Rapid Response Grant Fund: COVID-19

Racism is a Virus Too

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Introduction

Like many organizations across the globe, we at the Nellie Mae Education Foundation are carefully monitoring the development of the COVID-19 pandemic and are thinking about the impacted communities in New England and abroad who are experiencing the hardships of this virus first-hand. We recognize that for underserved communities and communities of color in particular, inequities—whether they be access to childcare, healthcare, food, or a paycheck, become exacerbated in such situations.

In response to Asian Americans in Philanthropy's (AAPIP) Statement on COVID-19, the Nellie Mae Education Foundation is standing in solidarity with Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities in the New England region who have been impacted by xenophobia, racism and Sinophobia stemming from a perceived connection with COVID-19. As a foundation, we have been disturbed and disheartened to learn about the bullying and hate crimes against students of Asian heritage that have arisen in our schools and communities as a result of misconceptions surrounding COVID-19.

At the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, our mission is to champion efforts that prioritize community goals that challenge racial inequities and advance excellent, student-centered public education for all New England youth. We are committed to using our power and privilege as a philanthropic organization to support antiracist and anti-xenophobic efforts by organizations that serve AAPI youth and communities at this critical time.

The Nellie Mae Education Foundation created this rapid response fund to respond to the hate crimes and bias against Asian American communities resulting from COVID-19. The Foundation has allocated resources for the **Racism is a Virus Too** rapid response grant fund to support Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) that provide services for AAPI communities.

Funding Opportunity

The Foundation will provide urgent support to organizations for activities including, but not limited to: holding community meetings, crisis response, culturally responsive trainings for schools or districts, culturally sensitive therapy, community healing, racial solidarity efforts with organizations serving other People of Color (ex. Latinx, Black, etc.), or other activities intended to hold space for AAPI community members.

We realize that some of activities named as examples of responsive actions or strategies may not be feasible at the moment given the current context, and the Foundation is open to supporting the AAPI community in ways that are responsive to the needs of community.

The Foundation is especially interested in projects that promote the safety and well-being of AAPI students in our schools, and efforts that seek to promote cross-racial solidarity during these challenging times. Schools or districts partnering with AAPI serving organizations may also apply.

Selection Criteria + Eligibility

- Grant request must respond to a time-sensitive, unanticipated event or urgent challenge or need in communities. *This grant is not intended to support ongoing programs and projects.*
- Nonprofits, Community-Based Organizations, schools or districts in New England working in and with communities of color serving parents, youth, and/or educators on transforming barriers to racial equity in public education.
- The Foundation supports and funds education organizations that are classified as public charities.
- Organizations other than schools or districts must have 501(c)(3) and 509(a)(1) or 509(a)(2) tax status or be fiscally sponsored by an education organization with 501(c)(3) tax status and 509(a)(1) or 509(a)(2). The Foundation cannot provide grants to 501(c)(3) organizations with a 509(a)(3) status.
- Organizations may apply for a rapid response grant at any time but can only receive one rapid response grant within a 12-month period.
- Request amount should not exceed $15,000.
- The project must be completed within six months of receiving a rapid response grant.

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
- Long-term operating or programmatic support.

Funding Priorities

Organizations with budgets under $500,000 who have previously and historically been unable to access and benefit from philanthropic dollars are *strongly* encouraged to apply, although we also welcome proposals from organizations with budgets that exceed $500,000.

Timeline

The Foundation aims to review proposals, and if selected disburse funds within 2 weeks of receiving the proposal. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and funds will distributed until the limited pool of resources is exhausted.

If you need assistance or have questions about your eligibility, please contact Ellen Wang at ewang@nmefoundation.org or Stephanie Cheney at scheney@nmefoundation.org.

Proposal

Please limit your application to one page or under (budget not included).

1.   What are the conditions that your organization/school/district is trying to address and how do you anticipate the proposed work will support these needs?

2.   Please share how your organization is rooted within the community that has experienced a time-sensitive urgent event or need.

3.   Please share why your organization is in a position to lead this work. How does the proposed work align with the mission of your organization?

4.   If the request amount is less than the total budget, briefly explain how the remaining budget needs will be met.

5. Total project budget

6. Request amount (up to $15,000)

Submission

Applications will be accepted using our online application portal. Signup 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 – Racism is a Virus Too" opportunity to start your application.