

## **Ready To Learn /Station Transition Initiative**

### **Ready To Lead in Literacy**

A Request for Proposals (RFP)

from

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting

#### **ABSTRACT**

Ready To Lead in Literacy represents a commitment by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to refashion and strengthen public television stations' current Ready To Learn /early childhood literacy activities. Such changes are necessary due to the new and narrower focus of Ready To Learn for years 2005-2010. This 3-year, limited funding initiative will provide funds as well as capacity-building activities for up to 100 stations that are currently Ready To Learn stations. In FY 2006, CPB's Ready To Lead in Literacy (RTLL) initiative will provide up to \$3 million in the aggregate to eligible public television stations that are required to participate for the full three years of the project

#### **INTRODUCTION**

The U.S. Department of Education's Ready To Learn Television Program is dramatically changing in 2006. The new project focuses on developing reading skills for the nation's poorest children and emphasizes research-based educational programming for preschool and elementary school age children with support materials and services that promote the effective use of such programming. CPB and PBS have submitted a proposal in response to the new Ready To Learn request for proposals. However, the new US DOE Ready To Learn grant allocates funds for a set of very focused activities, and station activity grants will no longer be available as of September 2005. Therefore, CPB is launching a competitive, transition funding initiative—**Ready To Lead in Literacy (RTLL)**, offering 3-year grants to stations that want to take a leadership role in early childhood education with a special emphasis on literacy in their communities, maintain their Ready To Learn partnerships and activities over the next three years, and develop fundraising capacities to sustain and increase this work beyond the period of the transition funding.

## **OBJECTIVES**

CPB's objectives for the Ready To Lead in Literacy (RTLL) initiative are to:

- 1) increase the literacy of children in RTLL station communities;
- 2) provide short-term funding to Ready To Learn stations to continue and grow their Ready To Learn activities; and
- 3) support public television literacy leadership in select communities where PTV stations have made early childhood education-especially literacy-a core competency of their local services mission.

## **OPPORTUNITY**

The U.S. Department of Education's 2006 Ready To Learn Television project—focused specifically on helping low-income children (ages 2-8) learn to read—provides a renewed opportunity for public television to stake its claim as an essential asset in the education of America's children. It is an opportunity that public television is eminently qualified to pursue. PBS has developed valuable materials and services for stations in support of local Ready To Learn activity; and there are dozens of PTV stations that are highly regarded in their local communities for their current activities and relationships connected to Ready To Learn. These activities may not focus solely on reading, but include literacy among other kinds of learning that are important to the development of the whole child. During this period of substantive change to the Ready To Learn project, CPB and PBS believe there is an opportunity for stations to use their current experiences, partnerships, and expertise in Ready To Learn to strengthen their leadership positions in the early childhood education/early literacy goals of their communities. This is consistent with CPB's own goals—and the work of CPB's new Educational Programming and Services department—to collaborate with system stakeholders (PBS, national children's program producers, and stations) in redefining the education mission of public broadcasting within the broader landscape of local services.

## **INITIATIVE GRANTS**

CPB expects to fund between 80-100 public television stations in FY 2006 for the RTLL initiative. First year grants in FY 2006 of up to \$35,000 (to be matched by the licensee)

will be awarded towards the total year one project budget. This competitive fund initiative will award grants to successful applicants based on a variety of criteria to include:

1. a demonstration of a station’s commitment to sustain the project during and beyond the three years of the initiative;
2. current and proposed partnerships;
3. a review of the applicant’s project plan including the fit with the initiative guidelines and goals; and
4. the potential number of children to be served.

In the second and third years of the initiative, it is anticipated that stations will receive reduced grants of about \$25,000 each in year two, and slightly less in year three. CPB expects RTLL stations to raise supplemental revenue for their activities in years two and three in order to maintain service activities at year one levels.

<b>FY 2006</b>	<b>FY 2007</b>	<b>FY 2008</b>
CPB grant up to \$35,000 towards total project budget	CPB grant up to \$25,000 towards total project budget	CPB grant up to \$15,000 towards total project budget
Minimum 1:1 Station match of CPB grant is required	Station should maintain year one service levels and provide matching funds	Station should-minimally-provide year one service levels and match CPB funds
Stations can include In-kind expenses toward the required match*	Stations can include In-kind expenses toward the required match*	Stations can include In-kind expenses toward the required match*

\*In-kind support may include project staff. However, general and administrative costs (e.g. office space, computers, and telephones) should not be applied to in-kind costs.

