

## History and Purpose

### ***Mission***

The Robert Bowne Foundation is a family foundation that supports the development of quality programs that offer literacy education to children and youth of New York City, in the out-of-school hours, especially those living in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods.

### ***History***

The Robert Bowne Foundation was established in 1968 by Edmund A. Stanley, Jr. and named in honor of Robert Bowne (1744-1818), founder of Bowne & Company.

At a time when there was very little organized concern for the plight of the poor, the sick and the uneducated in New York, Robert Bowne was a pioneer in his efforts on behalf of the disadvantaged. Through the Manumission Society, of which he was a founder, he sought to “exert all lawful means to ameliorate the sufferings” of the American slave and “ultimately to free him from bondage.” He was a founder, as well, of the Society for Establishing a Free School in the City of New York, where scholars would be chosen on the basis of need, irrespective of “sect, creed, nationality, or name.” He played an active role, too, in New York’s first hospital, its first public health organization, and its first fire insurance company. When he died, one of his many good friends said of Robert Bowne, “His active mind, open purse, expanded heart, and willing feet knew no bounds.” Through The Robert Bowne Foundation this tradition continues.

### ***Grantmaking Program***

Since 1987, The Robert Bowne Foundation has concentrated its grantmaking on out-of-school programs in New York City that address the issue of youth literacy, or have the desire to do so. Youth programs, especially those within community-based organizations, have the potential to address a range of educational concerns. After-school programs, in particular, have a long and positive history. Historically, programs have served the important function of providing a safe place for youngsters to engage in leisure activities with supportive adults. A growing number of such programs, responding to parents’ concerns about their children’s success in school, have begun to include educational support among their offerings and to function as a critical link for families and children between home and school.

Currently, The Robert Bowne Foundation seeks to have a long-term and substantial effect on the field of out-of-school education. We believe that quality out-of-school education programs form the foundation of the field. Therefore, our first priority is to support individual programs that aspire to and those that do make literacy education an integral part of their work, provide quality experiences for young people, and to evolve as learning organizations. That is, organizations that support the ongoing development of participants, staff, families, and communities as learners. Through grants and techni-

cal assistance, The Foundation seeks to build programs' capacity to support the literacy development of young people. We also believe that by studying and disseminating the practices of these quality programs educators, funders, and policy-makers can develop practices and policies to support the development of quality programs for young people. It is, therefore, a priority of The Foundation to identify, develop, support, and disseminate research and practices that will significantly impact out-of-school education policy. It is our hope that improved policies will lead to youth-centered, quality out-of-school programs for all young people.

**What do we mean by youth-centered programs?** Youth-centered programs have a clear mission and focus and make it possible for participants to express their emerging identities. Learning and development require ongoing feedback in varied forms. Therefore, assessment and program evaluation are integrated throughout the programs. Youth-centered programs have cycles of planning, practice, performance and assessment. The programs tailor their activities, techniques and material to the interests, strengths and needs of the youth with whom they work. Youth provide leadership and direction, taking a central role in designing activities, as well as enforcing formal and informal rules for program participants. High quality content and instruction propel youth to accomplishments beyond those they imagined. Young people's achievements are celebrated.

**What do we mean by literacy?** We believe that literacy is engagement in reading, writing, listening, and speaking in order to better understand ourselves, others, and the world around us. We use the knowledge we gain through these literacy activities to change the world in which we live.

*Becoming [literate] is a gradual process that begins with our first interactions with [language—spoken and written]. As children, there is no fixed point at which we suddenly become [literate]. Instead, all of us bring our understanding of spoken language, our knowledge of the world, and our experiences in it to make sense of what we read. We grow in our ability to comprehend and interpret a wide range of reading materials by making appropriate choices from among the extensive repertoire of skills and strategies that develop over time...*

This description is consistent with the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and the International Reading Association (IRA) positions and guidelines on reading. We have adapted them to help perspective grantees understand what we mean by literacy.

