**Request for Proposals for Lesson Study Support  
for Academic Year 2017 – 2018**

The McDougal Family Foundation invites proposals from Chicago public schools for financial support for using lesson study to improve teaching and learning. The Foundation makes this investment because of (a) The Foundation’s longstanding focus on improving outcomes for public school students in Chicago, and (b) the powerful, beneficial effects on teacher knowledge, teacher practice, professional culture, and student performance that we have observed arising from lesson study.

The Foundation aims to promote the spread of lesson study as a routine, school-based approach to professional development. We will favor proposals, therefore, that include a significant portion of the school’s teaching staff, or that articulate a plan for increasing the number of teachers involved. For schools without prior experience with lesson study, we encourage “learning grant” proposals involving two lesson study cycles; but even in such proposals we will look for a plan to expose additional teachers to the process.

Although lesson study is powerful, not all implementations of lesson study are equally so. The Foundation will only support lesson study meeting the criteria of “Collaborative Lesson Research”, or CLR, as described at http://www.lsalliance.org/clr-a-powerful-form-of-lesson-study/ .

## What the grants will cover

Grants will cover **only** the following expenses:

* substitutes to provide time for lesson study activities;
* an honorarium[[1]](#footnote-1) of $140 per teacher per lesson study cycle (up to 5 teachers per cycle, up to 2 cycles per teacher).

“Lesson study activities” includes but is not limited to the following: research and planning; observing research lessons at other schools; teaching, observing, and discussing the research lesson; and writing the post-lesson reflection.

Grants **will not cover** any other expenses. Examples of **excluded** expenses are

* out-of-school time for teachers beyond what can be covered by the honorarium;
* fees or honoraria for knowledgeable others;
* registration fees for conferences;
* transportation;
* materials.

Such expenses must be covered by other funds.

## Reporting requirement

After each research lesson, the planning team will be expected to send to the foundation by email a report consisting of the lesson research proposal (lesson plan) with a post-lesson reflection describing what was learned from the teaching of the lesson and from the discussion (approximately 3 paragraphs). **Ideally this report should be completed on the same day as the research lesson, while memories are fresh, but it should be submitted no later than 14 days later.** The report may be posted to a public website (e.g. http://LessonStudyGroup.net) at the discretion of the foundation.

## Size of grants

The total amount available is $230,000. The foundation accepts “learning grant”, “expansion grant”, and school-wide “sustaining grant” proposals. Learning grants are intended for schools with no prior experience with lesson study. These grants will provide support for two lesson study cycles and will typically be in the range of $8000. School-wide grants are intended for schools seeking to use lesson study as a year-long, systemic process. These grants may be in the range of $12,000 to $20,000. “Expansion grants” are for schools that have used lesson study in the past but seek to increase the number of teachers involved.

Proposals that include use of common planning time will be favored.

## Application process

The proposal form is at the end of this document. **The proposal should be signed by all participating teachers and by the school principal.** Please submit to:

Tom McDougal

McDougal Family Foundation

737 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 1040

Chicago IL 60611-7014

312-255-0916

Tom@McDougalFamilyFdn.org

Given the late hour of this RFP, proposals will be accepted in two waves to accommodate schools that already have a clear plan and want to have funds available as early as possible, and schools that need more time.

Wave 1

deadline: June 23

notification: by July 28

Wave 2

deadline: September 20

notification: by October 4

Grants funds will be made available through the Children First Fund. All activities should be completed by June 1, 2018 to ensure that reimbursements can be processed before the end of the school year.

A sample budget and timeline for elementary schools can be accessed at **http://tinyurl.com/pjd3x8q** ; a sample budget and timeline for high school can be accessed at **http://tinyurl.com/ngp9wlw** . A sample learning grant budget and timeline is at http://LSAlliance.org/public\_docs/sample\_learning\_grant.xlsx

## Help for the inexperienced

Although lesson study sounds simple, doing it well requires experience or expert guidance. Applicants who are new to lesson study should familiarize themselves with the process before applying. We suggest the article “CLR: A powerful form of Lesson Study” at <http://LSAlliance.org/clr-a-powerful-form-of-lesson-study> . Finally, several Chicago schools have acquired significant experience with lesson study and welcome inquiries. See <http://LSAlliance.org/chicago-lesson-study-schools> .

Schools new to Collaborative Lesson Research must identify an experienced person who will guide teams through the planning process. Lesson Study Alliance (<http://LSAlliance.org>), a Chicago-based non-profit organization, has agreed to provide any technical assistance they can at no charge to grantees. The Foundation encourages grantees to make use of their support, but doing so is not required.

