



REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL: CULTURALLY RELEVANT CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT SUPPORT

Proposal Deadline: September 17, 2021

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INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Great education transforms lives. KIPP, the Knowledge is Power Program, is a non-profit network of 255 college-preparatory public charter schools educating over 100,000 early childhood, elementary, middle, and high school students. KIPP schools are tuition-free, public charter schools open to all students. KIPP schools, KIPP regions, and the KIPP Foundation are united by a common mission, that together with families and communities, we create joyful, academically excellent schools that prepare students with the skills and confidence to pursue the paths they choose—college, career, and beyond—so they can lead fulfilling lives and build a more just world. In alignment with our network-wide mission, we are examining our policies, practices, and results to disrupt inequity at all levels and become an anti-racist organization.

The non-profit KIPP Foundation supports and develops outstanding educators to lead KIPP schools, provides tools, resources, and training for excellent teaching and learning, promotes innovation, and facilitates the exchange of insights and ideas within the KIPP network and with partners, including other charters, districts, colleges and universities, and non-profit organizations across the country. In 2015, a team of KIPP teachers, coaches, leaders, and instructional experts published the first edition of “KIPP Wheatley” (KW), a comprehensive literacy curriculum for grades K–8. Over fifty thousand students, including 85 percent of KIPP regions and 16 other charter management organizations, use the curriculum to help students meet the standards for reading, writing, and language development. KIPP Wheatley aims to build students’ knowledge of the world, instill a love of literacy, develop critical consciousness, promote inclusive classroom communities, and teach students the skills they need to lead fulfilling lives.

For the five years following its initial release, the KIPP Foundation published major annual updates to the curriculum responding to user feedback and research on reading and writing instruction. While each year the Foundation addressed select components of the curriculum’s ***cultural relevance—the extent to and ways in which the curriculum supports student achievement and learning, develops cultural competence, and encourages a socio-political consciousness***—the curriculum is not yet comprehensively culturally relevant.

The ultimate goal of the year ahead is to generate a revision plan for KIPP Wheatley that fortifies the curriculum to be more culturally relevant. To do this, we have identified three workstreams we believe will generate the information we need to complete that goal. The KIPP Foundation is seeking proposals from qualified vendors to lead this curriculum development work, including the three workstreams further detailed in the scope of work.

SCOPE OF WORK

As the largest charter operator in the country, spread over 30 regions, KIPP has a unique opportunity to set a bar in providing a K–8 literacy curriculum that centers and celebrates all students who use it.

We seek the support of a vendor in leading three major workstreams: organizing an advisory group of key stakeholders, developing a culturally relevant vision for the curriculum, and auditing the curriculum to identify the changes necessary to fulfill the vision. The end-goals of these workstreams include:

- A collective of engaged stakeholders, including students, families, teachers, leaders, and KIPP Foundation staff whose input and feedback guides the creation of the vision and curriculum audit,
- A plan for how to assess KIPP Wheatley as a culturally relevant curriculum, and

- An actionable audit report of KIPP Wheatley that identifies changes necessary to fulfill the vision.

The scope of work and expected deliverables for each workstream are described below. Vendors should highlight how they will leverage exemplar practices in K–8 literacy curriculum development, equity, and racial justice in their proposed approach to the overall scope of work. The contract and scope of work deliverables will span from fall 2021 to late spring 2022. This RFP was originally published in June 2021. We are republishing in August 2021 with updated pricing information (page 6). Vendors are welcome to submit proposals for any combination of the three workstreams.

Workstream 1: Organize stakeholders

Historically, our annual revision cycle provided limited user data and feedback that informed revisions. There was strong collective interest from both the network and Foundation to rapidly complete major revisions to the curriculum. The operating budget for the curriculum required changes (expenses) be allocated over the course of multiple fiscal years. Aligning the instructional calendar, curriculum production cycle, and annual/fiscal planning left a very small window during which the Foundation could capture user feedback and data to inform subsequent revisions. The primary collection methods of user feedback included surveys, as well as focus groups and “listening tours” with teachers and leaders. These events spanned from November through January annually, meaning curriculum users had one or two quarters of using the curriculum to inform their feedback. As a result, the curriculum developed with major gaps in understanding from core stakeholders and without comprehensive data from the full school year.

