



Every Hour Counts

Learning Community Application

Applications due: Friday, November 15, 2019

Every Hour Counts is issuing this application for the Every Hour Counts Learning Community, a professional learning opportunity targeted to emerging and intermediate-level expanded learning (after-school and summer learning) systems from cities, regions, and counties around the country that would benefit from learning and sharing strategies to build and enhance their community structures and services. The Every Hour Counts Learning Community will offer communities the opportunity to learn with peers in other communities as well as share and highlight their own approaches, improve their practices, receive coaching from field experts and experienced system-builders, and design solutions to shared challenges facing the field.

WHY JOIN THE EVERY HOUR COUNTS NATIONAL PEER LEARNING COMMUNITY?

The Learning Community offers its system-builder members the chance to strengthen their local systems through cross-fertilization of ideas and a distinct opportunity to learn from a group of peers and the Every Hour Counts partners. Communities will join a powerful system-building coalition and gain greater influence to effect strong policies for expanded learning programs and systems.

Benefits include:

- Exposure to promising system-building strategies from peers with directed guidance on how to implement approaches in your community;
- Access to and direct coaching from Every Hour Counts staff, Partner Intermediary organizations (see page 4), and policy experts;
- National exposure for your community through Every Hour Counts communications, including community spotlights, national presentations on promising practices, social media channels, blog, newsletter, and policy vehicles;
- Policy and capacity building support in partnership with our policy strategist, Penn Hill Group;
- Technical assistance support related to using data for driving improvement from city leaders and researchers;
- The opportunity to influence national education policy to strengthen the field and local practice;
- Opportunities to shape the focus of the Learning Community and our work together;
- Distance learning opportunities designed to address common challenges;
- Regular communications from Every Hour Counts through monthly round-ups, which will include important resources, event announcements, community spotlights, and the latest research and publication releases related to expanded learning and system-building;

- An in-person meeting with built-in networking opportunities with your peer members who are looking to enhance their expanded learning systems, and with nationally-recognized experts in system-building; and
- Access to grant funds (pending availability) for national demonstration initiatives.

Being a part of Every Hour Counts means we have mentors and friends across the country. Every Hour Counts helped my organization develop quickly, building upon the lessons and successes of organizations and cities that have gone before us. Now, Every Hour Counts helps NextUp get better and better.

- Barbara Couto Sipe, President & CEO, NextUp RVA, Richmond, VA

The Every Hour Counts Learning Community has given us a way to stay connected with peer cities and learn from their process, strategies and successes. As Detroit as a whole and the Youth Development Resource Center continue with OST system-building, Every Hour Counts partners have been invaluable sources of knowledge and motivation as we overcome hurdles like partnership and collaboration, quality improvement, communication, data, and youth access to programs in our community.

–Sara Plachta Elliott, Executive Director, Youth Development Resource Center, Detroit, MI

CORE LEARNING COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Core activities of the Learning Community include:

- In-person and virtual meetings to share promising practices and lessons learned.
- Matched peer-to-peer coaching with the Every Hour Counts partners.
- Distance learning opportunities, which may include: issue group discussions, office hours, webinars, and case studies. Issue areas and formats of the learning opportunities will depend on the needs expressed by Learning Community members.
- Content-specific technical assistance.
- Monthly round-ups of news, funding opportunities, articles, and events.
- Networking receptions at national conferences.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Non-profit and public intermediaries, public-private partnerships, system-building coalitions, and other organizations that lead expanded learning system-building are encouraged to apply.

We are seeking:

- Communities (city, county or region) with a demonstrated commitment to system-building.
- Communities with elements of a system in place related to quality improvement, commitment of community leaders, governance, access to and participation of children and youth in low-income communities, increasing financial resources, and/or policy change.
- System leaders and systems that have the capacity to advance local work based on participation in the Learning Community.
- System leaders and systems that recognize that system-building is a long-term, iterative process.