## Lesson Study Summer Institute

Lesson Study Alliance is offering a 5-day institute this summer to guide inexperienced and less-experienced teams through the lesson study process, with a focus on mathematics. More information is available at http://LSAlliance.org/2017-summer-institute/ . Participation in the institute is not required, nor will it be favored, as a condition for grant approval.

Other questions? Contact Tom McDougal, Tom@McDougalFamilyFdn.org, 773-875-3404.

**Lesson Study Grant Application  
for SY 2017-2018**

**By June 23 (wave 1) or September 20 (wave 2), submit the following:**

* this form
* a budget and proposed schedule of activities
* a signature page with names of participating teachers
* an email confirmation from each knowledgeable other

Submit to:

Tom McDougal

McDougal Family Foundation

737 N. Michigan Ave., Suite 1040

Chicago IL 60611-7014

fax: (844) 274-3230

email: Tom@McDougalFamilyFdn.org

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Please use as much space as needed to provide the following information.

1. Name and address of school:

2. Primary contact person’s name, title, email address, and phone number (include summer contact information):

3. Explain the reason for or history behind your school’s interest in lesson study. (1-4 sentences)

4. What problem of student development does the school hope to address this year through lesson study?[[2]](#footnote-2) For what content area(s) will lesson study be used? (1-4 sentences)

5. What history does the school have using lesson study? (1-4 sentences)

6. What training or experience has the staff had with lesson study? If the staff does not have extensive experience with lesson study, who will guide teams through the process, and what qualifies them to do so? (1-4 sentences)

7. Categorize this proposal (check one):

\_\_ Learning grant (usually 2 lesson study cycles, for schools lacking prior experience)

\_\_ Expansion grant (increasing the number of teachers involved from previous years)

\_\_ Sustaining grant

8. Number of lesson study cycles covered by this proposal: \_\_\_

9. Number of *distinct* teachers who will participate in planning a research lesson: \_\_\_

Indicate the likely composition of the planning teams, listing teacher names and grade level, and the content area to be addressed by each team (e.g. “math”).

10. Minimum number of teachers who will be freed up to observe and discuss at least one research lesson that they did not help plan: \_\_\_

11. Who will serve as the **knowledgeable other(s)**[[3]](#footnote-3) to help maximize staff learning from lesson study? Describe her/his/their qualifications and experience with lesson study and explain why you have chosen her/him/them. (2-4 sentences) **If you will be using someone other than Lesson Study Alliance personnel, attach an email message from each knowledgeable other indicating willingness to support your teams.**

12. Who will be invited to observe the research lesson(s)? (Inviting outside observers is optional. Teams doing their first research lesson may wish to invite only school colleagues.)

13. Please describe your plan of activities in narrative form. (1-4 paragraphs)

14. Please attach a budget and schedule of activities, clearly showing how substitutes or other coverage will be used. The budget can include costs that will be borne by the school.

Sample budget and timeline for elementary school: http://tinyurl.com/pjd3x8q .

Sample budget and timeline for high school: http://tinyurl.com/ngp9wlw .

15. Please affix the names and signatures of participating teachers and of the school principal (template, next page).

**SY 2017-2018 Lesson Study Grant Application  
Signature Page**

By signing below, the following teachers indicate their desire to participate in lesson study and their willingness to take time out of their classroom (using substitute coverage) in order to do so, as described in the timeline submitted with this proposal.

**Printed Name Signature**

By signing below, the principal indicates that he/she has read the article on Collaborative Lesson Research (CLR) (http://www.lsalliance.org/clr-a-powerful-form-of-lesson-study/) and will support the teachers listed above in conducting CLR by providing substitute coverage and other release time as described in the timeline submitted with this proposal.

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Optional: As principal, describe your vision for the long-term role of CLR at your school. (1-4 sentences)

1. Since CPS does not allow for the payment of stipends or honoraria, teachers may be paid this amount for work done after school. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Lesson Study is most powerful when used to seek a solution to a broad issue in student development, of concern to a large proportion of the school faculty, that might be addressable through changes in teacher practice. Example: “How do we develop students who will argue mathematically with each other, in line with Standard for Mathematical Practice #3 of the Common Core?” [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. A knowledgeable other is an independent person – not from the school – respected by the planning team who has deep expertise in the content and pedagogy being studied, and ideally, experience with lesson study. Please refer to the section “Contributions by knowledgeable others” in the article on CLR at LSAlliance.org. There are two knowledgeable other roles, which can be (in a pinch) filled by the same person: one role is to provide content support during the preparation of the research lesson; the other role is to observe and give feedback on the teaching of the research lesson. Lesson Study Alliance, a Chicago-based non-profit, provides knowledgeable other services for mathematics, and can help locate experts in other content areas. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)