



Innovative Schools Fellowship

New Schools for New Orleans

I. Overview and Goal

NSNO believes that the ideal system of charter schools includes a diverse array of academic models and approaches to school. A system that offers true choice – the choice to select from multiple, high-quality schools – ensures that more parents can find a school that best meets their child’s and their family’s needs, interests, and goals.

As part of NSNO’s work to ensure that our public school system offers choice to families and students, we are launching the Innovative Schools Fellowship (ISF) to support entrepreneurs in their journey to design, plan for, and launch new and innovative school models in New Orleans. Fellows will begin in summer 2018 and will launch schools between 2020 and 2022.

Our goal is that the ISF leads to the launch of up to two new schools in New Orleans by 2022 - schools that offer new, one-of-a-kind experiences for students while preparing them for post-secondary success and long-term financial freedom.

II. Design Principles

A design principle is a foundational belief around which a school is crafted. At each step of the school design process, an entrepreneur should consider how the principles listed below - along with others identified by the entrepreneur - are guiding their decision making. The design principles should align to an entrepreneur’s approach and focus at the outset of school design work and should translate into practice during pilot and launch of the new school.

The design principles below do not capture all that is important when designing and launching a school. The key elements of running a strong school – such as the need to define a clear mission, execute a comprehensive and aligned talent strategy, and design an instructional model that will meet the needs of *all* kids - still matter. However, the design principles below are about ensuring that this Fellowship leads to the launch of schools that offer new, personalized experiences for the students of New Orleans.

The design principles for the ISF are outlined on page 2, below.



1) Reimagine the Learning Experience

The future schools of New Orleans must prepare students for college and career by personalizing the school experience for all students. In order to do this, schools must:

- Tailor content by pathway, pace, and/or modality to meet all students' needs while maintaining high expectations for all students
- Ensure that students drive their learning and own their progress as appropriate
- Create learning environments that are engaging, relevant, and joyful

2) Partner with Students and Parents

Parents and students must be included in the conversations and decisions that most affect them. In the future, schools must:

- Co-design the school model with students and parents in authentic ways, including offering in-person opportunities to engage with all families and using family input to guide decision making
- Partner with students and parents throughout the life of the school



3) Commit to Creating and Maintaining Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive School Environments

Diverse, equitable, and inclusive schools will be better prepared to meet the needs of the students and families they serve. In pursuit of this goal, schools must:

- Commit to serving all students, regardless of background, race, gender, economic status, ability, or any other personal identify or attribute
- Build teams – of teachers, leaders, and board members – that are diverse in many ways, including by race, background, and prior experience
- Co-create systems and structures with students that ensure students of all backgrounds feel physically and emotionally safe with peers and adults
- Continue to assess and refine practices and policies to ensure equitable outcomes for all individuals



4) Engage in Purposeful, Constant Learning

Organizations that learn quickly can test new practices, assess efficacy, and continue to improve outcomes for students. These schools:

- Engage in constant iteration of their model (before and after launch) in pursuit of results for children
- Take risks often but adjust course quickly
- Use quantitative and qualitative data to inform all decisions
- Collaborate with other organizations and schools in the broader education community



5) Measure Student Success in Many Ways

Schools must balance rigorous academic expectations with the non-academic – but equally important – skills and mindsets that will support long-term success of students. In pursuit of an expanded definition of student success, schools must:

- Ensure rigorous academics that will support all students on their pathway to college and/or career
- Identify, define, and measure growth in habits and mindsets critical to success
- Believe in the importance of social-emotional learning, create structures for supporting student growth in this area, and measure students' progress



III. Eligibility

Applicants must meet the requirements below to be eligible for the Fellowship. Fellows must:

- Have an idea for a school that he/she has begun to test or pilot in some way¹
- Have completed a market analysis and/or have deep understanding of the local ecosystem of schools and knows that his/her program is unique among current schools in New Orleans
- Have at least two years of experience working in a school
- Plan to open an open-enrollment² school in Orleans Parish between 2020 and 2022³

IV. Fellowship Structure and Timeline

A typical timeline for designing, piloting, and launching a school is approximately three years. The chart below outlines the ISF experience for an entrepreneur on this timeline.

Some applicants may be on a shorter or longer timeline. After getting to know you and your plan, we will work with you to determine the ideal timeline for your ISF experience; however, we expect that the majority of applicants and Fellows will be on a three-year path.

