Improvement Project Team Application

All completed applications are due on or before **July 9, 2018**.
Notifications of acceptance will be sent by **September 10, 2018**.
Submit your application via this online form.
For questions, contact Kareen Yang at yang@carnegiefoundation.org.

Important instructions for preparing and submitting your application:

- **Submitting your responses via the online form**. Since the online application must be submitted within a single session, we recommend that you prepare your responses in a Word document and then copy/paste your responses into the text boxes of the online form.   The online form will not allow you to save and return to a partially completed application. You can only submit text in the text boxes. You cannot include graphics and/or tables within your text.
- **Word count**. There is a 4,000 character limit for each response (roughly 500 words).
- **Uploading evidence attachments in Part Three**. You may upload up to 10 files, each no larger than 30MB, directly into the online application. For each attachment, include in the available text box the file name and short description of the item. Please also add "**Dim#_**" to the front of the file name, where # refers to the dimension the item is providing evidence for. If you have additional or larger attachments, please upload what you can and check the box at the end of the online form. Within 24 hours you will receive an email with a link where you may upload additional or larger files.

Part One: General Questions for All Spotlight Category Applicants

The Carnegie Foundation's six core principles lay out a comprehensive view of improvement science and the power of networks to address longstanding educational problems. Although you may not use this specific language in your day-to-day work, these principles should be alive and discernable in your application.

We are especially interested in applicants that have used these approaches to advance more ambitious student learning goals and/or attack longstanding disparities, by race/ethnicity or income, in students' progress through school and educational attainment.

Please respond to each of the items below:

1a.   Provide a general description of the work.

1b.   Provide evidence of measurable educational improvements at some significant scale.

1c.   Describe how this work was informed by the improvement principles, and how you drew on specific improvement methods and tools as appropriate (including qualitative and quantitative data for tracking progress and informing subsequent improvement efforts).

1d.   Describe how you drew on research evidence and expertise to develop your working theory of improvement and change ideas.

1e.   Describe a key improvement challenge (or failure) that arose as this work progressed, how you managed it, and any lessons learned from this that you might share with the field.

Part Two: Specific Questions for Improvement Project Team Applicants

Your **Improvement Project Team Application** should demonstrate how you used improvement tools and methods to make significant progress on a well-specified aim. Your application should include a description of the work undertaken and how it positively impacted the lives of students and/or teachers.

Please respond to each of the items below:

2a.   A well-specified aim of the improvement effort, and why it is important.

2b.   A narrative that outlines the problem identified, the processes used to understand the problem, and analysis of its cause/s (i.e., a description of the system producing the current outcomes).

2c.   How examination of variation in performance both influenced the formation of your initial working theory of improvement (as may be reflected in a driver diagram) and informed your iterative improvement efforts.

2d.   Description of your team's membership, how members were engaged, and specific roles and responsibilities on the team.

2e.   The development and use of measures to track progress and inform the improvement efforts needed to progress toward your aim.

2f.   Lessons that could be shared with others.

Part Three: Evidence of Continuous Improvement Applied Within Your Improvement Project Team

We believe that the following **three dimensions** are important to a project team's improvement efforts. Using the list of elements under each dimension as a guide, please include in your application evidence (documents, charts, reports, data, etc.) of each of the **three dimensions**. We recognize that you may be further along in some areas than others.

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Dimension 1: Improvement Project Chartering

Elements:
- Analysis of the problem.
- Study of the system and how it produces the current conditions.
- Statement of aim.
- Development of theory of practice improvement (engaging both scholarly research and practice knowledge).
- Selection of high-leverage areas for change.
- Identification of improvement team members and their roles.
- Preparation of and support for members to engage in improvement.

Dimension 2: Improvement Learning

Elements:
- Identification or development of an initial change package reasonably hypothesized to drive improvement.
- Development of a system of measures.
- Data collection and regular measurement tracking.
- Iterative testing of change ideas (using a scientific methodology to build practical improvement knowledge).
- Documenting and sharing the results.

Dimension 3: Scale and Spread (If Applicable)

Elements:
- Rationale for scale and/or spread.
- Identification of target population for scale and spread.
- Identification of scale and spread approach, including methodology as well as roles and responsibilities.
- Local leadership responsibility and support.
- System for measuring and adjusting behaviors, policies, and procedures for spreading and scaling.
- Team knowledge management system.