**AWARD CRITERIA**

- The General Manager at each Ready To Lead in Literacy station will guide a station management team focused on early childhood education/early literacy that includes programming, education, and development staff. The GM will also serve as a literacy advocate in his/her community.

- RTLL stations will be part of a community of best practice demonstrating a commitment to early childhood/early literacy education as a major service strand of the station; a commitment to outcomes-based project planning; and a commitment to forging strategic collaborations and partnerships to leverage this RTLL funding.
- RTLL stations must commit to a match of CPB grant funds (not to exceed \$35,000 in year one; \$25,000 in year two; and \$15,000 in year three) towards the total project budget. CPB expects that stations will, at minimum, maintain RTLL activities at first year levels-throughout the 3 year project-even as the CPB share of the total project budget decreases.

#### GRANT CONDITIONS

- RTLL fund recipients will need to demonstrate that they are delivering a variety of early childhood education services in support of and complementary to the national Ready To Learn goals (e.g. parent/child co-viewing), as well as being responsive to local education needs.
- RTLL fund recipients will be required to participate in leadership development sessions (in station teams) offered by CPB. The leadership development sessions will focus on designing sustainable projects, developing strategic partnerships, fundraising techniques, and outcomes-based project evaluation. *[Note: CPB will provide support for these leadership development activities. Fund recipients would NOT be required to use their RTLL grants to pay for attendance or travel for this training].*
- RTLL fund recipients must commit to broadcast 6.5 hours of PBS Kids programming including all programming funded by Ready To Learn (particularly *Sesame Street* and *Between the Lions*) each weekday at times appropriate to reach the target audience of children ages 2-8 and their caregivers. Additional Ready To Learn programs, being produced with funds from the new U.S. Department of Education grant, will be available to stations in the third year of the Ready To Lead in Literacy fund agreement and will be part of the required block of programming.

- Stations must broadcast U.S. Department of Education/Ready To Learn interstitials (produced by PBS). Stations must schedule these interstitials a minimum of 3 times each weekday with an additional broadcast of the interstitials once in either prime time or on weekends.
- Stations must include parent/child co-viewing messages and reading messages in print materials or in any training workshops.

#### **USE OF THE READY TO LEAD IN LITERACY GRANT**

Stations receiving the 3-year RTLL funding may use the grant for a variety of activities consistent with the approved project plan in their proposal. The following are examples, and not all-inclusive, of appropriate grant activities:

- Training for early childhood educators and/or child-care providers or parents of children ages 2-8;
- The purchase and distribution of children’s books to be used to support training sessions, and follow up to increase co-viewing and reading;
- Ready To Learn gatherings, workshops, and other events that support co-viewing, early literacy and learning;
- Promotion of Ready To Learn television programs;
- Partnership development;
- Funder cultivation activities;
- Outcomes-based project evaluation.

#### **ELIGIBILITY**

Any CPB-qualified, PBS Ready To Learn station, non-commercial television licensee may apply. Stations that are selected—on a competitive basis—for the Ready To Lead in Literacy designation will be required to participate in the program for three years; provide a one to one match of CPB funds (including in-kind funds) for each year of the grant; and commit to provide CPB and PBS with financial and project information that will be used to evaluate the success of this initiative.

## PROPOSAL SUBMISSION FORMAT

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit an online application using the following URL: <http://www.cpb.org/grants/leadinliteracy/>. The application will require the following information:

- Project Summary: including project title, main contact name, official licensee name, mailing address, phone number, email address, and authorized licensee representative\* providing a brief summary of proposed services and total project budget.
- Project Work Plan: 8-pages maximum, detailing full scope of project activities in Year One of the project.
- Key Personnel: name(s) of the project team principals, to include the General Manager, Development officer, Ready To Learn Coordinator, and Programmer as well as those of key personnel from partner organizations, or proposed subcontractors, etc.
- Project Budget: detailed budget for Year One activities in Excel or similar format, indicating projected revenues and expenses of this project. Itemize sources and amounts of project funding, including in-kind funding. Also include a summary budget for years two and three of this project including a listing of *likely* revenue sources.

