering their second year of high school at a transfer school saw even greater gains on their six-year graduation results, increasing to 56 percent vs. 20 percent at non-transfer schools (a 36 percentage-point boost). However, although transfer schools do a better job of graduating students who are behind in their schooling, the average 2021 NYCPS transfer high school graduation rate was only 55

¹ Maria, A., Holstein, A., & Wolcott, A. (2022). How they thrive: Lessons from New York City alternative school alumni. New York: Eskolta School Research and Design, eskolta.org/project/How-They-Thrive



percent, almost 25 percentage points lower than the overall NYC graduation rate of 78.5 percent. Robin Hood seeks to help improve upon what progress has been made to-date at transfer schools by supporting targeted efforts that enable more overaged and under-credited students to achieve arguably the first significant milestone of their young adult life: a high school diploma.

ROBIN HOOD REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

This RFP seeks to spur innovation and source evidence-informed efforts to significantly increase the six-year graduation rate for overage and under-credited students at transfer schools – district or charter.

Robin Hood recognizes the value that community-based organizations and additional key partners can play to create rigorous, flexible and responsive learning environments that ultimately impact students' academic progress, career readiness and postsecondary success. Through this RFP, Robin Hood is seeking proposals from organizations that have recent experience partnering with transfer high schools, or experience serving overage and under-credited youth, either through direct service or capacity building/school design to improve outcomes for youth who are off track for high school graduation.

Robin Hood recognizes that NYCPS currently supports many transfer schools through its Learning to Work (LTW) Program. This RFP is not intended to supplant or replace LTW Funding, and we are seeking concepts that extend beyond hiring additional advocate counselors (or other primary-person models where a staff person serves as a motivator and coordinator of program services and provides general academic and/or personal supports).

We invite proposals that can demonstrate, with strong evidence (based on research and/or prior implementation), strategies that will improve transfer schools' six-year graduation rate (as measured by NYCPS) and achieve meaningful growth toward at least one of the secondary outcomes listed below.

Secondary Outcomes in support of increasing transfer schools' six-year graduation rate:

1. **Increased Credit Accumulation:** Strategies that lead to students earning a meaningful average increase of credits annually.
2. **High School Persistence:** Strategies that lead to a significant increase in students' high school persistence rate.
3. **College & Career Readiness:** Strategies that lead to postsecondary access (by way of matriculating into college or a quality postsecondary pathway/job). For example:
 - At least an X percent college matriculation rate within 6 months of graduating high school.
 - At least X percent of graduates will enter a postsecondary training program that leads to a job with a minimum hourly salary of X within 6 months of completion.

Robin Hood will consider proposals that provide direct services to students and proposals that provide capacity building or school-design supports to schools to implement evidence-based practices. Successful applicants may propose practices that include, but are not limited to the following:

- **Career Connected Learning:** Initiatives to ensure juniors or seniors will have completed an internship or certification that leads to a job opportunity that pays more than minimum wage.

- Authentic assessments²: Students understand the requirements for progressing through their courses and graduating high school college and career ready. Processes are leveraged so students know at all times how they are performing in a course and where they are on their pathway to graduation.
- Personalized learning³: Learning experiences that strategically leverage asynchronous and anytime/any place learning designed to meet students' needs and ensure mastery of content and skills, with appropriate scaffolds and systems for data capture, progress monitoring, intervention, and support.
- Student agency and engagement⁴: Students own every step of their pathway to graduation, informed by an understanding of the school's graduation requirements, their performance level in each content and skill domain, their interests, and their experiences setting goals and reflecting metacognitively on their progress towards those goals.

ESTIMATED SCOPE OF FUNDING AND GRANT SIZE

- Total Funding for this initiative is anticipated to be approximately **\$2,500,000** over two years.
- Grant size will be based on the number of schools included in the proposal and scope of the proposed effort.
- All proposals should serve at least two transfer schools and it is anticipated that between 8 – 20 schools will be supported across the initiative.
- For proposals providing direct services to students, we anticipate budgets of between \$150,000 and \$200,000 per school, per year. We assume capacity building/school design proposals would be budgeted at a lower per-school cost.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM ROBIN HOOD

Robin Hood anticipates hiring an external evaluator to assess the fidelity of implementation for all funded projects and progress towards target outcomes. We expect all grant recipients to fully participate in the evaluation of their awarded projects. Engagement in the evaluation can include meeting with the evaluators, articulating project logic models/theory of change, providing data and hosting site visits, among other things.