**What do literacy activities look like in after-school programs?** Literate behaviors and activities look different in every program because programs reflect the different communities and children they serve and, therefore, programs are engaged in different activities. In her book, *Community Counts: How Youth Matters for Youth Development*, Milbrey MacLaughlin describes some youth programs, in which literacy is an integral part, that are very similar to the types of programs that the Robert Bowne Foundation funds:

*...An arts program asks youth to research their cultural history. Young painters learn a good deal of history, gain pride in their background, and gain skills in mural making. A dance teacher encourages her students to keep journals and often starts dance sessions by having students read their writings aloud. These dancers pick up habits of writing and reading while learning hip-hop or double tap.*

*...In a project focused on childcare in the community, youth read news articles on the topic and study various issues related to childcare. They read in textbooks about “stages of play” and create write-ups on their observations as classroom aides.*

*...Even hard-driving sports organizations find ways to broaden the perspectives and competencies of youth. For example, it is common in many organizations for team members to come to practice early to work with volunteers on homework, study for exams, or fine-tune specialized units related to their sport. Many coaches work academics into topics of great interest to their young athletes, such as nutrition and weight training. One year a basketball team had six-week units of study on the following topics: finances of the National Basketball Association, physics in the sport of basketball, and neurophysiology.*

All young people benefit from and are entitled to quality programs that support their development—intellectual, artistic, physical, emotional, and spiritual—to its fullest potential. Out-of-school programs, alongside families, schools and other community supports, play a major, though too often unrecognized role in providing support to young people. Through direct grants to programs, technical assistance, and research and dissemination The Robert Bowne Foundation seeks to increase access to youth-centered, quality out-of-school programs for all young people.

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## Grant Criteria

The Robert Bowne Foundation provides grants related to youth literacy for direct service programs, technical assistance to out-of school programs, evaluation, advocacy, and research. Awards generally range from \$20,000 to \$30,000 and may be granted for specific projects or general operating support to the youth literacy program.

The criteria for funding are as follows:

- The agency must serve youth (preschool to age 21).
- The agency must have 501(c)3 status and be located within one of the five boroughs of New York City. In rare instances, the Foundation will award a grant to an agency located outside the City if it serves New York City children.

The Foundation does **not**:

- make grants to individuals, capital campaigns, or endowments;
- support religious organizations, primary or secondary schools, colleges, or universities. An exception may be made when some aspect of the organization's work is an integral part of a program receiving funding from The Foundation or if the college or university is participating in a research project supported by The Foundation; or
- support in-school projects or projects following a traditional remedial model of instruction.

## Application Process

The initial request must be an inquiry letter describing the proposed project. The Foundation will usually respond to this request within four weeks. If the proposed project meets The Foundation's criteria and current funding priorities, and if grant funds are available, we will invite a proposal. Proposals are due on April 1.

Program change takes time. Therefore, The Foundation tends to provide multi-year support if a program continues to meet The Foundation's criteria and funding objectives. However, the agency must reapply each year and submit midyear and final reports.

For further information, you may visit the Robert Bowne Foundation on the internet at <http://fdncnter.org/grantmaker/bowne> or contact:

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Summary of 2001 Grants by  
 The Robert Bowne Foundation