\*The "Authorized Representative" must be an official of the applicant's organization and must be empowered to sign contracts on behalf of the organization.

## APPLICATION DEADLINES & FILING REQUIREMENTS

**The deadline for receipt at CPB of applications for the Ready To Lead in Literacy is July 25, 2005 at 5:00 p.m. ET.** Award notification is expected to begin on or before September 2, 2005, or as soon as possible thereafter. CPB prefers to receive online applications for the RTLL Fund; however if an applicant opts to mail their application, materials must be received by close of business on July 25, 2005 at the following address:

Ready To Lead in Literacy  
Corporation for Public Broadcasting  
401 Ninth St. N.W.  
Washington, DC 20004-2129  
[leadinliteracy@cpb.org](mailto:leadinliteracy@cpb.org)

## **GENERAL**

CPB is not responsible for loss or damage to the materials submitted, or for any unauthorized use or misuse of the submitted materials by any third party.

By submitting a proposal, each applicant grants to CPB the right to duplicate, use, disclose, and distribute all of the materials submitted for purposes of evaluation, review, and research. In addition, each applicant guarantees that the applicant has full and complete rights to all of the information and materials included in the proposal. Each applicant also guarantees that all such materials are not defamatory and do not infringe upon or violate the privacy rights, copyrights, or other proprietary rights of any third party.

Solicitation by CPB of proposals does not constitute an agreement by CPB to extend funding to any party for the project under consideration. CPB may, in its sole discretion, elect not to pursue this project in any manner.

## **CONDITIONS OF AGREEMENT**

If a proposal is selected for funding, applicants will be required to sign a binding agreement. Until both parties have signed an agreement, no express or implied commitment has been made to provide financial support. Applicants are not authorized to commence work until the agreement is fully executed. If applicants opt to commence work, they do so at their own risk. No oral or written statement other than the signed, written agreement will govern or modify the relationship.

As a condition of agreement, applicants must guarantee that, among other things, any work they undertake on behalf of CPB is not defamatory and will not violate or infringe upon the privacy rights, copyrights, or other proprietary rights of any third party. Contractors must also agree to indemnify CPB against any loss resulting from breach of any of the guarantees contained in the agreement.

Those receiving funds from CPB must be able to comply with a number of requirements that will be included in the agreement. These requirements include but are not limited to:

- (1) A demonstration of adequate financial support to complete the work for which they have been contracted and to deliver reports and/or other intellectual property created pursuant to the Agreement;
- (2) Maintenance, for three years following receipt of relevant funds, of all financial records to the project, which records shall be accessible to CPB, or other representatives for examination and audit purposes;
- (3) Submission to CPB of a copy of any U.S. Comptroller General final audit report in connection with the project;
- (4) Compliance with equal employment opportunity and nondiscrimination laws and policies;

- (5) Documentation as to actual costs, and provision of supporting detail demonstrating that all costs are reasonable, necessary and allocable to the requirements and objectives of the work undertaken.

Other material terms and provisions will be set forth in the documents provided that successfully completes the selection process.

**NOTIFICATION**

Award notification is expected to begin **on or before September 2, 2005, or as soon as possible thereafter.**

**EXCEPTIONS TO APPLICATIONS**

In some instances, additional information or material is required to evaluate an application. If this is the case, applicants will be notified by telephone or email and will be expected to provide the requested information within three (3) **business** days of the request or as soon as possible.

Exceptions to any of the administrative requirements or procedures stated in this document are not encouraged. If, however, requests for exceptions are made, applicants must detail and justify proposed exceptions in writing prior to the deadline for submissions. Waiver of any requirement should not be presumed. If granted, exceptions will be conveyed by specific written authorization only. Oral authorization will not be considered valid.

Applicants may withdraw a proposal at any time by written notice to CPB. CPB reserves the right to alter or withdraw this program at any time with no financial, legal or other obligation to any applicant responding or planning to respond.

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