We seek to change that practice this year by forming an advisory group that centers the voices of those closest to the curriculum: students, families, and teachers, as it is our primary goal that students feel seen and celebrated in our curriculum. We also want representation in the advisory group from leaders and Foundation stakeholders. As in all workstreams detailed in this proposal, it is critical to center and amplify Black, Indigenous, and persons of color (BIPOC) voices and experiences in this advisory group. Success for this aspect of the work is that participating contributors state that:

- 1) Participation in this project was a valuable use of their time
- 2) They stand by the vision cultivated in the project, as well as the recommendations resulting from the audit
- 3) They can name multiple instances in which their feedback shaped the decisions and outcomes in the project

In this RFP, we are characterizing this work as an “advisory group,” but we are open to different approaches and welcome vendors to detail alternative pathways for this workstream that serve the goals stated for this aspect of the work. There is no minimum requirement for frequency of advisory group meetings or size of advisory group.

Key Deliverables

- In partnership with the Foundation, building of an engaged advisory group that centers BIPOC student, family, and teacher voices and equitably reflects the student populations of KIPP Wheatley users. The group should also include regional leaders, such as chief academic officers, and KIPP Foundation staff members.
- Development of a work plan that includes roles, processes, and timelines to create and maintain the advisory group
- Ongoing communication with advisory group members
- Facilitation of advisory group meetings
- Organization of deliverable(s) for stakeholder review
- Documentation and synthesis of stakeholder feedback throughout the project, including a “considerations and conclusions” document that details critical suggestions made, the extent to which each suggestion was taken or not, and why (*CKCS Considerations and Conclusions* example linked in appendix)

Workstream 2: Defining how to audit KIPP Wheatley as a culturally relevant curriculum

In workstream 2, the vendor will work with the advisory group to identify how to evaluate KIPP Wheatley as a culturally relevant curriculum. The K–8 Academics team has adopted Gloria Ladson-Billings’ definition of culturally relevant pedagogy, as teaching and learning that equally includes the following three components:

- Academic achievement/student learning

- Cultural competence¹
- Socio-political consciousness

The Foundation has not yet named how this definition comes to life for KIPP Wheatley. For example, common outstanding questions include, “How does the curriculum honor *all* KIPP students in its text list?” and examining how different topics are presented in modules to meet the mandates of this CRP framework. The creation of this plan is a critical primary step before auditing the curriculum as described in workstream 3. To ensure the vision is actionable, part of this workstream will include creating or identifying a rubric or other tool the vendor can use in their audit of the curriculum.

Key Deliverables

- In conjunction with the advisory group, development of a plan for how to audit KIPP Wheatley to identify what needs to change and how that content needs to change to foster student learning, cultural competence, and socio-political consciousness. This plan should cover each grade’s reading, writing, and foundational lessons, module overview documents, and checkpoint and end-of-module assessments. As needed, the plan should incorporate data from the curriculum’s supplementary materials such as the Teacher Resource Guide, text lists, etc.
 - Vendor should be prepared to also document this process in a work plan that indicates who is completing which review tasks by what dates.
- Creation of a (or identification of an existing) rubric or other tool to guide assessing KIPP Wheatley against the vision and to effectively identify exactly where and when the curriculum does and does not meet the vision.

Workstream 3: Auditing KIPP Wheatley

Building from workstreams 1 and 2, the vendor and advisory group will work together to audit KIPP Wheatley (KW) using the vision and accompanying rubric/tools created. This workstream’s goal is to deliver a clear and detailed perspective on recommended revisions to ensure KW is a culturally relevant curriculum for all students, in alignment to the Ladson-Billings’ framework. The results of this audit should be actionable and reflect an understanding of the curriculum’s instructional design and publication process. Note: upon contract commencement, the vendor will meet with the senior manager, product development to gain a fuller understanding of the curriculum’s history, instructional design, and publication process. Depending on the vendor’s needs, KIPP can provide additional support to execute the audit under the guidance of the vendor and dependent on KIPP staff capacity.

Key Deliverables

- Analysis of the curriculum, including KW reading, writing, and foundational lessons, module overviews, text lists, assessments and, as needed, implementation resources, to identify how the curriculum’s instructional design and content align and do not align with the CRP vision as well as identifying the specific changes the content needs to undergo to meet the vision.
- Report of the outcome of the audit detailing opportunities in the curriculum’s overall instructional design, in each grade and module, and, as needed, in curricular support materials (e.g., the [Teacher Resource Guide](#)).
 - Report should identify any opportunities for current KW users to make revisions while they use the published curriculum in addition to longer term revision needs.

