



New Mexico Out-of-School Time Network Call for Applications: Youth Entrepreneurship Mini-Grants

Project Timeline: February - May 2024

Applications Due By: January 15, 2024

New Mexico OST programs! Receive up to \$2,500 as a mini-grant (stipend) to implement an entrepreneurship project to support your middle and/or high school students in exploring and experiencing entrepreneurship in OST during Spring 2024!

- **Open to New Mexico CBOs implementing afterschool programs for middle and/or high school students.**
- **Access nationally-recognized curriculum, resources, staff training, and coaching. Purchase and use of VentureLab curriculum kit is required.**
- **Receive initial stipend and entrepreneurship curriculum kit in February 2024; final payment of stipend at midway point in April 2024.**
- **Participate in virtual training and receive ongoing coaching support for program staff from VentureLab and NMOST for the duration of the project.**
- **Connect with other OST programs implementing entrepreneurial projects; find peers plus additional resources and opportunities.**
- **Submit final project report by June 15, 2024**

Call for Mini-Grant Applications

New Mexico Out-of-School Time Network (NMOST) is excited to announce four (4) mini-grants to be awarded to New Mexico community-based organizations (CBOs) that operate out-of-school time (OST) programs for 6th-12th grade students. Programs are expected to use mini-grant funds to implement an entrepreneurship project with their participants during spring 2024. This call for applications is open for CBOs running OST programs for middle and/or high schools students; these OST programs may happen before school, afterschool, or on weekends.

The Objectives of these mini-grants are to:

1. Expand students' awareness of and experience with entrepreneurship to unleash the potential of students as entrepreneurial thinkers and problem solvers.
2. Engage students in activities that encourage an entrepreneurial mindset and an entrepreneurial spirit.
3. Grow out-of-school time program capacity for entrepreneurship programming.
4. Spark new local and statewide partnerships and networking between OST programs and local/regional ecosystems.
5. Raising awareness of OST programs' impact on education, workforce, and entrepreneurial development.

Mini-grant projects will utilize a nationally-recognized curriculum that includes hands-on activities from VentureLab (training provided). Grantees will also have access to additional resources and technical assistance from VentureLab and the Young Entrepreneur Institute as part of NMOST's Advancing Youth Entrepreneurship Initiative, funded by the Charles S. Mott Foundation. These partners are working with NMOST and other State Afterschool Networks around the nation to expand entrepreneurship in out-of-school time programs.

Targeted Students

The target audience are students in grades 6-12. Priority will be given to programs that specifically reach female, minority, and/or rural students (i.e., those from communities with populations under 50,000) as all of these groups are underrepresented among entrepreneurs.

Why Youth Entrepreneurship?

The New Mexico Out-of-School Time Network aims to increase exposure to and experience with entrepreneurship for older youth across the state through its Advancing Youth Entrepreneurship Initiative, funded by the Charles S. Mott Foundation. Successful entrepreneurship requires a suite of skills and mindsets that are beneficial for children and youth both academically and socially. Entrepreneurial skills include creativity, teamwork, public speaking, and design thinking. Entrepreneurial activities and education encourage a growth mindset and build curiosity, courage, perseverance, empathy, optimism, and adaptability.

NMOST partner VentureLab provides expertise in entrepreneurship education and ready-to-implement curriculum to make entrepreneurial learning accessible. For VentureLab, entrepreneurship is important for today's children and youth because

“According to the World Economic Forum, roughly 65% of children entering primary schools today will likely work in jobs that don't currently exist. The fact is that we can't

predict the “hard skills” and jobs of the future and our education system is not preparing students for a rapidly-changing world. In order to be successful, we believe that all kids must develop an entrepreneurial mindset and be able to seek out and create their own opportunities with empathy and creativity.”

Entrepreneurship education enables youth to explore and mix many interests and blends well with other fields, including STEM. VentureLab’s programs are “built with girls in mind” as they aim to reduce the gender gap and empower all kids to follow their passions. Learn more about VentureLab [here](#).

VentureLab curriculum kits:

[Idea to Pitch](#) - With the Idea to Pitch Program, students grow their entrepreneurial mindsets and skills as they apply their passions and strengths to identify opportunities to creatively solve problems, develop their solution into a business, and pitch the idea. The Idea to Pitch Program is also perfect for engaging teachers and students in project based learning.

[Social Entrepreneurship](#) (grades 9-12) - With the Social Entrepreneurship Program, students grow their entrepreneurial mindsets and skills as they apply their passions and strengths to creatively solve societal challenges. Youth design their solution through the design thinking process, carry out market research, create a sustainable business model, and present their idea in a culminating pitch presentation.

Both of the curriculum kits end with a **Pitch Event**. Programs are encouraged to invite family, friends, and community members to see the courage, confidence, and ideas students have developed. Kits include a “Pitch Event Planning Guide” and “Templates & Certificates” to help create a successful and memorable event!

Mini-Grant Awards

A total of 4 mini-grants (stipends) of up to \$2,500 will be awarded to New Mexico OST programs implemented by CBOs. Grantees will be required to use a portion of their stipend to purchase an entrepreneurship project kit from VentureLab (\$550). Programs can choose the curriculum that best meets the needs and interests of their students –Idea to Pitch or Social Entrepreneurship (grades 9-12 only). Each VentureLab kit provides materials for up to 22 students. VentureLab will provide a virtual, 2-hour training for each awardee’s program staff, ongoing support through (up to four) 30-minute coaching calls, surveys and a final report of results, and a custom pacing guide for each program. Awarded programs will be expected to implement the VentureLab curriculum and activities including a pitch event with their program participants by the end of May 2024. Grantees will also be expected to participate in and complete VentureLab and NMOST surveys and to provide a final, brief narrative report by June 15, 2024.

Mini-grant funds, in addition to being used to purchase a VentureLab kit, may be used for staff time, additional materials and resources, field trips or tours, guest speakers, etc. Grantees will receive the award in two stipends, one issued at the beginning of the project and one at the midway point to ensure ongoing project work and sustainability.

For resources to support entrepreneurship projects, please visit <https://nmost.org/youth-entrepreneurship/>.

Due Date for Applications

The application will be open from Friday, December 8, 2023 - Monday, January 15, 2024. Applications for this entrepreneurship mini-grant opportunity are **due by 7 pm Monday, January 15, 2024**. Funded program sites will be notified by January 30, 2024 and projects can begin as early as February 5, 2024.

Expectations of Funded Programs

Selected applicants will receive up to a \$2,500 stipend for direct support of an entrepreneurship education project in their OST program. The entrepreneurship project will implement a VentureLab entrepreneurship curriculum by May 31, 2024. Grantees agree to participate in project-related training, coaching, and evaluation, and to complete a brief final report by June 15, 2024. Grantees **must** use part of the stipend to purchase a kit from Venture Lab for \$550. Grantees will ensure project sponsorship is credited to the New Mexico Out-of-School Time Network and the Charles S. Mott Foundation. Grantees may be asked to share results on webinars or during conference presentations for OST audiences. Grantees will receive half the awarded funds at the start of the project and the remainder at the midway point to ensure ongoing, consistent project implementation.

Online Application

Ready to apply? Access the application [here](#).

For questions or more information, please email spratt@nmost.org or msagbakken@nmost.org

Thank you!