



Brady Education Foundation

The Brady Education Foundation is announcing a five-year \$3 million initiative to investigate the impact of Montessori Education in Public Schools.

Purpose

The mission of the Brady Education Foundation (BEF) is to help close the opportunity and resulting achievement gap between children living in under-represented and/or under-resourced communities and other children. One way we address this issue is via funding evaluation research that has the potential to inform public and private funding decisions.

Although Montessori education has been popular among well-resourced families for over 100 years, its availability to children in under-resourced communities in the United States has been limited. Further, while rigorous research concerning the effects of the Montessori approach is limited, recent evidence suggests that it may be particularly effective for executive functioning and achievement outcomes and that it may moderate the effects of low family income on these outcomes.

BEF is inviting proposals to participate in the creation of a network of researchers focused on investigating the impact of high-fidelity Montessori education in public schools from age 3 through 3rd grade. The primary aims of this initiative are to:

1. *conduct a rigorous evaluation of the impact of Montessori education, and*
2. *investigate whether Montessori education moderates the associations typically found between family income and achievement outcomes.*

Specific outcomes of interest include executive functioning, achievement, mastery orientation, and school engagement. In addition, each potential research site is encouraged to propose additional questions (e.g., mediators that may account for the effectiveness of the Montessori approach) that might help to inform the effectiveness of and/or access to high quality Montessori educational opportunities for families in low-resourced and/or under-represented communities.

BEF will fund this initiative with a \$3 million investment over a five-year period (2018-2023), with the intention of funding 4 to 5 research sites and one coordinating site.



Brady Education Foundation

Timeline

The expected timeline for funding decisions concerning this initiative is as follows. Note that this is a 3-stage process: Letter of Intent, Stage 1 full proposal, Stage 2 proposal. There is no guarantee that proposals submitted to BEF through this process will be funded. If you would like to attend the webinar on 8/16/17, [request a link here](#) or at (applications@BradyEducationFoundation.org).

8/16/17	Webinar (participation optional); 1:00pm Eastern time
9/6/17	Letter of Intent (LOI) due
10/11/17	Notification of invitation to submit full Stage 1 proposals
12/15/17	Stage 1 full proposals due
2/8/18	Notification of invitation to submit Stage 2 proposals
2/15/18	Webinar; 1:00pm Eastern time
4/2/18	Stage 2 proposals due
6/1/18	Notification of funding decisions
7/1/18	Earliest funding starting date

Letter of Intent (LOI)

Letters of Intent should be no longer than **5 pages**. Please include the following information:

1. Application type.
BEF will fund 3 types of activities via this initiative. Please indicate which of these activities your proposal would address (you may propose to address only one, any combination of two, or all three):
 - a. research that focuses on the primary goals of this initiative (i.e., effectiveness of Montessori education and whether Montessori education moderates the associations between family income and student outcomes),
 - b. research that investigates a secondary aim that might help to inform the effectiveness of and/or access to high quality Montessori educational opportunities for families in low-resourced and/or under-represented communities,
 - c. the coordinating site for the initiative.
2. Secondary aims.
If you are proposing to investigate a secondary aim(s), please state the specific aim(s) and provide a brief rationale (with citations as appropriate).
3. Key personnel and affiliations.
 - a. Provide a complete listing of all the key personnel, indicating roles (e.g., PI), and affiliations.
 - b. Briefly describe in what ways the team is specifically qualified to investigate these aims (primary aims, secondary aims, and/or coordinating site).



Brady Education Foundation

- c. BEF is among a growing community of foundations that track the diversity of its grantees. Please provide racial/ethnic background information for key personnel.
4. Research Methods.
As applicable, please provide the following:
 - a. Research concerning primary aims; briefly describe your intended methodology including:
 - i. design (note that the intent of BEF is to fund randomized control trials, such as those that might be achieved via school lotteries),
 - ii. partnering Montessori schools (may be traditional public schools, charter schools, or magnet schools): total number; names and locations of each,
 - iii. expected number of students in the Montessori and business-as-usual groups,
 - iv. expected demographics of the students: ages (grades), ethnicity, family income, and
 - v. constructs to be assessed (e.g., fidelity, quality, outcomes, covariates) (do not need to propose specific measures for LOI, but can be included if already known).
 - b. Research concerning secondary aims; briefly describe your intended methodology including:
 - i. design,
 - ii. partnering Montessori schools (may be traditional public schools, charter schools, or magnet schools): total number; names and locations of each,
 - iii. expected total sample size, and sub-groups sizes if applicable,
 - iv. expected demographics of the students: ages (grades), ethnicity, family income, and
 - v. constructs to be assessed (do not need to propose specific measures for LOI, but can be included if already known).
5. Coordinating Site.
If proposing to be the coordinating site, briefly describe evidence supporting the research team's ability to effectively do so.
6. Timeline for key tasks (maximum 3 years).
7. Initial budget estimate.
Please state your current estimate for the total budget for your proposal; if proposing a multi-year project, please provide your current estimation for the cost for each year. Please note that BEF caps indirect costs at 10%, and BEF follows the National Institutes of Health guidelines for salary caps.

Letter of Intent (LOI) Submission

Convert **Letter of Intent (LOI)** and **CVs of each Key Personnel** (each not to exceed 3 pages) to .pdf format and combine into one document. Submit entire application to:
applications@BradyEducationFoundation.org



Brady Education Foundation

Criteria

LOIs will be evaluated along 3 general criteria:

- 1) **Design and methodology:** Successful proposals will describe rigorous designs (e.g., randomized assignment to Montessori education, such as through school lotteries) with sufficient power to address the outcomes of interest.
- 2) **Research team:** Successful proposals will provide evidence of a team that includes: expertise to carry out the proposed activities (i.e., investigate the primary aims, investigate proposed secondary aims, and/or to be the coordinating site as applicable), expertise concerning the Montessori approach, and expertise concerning the population(s) to be represented in the study participants. The Foundation favors projects that represent strong collaborative relationships between researchers and practitioners / partnering schools (and other community stakeholders as appropriate), and where the community/population being studied is represented in the project's leadership team.
- 3) **Secondary aims:** If proposing secondary aims, successful proposals will provide strong rationale to support their investigation.

BEF Funding Policies

- ❖ Funding must be through the Principal Investigator's home institution.
- ❖ Grants are awarded to non-profit organizations only. If a researcher is currently working for a for-profit company, the researcher must collaborate with a non-profit organization and be included in the proposal as a sub-contract or consultant.
- ❖ The Foundation caps indirect costs for both primary institutions and subcontracts at 10% of the direct costs of the project. Primary institution may NOT charge additional indirect on subcontract funds.
- ❖ The Foundation follows National Institutes of Health guidelines for salary caps.