¹ See definition of “cultural competence” in Leading for Racial Equity Glossary in the appendix

VENDOR REQUIREMENTS

The KIPP Foundation is seeking an experienced contractor or team that meets the following specifications:

- At least five years of experience in culturally relevant pedagogy and K–8 reading and writing instruction and curriculum development.
- Capacity to and experience in managing remote stakeholders with differing contexts and identities (e.g., students, families, teachers, regional leaders, Foundation employees).
- Demonstrated commitment to furthering racial equity, as evidenced by internal company practices and client recommendation.
- Experience implementing pedagogical practices and K-8 curricula that support equitable outcomes for BIPOC students.
- Dedicated point of contact to work closely with KIPP Foundation’s project manager.
- A diverse (by race and gender) and experienced team. If the vendor applying is an individual contributor, demonstrable experience applying a diverse lens and working across difference.
- Demonstrable understanding of and commitment to the ideals within KIPP’s mission.

RFP PROCESS

Listed below are the scheduled activities related to this RFP.

Activity	Expected Completion Date
Publication of RFP	August 25, 2021
Due date for respondents’ questions	Rolling
Response to questions	Rolling
Proposal due date	September 17, 2021
Finalists notified and invited to final task, if applicable	October 8, 2021
Estimated notification of award	October 2021
Estimated contract start date	October 2021

Responses to questions from respondents will be emailed to respondents. Proposals must be submitted in PDF format only via email to Leeann Booher, Senior Manager, Product Development, lbooher@kipp.org with a CC to procurement@kipp.org. Please include “Your Company Name-Wheatley Development” in the email subject line. No responses will be received after 11:59 pm PT on September 17, 2021.

PROPOSAL ELEMENTS

To ensure all proposals are evaluated in an equivalent manner, Respondents must submit a proposal that contains responses to all the sections below. Proposal formatting should also correspond to the sequence and format outlined below. To allow for a blind review, please do not embed a logo or other identifying insignia in submitted materials. The KIPP Foundation will redact identifying information in pertinent proposal materials to allow the selection committee to complete a blind review.

Each proposal should contain the following information:

1. **Vendor Background and Previous Experiences**
2. **Contact Information**
3. **Organizational and Staff Capability**
4. **Scope of Work**
5. **Expertise**
6. **Pricing**
7. **Client References**
8. **Additional Capabilities (if applicable)**

1. Vendor Background and Previous Experiences

To demonstrate the Respondent’s experience with similar organizations and/or with similar work, include:

- Summary description of organization and its primary offerings
- Experiences in culturally relevant curriculum and K–8 literacy curriculum and instruction (specifically close reading and writing curriculum)
- Relevant experiences in K–8 education sector, particularly with charter management organizations similar to KIPP

2. Contact Information

Primary Contact Name	
Primary Contact Title	
Primary Contact Phone Number	
Primary Contact Email Address	

Vendor Legal Name	
Vendor Address	
Vendor Phone Number	
Vendor Website	
Year Founded	
Number of Clients	
Number of Employees	

3. Organizational and Staff Capability

To demonstrate how the Respondent will manage, supervise, and execute the work, include:

- Description of experience and qualifications (i.e., resumes) of all key personnel expected to be staffed on the project. Key personnel are defined as any staff member who will be working on or providing oversight on the project. For all key personnel, describe planned level of effort, anticipated duration of involvement, ethnicity, gender, and tenure with vendor.
- Description of management and reporting relationships. Provide detailed organizational chart and project staffing model.
- Description of how the Respondent will project manage the workstreams to keep the KIPP Foundation project team engaged and updated on work throughout the project.

4. Scope of Work

To demonstrate how the Respondent will effectively perform the services specified in this RFP, include:

- Description of how the Respondent will provide all aspects of each workstream as specified; include detailed plan listing out all major activities and deliverables and description of exemplar practices in equity and racial justice that will be leveraged.
- Explanation of each major activity planned and how the expected output(s) will inform the final work product and deliverable.
- Estimated timeframe (e.g., number of days, number weeks, etc.) estimated for each major activity planned. See Appendix for details on curriculum’s contents and size.
- A proposed high-level project plan that includes the current requirements specified in this RFP.
- Description of the research base that informs your approach to high-quality culturally relevant literacy curriculum.