On the basis of the above criteria and geographic diversity, we will select up to 10 communities to join our network.

LEARNING COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

We're seeking representatives from communities that are eager to improve their system-building practice and engage fully in the Learning Community. Specific responsibilities for communities and members will include:

- **Identify a lead representative, along with a colleague, to engage in Learning Community activities.** Ideally, the representative is a senior leader for your community's system-building efforts, and has the influence and ability to directly apply what is learned to local contexts and circumstances to improve practice and policy. The representative will have strong relationships across the local system and will serve as a liaison between the Learning Community and the local system, striving to relay information and lessons learned to local colleagues. We encourage communities to also identify a second point person to participate in learning activities.
- **Commit to active participation and applying tools and knowledge to enhance policy and practice in your community.** This community is only as strong as its members and will thrive through member engagement and contributions. Once committed, members are expected to actively participate in learning activities as appropriate and to be prepared to share resources and respond to requests. Participation in the Learning Community should facilitate members' abilities to perform everyday system-building work and is intended to support communities and members in achieving professional goals.
- **Participate in quarterly distance-learning activities.** An advantage of a learning community, as opposed to a professional development institute or workshop, is the ongoing support of experts and peers to help address common challenges. Therefore, sustained participation in distance-learning activities is critical to member satisfaction and success. Activities may include: issue group discussions, office hours, webinars, and case studies, determined by the needs of the group and guidance from Every Hour Counts.
- **Share news and resources with Every Hour Counts for dissemination among members.** These will be shared through monthly Learning Community round-ups, as well as through Every Hour Counts social media channels and other platforms, and are beneficial to you and your peer members.
- **Use our file sharing system.** Every Hour Counts will establish a file sharing space (likely on DropBox, Google Docs, or similar) for communities to voluntarily share materials such as MOUs, communications workplans, mission statements, and other materials.

- **Participate in coaching sessions.** Each community will have 2 45-minute coaching sessions with an Every Hour Counts partner and/or member of their senior staff depending on expertise.
- **The community will only be as strong as its members' engagement!** Reach out to Every Hour Counts at any time to discuss your needs and interests so that the Learning Community is of greatest possible benefit to you.

ROLE OF THE FACILITATOR

As the facilitator of this Learning Community, Every Hour Counts will:

- Serve as first point of contact for members;
- Schedule and coordinate all in-person and distance learning activities;
- Facilitate meetings, calls and activities;
- Identify, facilitate, and manage opportunities for cross-connections and peer sharing;
- Identify, facilitate, and manage opportunities for technical assistance and coaching from system-building and communications experts;
- Manage resource and file sharing; and
- Organize and share regular communications through monthly round-ups.

OUR NETWORK

Our network members are accomplished in expanded learning system-building and lead some of the most innovative intermediaries in the country. The Every Hour Counts Network members are: After School Matters (Chicago)*, Boston After School & Beyond (MA)*, Alleghany Partners in Out-of-School Time (Pittsburgh), California Teaching Fellows Foundation (Fresno), CASE for Kids (Houston), Collective for Youth (Omaha)*, Dallas After School, Denver After School Alliance, ExpandedED Schools (New York City)*, Greater Rochester After School Alliance, Nashville After Zone Alliance*, Newark Thrives!; NextUp RVA, (Richmond), Partnership for Children and Youth (Bay Area, CA)*, Prime Time Palm Beach County (FL)*, Providence After School Alliance, (RI)*, Sprockets, St. Paul, Youth Development Resource Center (Detroit), Youth Development Executives of King County, Seattle. Youthprise (Twin Cities, MN)*.

*=Every Hour Counts Partner Organization

COST

Communities are asked to contribute \$2,500 for a one-year membership effective January 2020 through December 2020. This contribution covers Every Hour Counts staff time to manage the learning opportunities, supports the participation of Every Hour Counts faculty, and covers partial costs of hosting an in-person meeting.