<b><i>Direct Service Grants</i></b>	<b><i>Type</i></b>	<b><i>Amount</i></b>
Abraham House, Inc.	General Operating	\$20,000.00
Brooklyn Bureau of Community Service	Support for Ed. position	\$30,000.00
Burns, W. Haywood	General Operating	\$25,000.00
Catholic Charities/ Dr. White Community Center	General Operating	\$30,000.00
Center for Educational Options, Inc.	General Operating	\$25,000.00
Coalition for Hispanic Family Services	General Operating	\$ 5,000.00
Colony -South Brooklyn Houses, Inc.	General Operating	\$25,000.00
New York Career Guidance Services, Inc.	General Operating	\$20,000.00
Concourse House Housing Development Fund Company, Inc.	Library Project	\$35,000.00
Creative Arts Workshops for Children	General Operating	\$ 5,000.00
Crenulated-New Settlement Apartments	General Operating	\$30,000.00
Cypress Hills Local Development Corp., Inc.	General Operating	\$30,000.00
East Harlem Urban Centers (Booker T. Washington)	General Operating	\$20,000.00
Flatbush Youth Initiatives	Planning & General Operating	\$20,000.00
Frederick Douglass Creative Arts Center	General Operating	\$30,000.00
Fresh Youth Initiatives	Evaluation	\$ 5,000.00
Global Kids, Inc.	Project	\$30,000.00
Grand Street Settlement	General Operating	\$25,000.00
Hartley House	General Operating	\$34,000.00
Horticultural Society	Summer Program	\$10,000.00
Hour Children, Inc.	General Operating	\$30,000.00
Institute for Labor and the Community	General Operating	\$20,000.00
Interfaith Neighbors	Library Project & General Operating	\$50,000.00
Jamaica Center for Arts & Learning, Inc.	Library Project	\$35,000.00
Kingsbridge Heights Community Center, Inc.	General Operating	\$30,000.00
Knox-Gates Neighborhood Association, Inc.	Planning & General Operating	\$20,000.00
Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center, Inc.	General Operating	\$25,000.00
Lower East Side Girls Club	General Operating	\$25,000.00
Lutheran Medical Center- Warren Street After School Program	General Operating	\$25,000.00
Manhattan Valley Development Corporation	General Operating	\$25,000.00
Mary Mitchell Family & Youth Center, Inc.	General Operating	\$33,500.00
Montefiore Medical Center	Library	\$20,500.00
New York City Brotherhood, Inc.	General Operating	\$20,000.00
New York Community Trust	Project	\$10,000.00
Rauschenbush Metro Industries, Inc.	General Operating	\$20,000.00
REACH Charter School	General Operating	\$25,000.00
Riverdale Neighborhood House, Inc.	General Operating	\$30,000.00
Saint Mary's Community Services	Planning & General Operating	\$20,000.00

South Asian Youth Action, SAYA, Inc.	General Operating	\$ 25,000.00
South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corp.	General Operating	\$ 30,000.00
St. Nicholas Neighborhood Preservation Corp.	Library Project & General Operating	\$ 70,000.00
Stryckers Bay Neighborhood Council, Inc.	General Operating	\$ 30,000.00
Trail Blazer Camps	Summer Program	\$ 12,000.00
Union Settlement Association, Inc.	General Operating	\$ 20,000.00
United States Catholic Conference-Pius XII Youth and Family Services	General Operating	\$ 30,000.00
United Community Centers	General Operating	\$ 25,000.00
Subtotal for Direct Service Grants		\$1,160,000.00

***Technical Assistance/Special Project Grants***

Community Resource Exchange		\$ 21,000.00
Educational Video Center		\$ 9,000.00
Hispanic Federation		\$ 20,000.00
Innovation Network, Inc.		\$ 70,000.00
Nonprofit Connection	-	\$ 20,000.00
Subtotal		\$ 140,000.00

**TOTAL GRANTS \$ 1,300,000.00**

## Technical Assistance/Special Projects

Literacy programs often need more than financial assistance to fulfill and sustain their potential. They also need technical assistance, both in programmatic and management areas, to become quality educational providers.

The Robert Bowne Foundation dedicates a portion of its annual budget to supporting organizations that have expertise in after-school education and can provide staff development for the Foundation's grantees. It also recognizes that educational change cannot occur without administrative support. Program staff cannot achieve their quality program goals without the management skills needed to support change. In response to this need, The Foundation funds management technical assistance providers who, like the programmatic experts, offer customized, on-site assistance as well as group workshops and networking opportunities. Currently the following organizations provide technical assistance to Robert Bowne Foundation-funded programs:

### ***Management Technical Assistance Organizations***

#### **Community Resource Exchange (CRE)**

CRE's team of 23 consultants works with small, grassroots community-based groups as well as large, established nonprofits that seek to tangibly improve the quality of life for NYC's residents, particularly those residents in the city's poorest communities. They have the greatest success with client organizations that are ready to give energy to the work of improving issues of management and infrastructure, such as board and staff leadership, financial management, human resources, organizational development, marketing and public relations, and fundraising.