	Year 1 of 3		Year 2 of 3	Year 3 of 3
Number of hours committed to Fellowship	5-10 hours/week (part-time)	<i>At the end of Year 1, NSNO will invite high-potential Fellows to continue into Years 2 and 3</i>	40+ hours/week (full time)	40+ hours/week (full time)
Funding available to selected Fellows from NSNO	Up to \$50,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small-scale pilot • Travel • Part-time staffing or consulting 		Up to \$200,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founder salary and benefits • Large-scale pilot • Travel • Part-time staffing or consulting 	Up to \$400,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founder salary and benefits • Materials for start-up • Part-time and/or full-time staffing or consulting
Key activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot (small-scale)⁴ • Participate in Fellowships, workshops, etc. as needed to support entrepreneur's specific needs • Visit and/or embed in existing schools • Hold community events 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot (large-scale)⁵ • Apply for a charter • Continue to build personal leadership competencies • Continue to iterate on model • Visit existing schools • Hold community events • Fundraise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for school launch, including: secure a facility, hire staff, purchase materials, recruit students, continue to fundraise • Hold community events

Within this overarching timeframe, each Fellow's ISF experience will be highly personalized to meet his/her individual needs around model design and/or personal leadership growth. NSNO will get to know each Fellow

¹ Prior testing of the proposed idea will look different for different applicants, but may include trying out elements of your model in your current classroom or participating in a fellowship to explore and test your idea in some way. If you are not sure if your prior work would meet this requirement, email alyse@nsno.org to discuss this requirement in more detail.

² An open-enrollment school is one that: 1) does not have academic, language, or other admissions requirements of any kind; 2) does not give enrollment preference based on zip code or organizational affiliation; 3) participates in OneApp; 3) offers appropriate, free transportation for all students, including at a minimum: bus or van service through grade 8 and fully subsidized public transportation in grades 9-12.

³ If you have plans to launch a school in 2019 and are interested in this opportunity, please email alyse@nsno.org to discuss potential pathways for participating.

⁴ A small-scale pilot is not full-time – it may take place over holiday breaks, during the summer, during an after-school program, or as intermittent pop-ups.

⁵ A large-scale pilot is ideally full-time – it may be embedded in an existing school serving a consistent group of students over at least a 6-month period (ideally a full school year)

through weekly meetings and will recommend specific activities and experiences best suited to accelerate model iteration and/or personal growth. NSNO will also serve in a mentor role to support Fellows as they navigate the activities listed above, such as designing and running a pilot, applying for a charter, and planning for community events. Fellows may work with multiple local and national organizations during their Fellowship experience (particularly in Year 1) - including other fellowships, workshops, and development opportunities. Fellows who pursue these opportunities will need to apply directly to the opportunities offered by these organizations with NSNO's support.

V. Criteria for Fellowship Selection

NSNO will select Fellows based on 1) alignment to core beliefs (outlined below) and 2) commitment to design principles (outlined above on page 2 of this document).

ISF core beliefs:

- 1) **Student expectations:** believing that every child can succeed
- 2) **Openness to Feedback:** actively seeking and willingly accepting feedback from multiple partners with the aim of personal and organizational growth
- 3) **Empathetic Relationships:** intentionally building relationships with many stakeholders and making decisions with consideration for how different parties are affected
- 4) **Self Sufficiency:** taking personal responsibility for the school's success and actively seeking opportunities as a result
- 5) **Self-Awareness:** reflecting on personal strengths and areas for growth, and intentionally seeking experiences and/or hiring staff to address growth areas

VI. Application Timeline

The table below outlines the key dates related to the Fellowship application.

January 16, 2018	Application opens. NSNO will share the application materials and begin accepting applications.
January 16 – February 27, 2018	Optional exploratory calls. Interested applicants can set up time to discuss the opportunity with NSNO staff to determine fit and ask questions. Please reach out to alyse@nsno.org to set up a call.
February 28, 2018	Applications due. All applications are due by 5pm on this day. Please submit the application via the Google form and email a résumé to alyse@nsno.org .
March 16, 2018	Invite to interviews. NSNO will notify all applicants on or before this date regarding invites to the interview stage of the application process.
March 26 – April 6, 2018	Interviews. Applicants invited to the interview stage will participate in a 1-2 hour interview during this window. Applicants not currently residing in New Orleans can choose to interview in person or via video call.
April 30, 2018	Final notification. All applicants will be notified of their final application status on or before this date.
July 16, 2018	Fellowship begins. Selected Fellows will begin their Fellowship-related activities on this date.