BACKGROUND

Formed in 2006, Every Hour Counts is a coalition of community-wide organizations that increases access to quality learning opportunities, particularly for underserved students. Our approach — called an *expanded learning system* — coordinates the work of service providers, public agencies, funders, and schools, so dollars stretch farther and more young people are served.

The Every Hour Counts coalition represents longstanding partnerships with more than 3,500 schools, districts, and community-based organizations that provide quality after-school and summer programming. Every Hour Counts partners support initiatives that reach 500,000 students each year.

Every Hour Counts has become an influential national player in the expanded learning field. We define outcomes and effective practice for expanded learning systems, demonstrate models for scaling program initiatives and advancing quality, support system-builders through knowledge sharing, serve as a go-to expert on promising practices, and educate policy makers on the value of expanded learning systems. As the only coalition of community-wide expanded learning systems, Every Hour Counts is uniquely positioned to support system-building communities with on-the-ground expertise, guidance, and support.

The Every Hour Counts coalition:

- Convenes stakeholders to share knowledge, ideas, and promising practices.
- Convened experts from across the expanded learning field to develop a [Measurement Framework](#) that describes common measures for outcomes at the youth, program, and system levels. This framework provides a blueprint for coordinated accountability and improvement, so quality practices lead to measurable, improved outcomes for students. Every Hour Counts is pilot-testing the Framework in three cities starting this fall.
- [Developed messaging materials](#) to help communities clearly explain the value of expanded-learning, the work of intermediaries, and the role of expanded-learning systems in improving outcomes for youth.
- Leads demonstration projects that test the feasibility of policy and practice concepts, and disseminates findings and tools for replication. For example, Every Hour Counts leads the national [Frontiers in Urban Science Exploration \(FUSE\)](#) initiative which seeks to institutionalize engaging, inquiry-based, informal STEM education.
- Serves as a clearinghouse of information about expanded learning systems.
- Advocates for policy change. For example, we worked with Senator Sheldon Whitehouse to include language on community partnerships and 21st century skills into the *Every Child Achieves Act*, the Senate's bill to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
- Provides local, customized technical assistance. Every Hour Counts leads citywide planning processes to build expanded-learning systems.
- Hosts an annual System-Building Institute, which brings approximately 30 community teams together to tap the expertise of Every Hour Counts partner organizations, and to build on one another's ideas for developing and strengthening after-school, summer, and expanded learning programs that engage community partners and schools.

Every Hour Counts Learning Community Application

Please email your completed application to Ally Margolis (amargolis@everyhourcounts.org) by November 15, 2019. Please address questions to Ally by email or by phone at 646-943-8737. For more information on Every Hour Counts, please visit: www.everyhourcounts.org

This information will help Every Hour Counts and partners better understand the history and state of system-building in your community, common areas of interest for Learning Community activities, as well as potential areas to highlight your work. Please limit your responses to 3-5 pages total.

Organization/Community:

Lead Representative to the Learning Community (Name and title):

1. Why is your organization interested in joining the Every Hour Counts Learning Community?
2. Please provide a brief history of your community's system-building effort. Some aspects to include:
 - a. What was the impetus to build an expanded-learning system?
 - b. Who were critical players in its inception and development, and when was it formed?
 - c. Please describe the development and evolution of priorities, key strategies, and any noteworthy shifts in priority areas.
 - d. How is the system-building work funded?
 - e. Describe the state of system-building leadership in your community.
3. What have been the successes so far in your expanded learning system-building efforts? More specifically, describe your top three successes related to the following categories: securing leadership support, forming a governance structure, collecting and using data for improvement, program quality, policy change, equity, sustainability, and/or another area.
4. Among those accomplishments, what would you be most excited to share with your peers in the Learning Community?
5. What are your top three most pressing system-building challenges?

6. Among those challenges, what would you most hope to gain from the Learning Community to help you address those challenges? What do you most hope to learn from your involvement in the Every Hour Counts Learning Community?
7. What are your goals for your system-building work for the next three years?