Robin Hood also anticipates offering some variation of technical assistance to support schools and their partnering organization with project implementation support. This support may take place through school site visits that offer targeted support and communities of practice that allow for cross collaboration and change-management assistance.

² "Indicators of School Quality." Springpoint. Downloaded in April 2024 from https://www.springpointschools.org/media/2023/01/Springpoint-Indicators-of-School-Quality_Spring-2021.pdf

³ "Indicators of School Quality." Springpoint. Downloaded in April 2024 from https://www.springpointschools.org/media/2023/01/Springpoint-Indicators-of-School-Quality_Spring-2021.pdf

⁴ "Indicators of School Quality." Springpoint. Downloaded in April 2024 from https://www.springpointschools.org/media/2023/01/Springpoint-Indicators-of-School-Quality_Spring-2021.pdf



ANTICIPATED RFP TIMELINE

Funding will be provided for up to two (2) years with potential for subsequent annual follow-up funding based on demonstrated impact. If selected for funding, work is estimated to begin in September 2024.

- RFP Opens: April 17th, 2024
- Info Session / Q & A for Prospective Applicants: 12pm – 1pm EST, April 25th, 2024
 - Zoom Link: <https://shorturl.at/IGIW1> // Meeting ID: 840 6431 8266
- RFP Closes: May 17th, 2024
- Notification of finalists: May 31st, 2024
- Finalist Interviews: June 3rd – June 14th, 2024
 - We encourage you to keep as many of the below times open (as you can) for interviews:
 - 6/3: 1pm-2:30pm
 - 6/5: 3pm-4:30pm
 - 6/6: 3pm-4:30pm
 - 6/7: 12:30pm-2pm
 - 6/10: 1pm-2:30pm
 - 6/12: 9:30am-11am
 - 6/13: 11am-12:30pm
 - 6/14: 12pm-1:30pm
- Applicants Notified (Award Notifications are contingent upon board approval): July 2024
- Robin Hood Board Committee Meeting: July 2024
- Implementation of Work: September 2024

SELECTION CRITERIA FOR FUNDING

- Clarity of strategy
- Connection to research and/or compelling evidence from prior implementation
- Anticipated impact on students as it relates to primary and secondary outcomes
- Ability of applicants to express what they determine as meaningful target outcomes and demonstrate how they plan to achieve growth towards target outcomes over two years
- Cost effectiveness (sustainability / scaling) across transfer schools citywide
- Commitment from school-leader to support implementation plan
- Evidence of ability and or effective systems in place to closely monitor target outcomes
- Demonstrated feasibility to implement the proposed plan across at least two transfer schools (district and/or charter)
- Strong organizational leadership, financial standing and capacity to deliver services

ELIGIBILITY

The following entities are eligible to apply:

- Only 501(c)(3) entities doing work in NYC
- Community-based organizations who have prior experience working with transfer schools/overage and under-credited youth
- Charter Management Organizations (CMOs) that operate schools that exclusively serve overage and under-credited students
- Capacity Building / School Design / Technical Assistance providers who have prior experience supporting schools that serve overage and under-credited youth

PROPOSAL APPLICATION

PART I: BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Organization Information (completed via [online survey form](#))

1. Organization name
2. Is your organization a current or former Robin Hood Community Partner (Yes/No)
3. Organization Address
4. Name(s) of CEO / Executive Director
5. Leadership Demographics
6. Primary contact name for proposal
7. Primary contact email address
8. Website URL
9. Annual Organization Budget (\$)
10. Organization Tax ID
11. Are you applying to provide:
 - a. Direct student services
 - b. Capacity Building / School Design / Technical Assistance
 - c. Both
12. Number of Schools to be supported in this proposal (must propose at least 2)
13. Funding Request
 - a. Year One Funding Request / Year Two Funding Request / Total Funding Request:

PART II: PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Applicants are asked to submit a proposal narrative describing the practices they are looking to implement during the two-year grant term. In this section, applicants should address their experience working with overage and under-credited youth, and their vision and plan for enacting their proposed program or project. The narrative should also touch upon the organizational capacity to carry out the proposal. Throughout the proposal, applicants should highlight the evidence-base they are using to support their project. The maximum length of the narrative is 5 pages and should be submitted as a PDF file. Applicants should make sure to address the following prompts in the submitted narrative:

Organizational Experience

1. Describe your current and /or prior work to support students off track to graduate. Include, if applicable, prior or existing partnerships with the schools included in this proposal. Additionally, describe your vision and approach for serving students off track for graduation.
2. Outcomes:
 - a. What key indicators do you use to measure success year over year?
 - b. For your prior work with overaged and under-credited young people, provide data that is evidence of student success.

Program Description

1. Which practices or programs are you looking to implement through this proposal. What is the evidence base you are using to support your proposal? Please describe in detail.
2. Describe your approach to partnering with school communities for this project.
3. Inform us about the team that would be involved in managing this project. What will be their roles, and how will they work in collaboration with schools?
4. Provide context to the schools you are choosing to partner with to implement this proposal. Why are the conditions ripe for partnership? What about the students across these schools inform your intent to implement the proposed project?
5. Which of the secondary outcomes (listed on page 2) are you aiming to impact over the next 2 years? How will your project positively impact the outcome? What target goals would you set out to achieve?
6. What specific six-year high school graduation goals would you set for your partner schools? How will your intervention ultimately support more students graduating on-time according to the NYCPS six-year graduation measure?
7. What additional measures would you include to assess the impact of your project? What will success look like in two years and how will you know you achieved it? Please list all additional quantitative and qualitative student-based measures you intend to focus on.
8. What supports do you anticipate needing to move this work forward? How can Robin Hood help ensure successful implementation?

PART III: ATTACHMENTS

- **Attachment A: Budget and Budget Narrative**
 - Provide a two-year budget, broken out by year (July – June Budget Years), that includes personnel and other-than personnel service lines detailing the projected use of funds that aligns with the described project.
 - Provide a detailed narrative of the use of funds.
- **Attachment B: Partner School Information Form ([Use downloadable Excel template](#))**

Schools to be supported in this proposal. For each school fill out the following:

 - Name of School / District-Borough-Number: DBN
 - District or Charter
 - Principal Name
 - Have you partnered with the school before?
 - If yes, when was the most recent school year you partnered with this school?
 - If yes, how many years have you partnered with this school?
 - 2022-2023 total student enrollment – *auto populated*
 - Percent of students in poverty - *auto populated*
 - Average Number of high school credits students have accumulated for the 2022-2023 school year - *auto populated*
 - Percent of all students graduated high school - *auto populated*

- **Attachment C: Growth Toward Outcomes** ([Please use downloadable Excel template](#))
 - List the targets you propose to set to demonstrate meaningful growth toward outcomes over the course of two years
 - Include baseline data for all quantitative and qualitative measures
 - Create a target goal the proposed program aims to garner for each listed outcome

- **Attachment D: Financial Audit**
Include a copy of your organization’s recent financial audit (2023 or 2022).

- **Attachment E: Organizational Chart**
Include an organizational chart (include where within the organization the proposed project would fall).

- **Attachment F: Principal Letters of Support (Limit to 500 words/ 1 page)**
 - The RFP requires that applicants’ proposed project is intended to be implemented across at least two transfer schools. For each school you are proposing to implement your proposed project in, include a brief letter of principal support that addresses the following:
 - Background to the relationship between the school and the applicant, and any lessons learned.
 - Why the school leader would like for this proposed project to take place at their school
 - What actions does the principal plan to take to support the proposed work so it can be successfully implemented

CHECKLIST: To submit your proposal, please ensure all attachments are uploaded.

- Proposal Narrative – PDF document
- Budget and Budget Narrative
- Partner School Information Form – Excel Template Download
- Growth Toward Outcomes– Excel Template Download
- Financial Audit
- Organizational Chart
- Letters of Support: Attach Principal letter of support per partnering school.