5. Expertise

To demonstrate the Respondent’s expertise in the workstreams specified in this RFP, include:

- For general approach to the Scope of Work
 - Sample work products that centered diversity, equity, and CRP as the focus of literacy curriculum design or production
 - Examples of how the Respondent’s approach to the RFP scope of work is grounded in exemplar practices in equity and racial justice and backed by research in literacy instruction
 - Description of the Respondent’s philosophy/approach to culturally relevant curriculum and diversity, equity, and inclusion work
- For Workstream 1: Stakeholder Organization
 - Sample work products or examples from other clients demonstrating capability and expertise
 - Description of the proposed approach to stakeholder engagement – the advisory group or an alternate suggested approach (e.g., who are the relevant stakeholders, how they will be engaged, etc.)
 - Description of potential factors to consider when engaging stakeholder groups, especially those that include a K–8 student population
- For Workstream 2: Audit approach
 - Sample work products from other clients demonstrating capability and expertise (e.g., curriculum and pedagogy mission and vision, criteria for success for K-8 curricula)
 - Description of potential factors to consider when auditing a curriculum’s cultural relevance
- For Workstream 3: KIPP Wheatley Audit
 - Sample approach for curriculum audit
 - Examples from similar work for other clients on assessing the strengths and opportunities in their existing curricula

6. Pricing

Respondents must provide a detailed proposal and cost breakdown by project workstream, including the number of FTEs staffed, the proposed staffing levels of the team members, and the estimated hours and price breakdown for each major activity. The maximum budget KIPP Foundation has for this proposal is \$210,000.

7. References

List three client references to which the Respondent has provided curriculum development consulting or culturally relevant pedagogy/curriculum consulting services within the past five (5) years, preferably in the K–8 education sector.

Reference Information

Name of Company	
Company Address	
Contact Name	
Contact Title	
Contact Phone Number	
Contact Email Address	
Brief Description of Services Provided	
Dates of Service	

8. Additional Capabilities

If applicable, include a description of any other resources to be provided by the Respondent that would enhance the Respondent’s ability to carry out the services (e.g., additional services, deliverable quality assurances, etc.)

EVALUATION CRITERIA AND METHOD

The weighted criteria listed below will be considered in evaluating proposals.

Criteria	Maximum Points
Vendor Capacity and Approach	30
Prior Experience	30
Price	25
Reputation and References	15
Total	100

- **Vendor Capacity and Approach:** Respondent has the staffing and resources necessary to complete the services required and outlines a plan to deliver high-quality work products that meet the full scope of work and leverage exemplar practices in equity and racial justice.
- **Prior Experience:** Respondent provides resumes for key staff and documentation, e.g., work samples, client testimonials, etc. that verifies expertise in successfully implementing similar work with clients like KIPP.
- **Price:** Respondent offers the requested services at a competitive price and all necessary factors that contribute to the price are accounted for.
- **Reputation and References:** Respondent has a demonstrated track record of success in performing the requested services and/or in the industry and provides positive references.

The KIPP Foundation review committee seeks to evaluate each vendor’s capacity and approach, prior experience, and price through a blind review, meaning the vendor’s name will be redacted from proposal materials relating to these criteria. The vendor reputation and references will be evaluated separately and will include identifying information about the vendor.

APPENDIX

- [About the KIPP Foundation](#)
- [KIPP's Structure](#)
- [List of Regions](#)
- [CKCS Curriculum Considerations and Conclusions sample](#)
- [KIPP Leading for Racial Equity Glossary](#)

KW by the numbers:

Curriculum excerpts available upon request

- 9 grades
- 4 modules
- 36 module overviews
- ~160 anchor texts and ~200 supplemental texts
- 2,186 reading and writing lessons
- 72 foundational lessons
- 72 reading checkpoint assessments
- 36 writing checkpoint assessments
- 36 end-of-module assessments

KW Implementation support materials:

Although not central to the audit, these materials will be referenced as needed

- Module internalization guide
- Reading and writing lesson internalization guides
- Teacher's Resource Guide
- Close Reading Rubric
- Writing rubrics (for each grade in each genre of writing, student- and teacher-versions)
- Reading lesson data-driven instruction protocol
- Scope and sequence of standards
- Supplemental text lists