#### **The Hispanic Federation**

The Hispanic Federation provides organizational development technical assistance, grants, and fair share advocacy for its 75 member health and human service organizations that serve the Latino population in the tri-state area. The Hispanic Federation works primarily with member agencies, but also works with other nonprofit organizations. Robert Bowne Foundation grantees are given special consideration when asking for assistance.

#### **Institute for Not For Profit Management (INM), Columbia University**

INM programs are designed for executives and mid-level managers of not-for-profit agencies, including afterschool program directors, managers, and supervisors who wish to increase their managerial and leadership effectiveness.

#### **Nonprofit Connection**

Nonprofit Connection provides customized management assistance and access to information and resources to nonprofits of all sizes to help them plan for and manage change. Our integrated approach uses the complementary skills and experience of our

diverse staff to help programs build their internal capacity. This may focus on any one or combination of the following areas:

planning and strategic management, fundraising, board development, marketing, organization design and restructuring, human resources management, accounting and financial management, executive coaching, mediation and retreat facilitation.

### ***Programmatic Technical Assistance Providers***

#### **Center for Educational Options (CEO)**

CEO provides support in developing and integrating literacy into after school programs. For educational or program directors this support includes developing and implementing a literacy plan, working with staff, assessing staff and children's work to plan for next steps. For line staff this support includes discussing literacy successes and challenges, studying children's work, developing and implementing literacy plans that build on staff and children's strengths. CEO combines seminars and on-site support.

#### **Innovation Network, Inc.**

Innovation Network, Inc. (InnoNet) is dedicated to helping public and nonprofit agencies to become learning organizations. InnoNet tailors its evaluation consultations, trainings and workshops to the needs and interests of the client organization. Input of all of the key stakeholders in the design and implementation of the evaluation is encouraged. They are also keenly aware of the need to develop data collection methods that are not burdensome to organizations but seamlessly embedded in the management and current information practices of the agency. They meet with key staff members on an as-needed basis to inform and train staff members. Most of the evaluation projects that InnoNet is commissioned to perform involve assessments of program processes and outcomes.

#### **Institute for Literacy Studies (ILS), Lehman College, CUNY**

ILS professional development programs support practitioners in after-school education who interested in developing or expanding the literacy component of their program; in particular those who work directly with the youth in their program and function as leaders.

#### **The Reading Excellence And Discovery (READ) Foundation**

READ targets kindergarten through third grade children struggling with reading and who attend schools which serve predominately low income students. READ recruits and trains New York City teens to tutor these children in public and parochial schools and community centers. READ seeks partnerships with organizations which serve these populations of students and teens.

#### **Spaghetti Book Club**

The Spaghetti Book Club is a comprehensive literacy program that integrates reading, writing, art and technology by teaching students how to write and illustrate book reviews and then publishing their work on the web. Spaghetti Book Club provides: onsite training workshops and ongoing support for educators working directly with children as well as program/educational directors; a curriculum of lesson plans to help

guide students through the process of writing, revising and illustrating their reviews; and the publishing of student book reviews and artwork on the web.

#### **The New York Hall of Science**

The New York Hall of Science's Teacher Training Workshops are targeted at educators and caregivers who run their own After School Programs, and wish to gain the skills necessary to include science and technology workshops for children at their own locations. (No science background is necessary). During these training workshops, participants will cover hands-on, inquiry-based teaching techniques and concepts and learn how to use simple easily found materials to complete each topic.

### ***Special Projects***

#### **The Library Development Project**

The Foundation recognizes that quality libraries are an integral part of an after school literacy program. Therefore, we provide support to out-of-school programs to create, implement and promote a library program that is appropriate for the program and the developmental needs and interests of the children and young people who attend the program. Through this project, staff of after school programs are supported in locating, accessing and evaluating children's books, audiovisual materials, web sites and other electronic media, and other materials that constitute a diverse, current and relevant children's collection.

**Grantees of the Robert Bowne Foundation may access the above technical assistance by calling Anne Lawrence, Program Officer, at 212-229-7227 or by email at [anne.lawrence@Bowne.com](mailto:anne.lawrence@Bowne.com).**