

**Early-Phase Competition Absolute Priority 4 (SEL)  
President and Fellows of Harvard College  
S411C220046**

**Kernels of Practice for Social Emotional Learning in Afterschool Settings**

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Applicant Name: President and Fellows of Harvard College

Project Title: Kernels of Practice for Social Emotional Learning in Afterschool Settings

Type of Grant Requested: (select one)  Early-Phase

Absolute Priorities the Project Addresses:

Absolute Priority 1—Demonstrate a Rationale (Early), Moderate (Mid), Strong (Expansion)

Absolute Priority 4-- Field-Initiated Innovations—Meeting Student Social, Emotional, and Academic Needs

Competitive Preference Priorities the Project Addresses:

Competitive Preference Priority 1—Promoting Equity in Student Access to Educational Resources and Opportunities

Competitive Preference Priority 2-- Addressing the Impact of COVID-19 on Students, Educators, and Faculty

Total number of students to be served by the project: ~8,000

Grade level(s) to be served by the project: Kindergarten, First Grade, Second Grade

Your definition of high-need students: Students living in poverty, students of color, students with special needs, English language learners, and students exposed to chronic stress or trauma.

Brief description of proposed project, including project activities: We will: (a) partner with afterschool staff in a small number of Nebraska 21st Century Community Learning Centers (CCLCs) to design low-cost, flexible, evidence-based strategies for social emotional learning (called "SEL Kernels") and related implementation supports for afterschool settings; (b) implement and evaluate SEL Kernels in 90 CCLC sites across Nebraska; and (c) make available the final set of SEL Kernels materials and project results for broad distribution.

Summary of project objectives and expected outcomes: Improve the social, emotional, behavioral, wellbeing, and learning supports available to high-needs students in afterschool programs, and observe gains in child, adult, and setting-level outcomes at multiple points across the two-year implementation and evaluation period.

Describe how the proposed project is innovative: SEL Kernels represent a new approach to SEL designed for a variety of learning settings including OST that is flexible, low-cost, strategy-based, and targeted to discrete SEL skills. This kind of approach is badly needed as children face ongoing mental and emotional challenges tied to the pandemic and as schools face opposition to social-emotional learning curricula.

Identify other studies and/practice related to the proposed project: There are many studies (including correlational, randomized control trials, and meta-analyses) of social-emotional learning interventions, primarily focused on school-based curricula. In addition, a great number of school districts around the country currently implement social and emotional learning curricula, although implementation challenges are a substantial barrier to impact.

Proposed implementation sites: 90 Nebraska 21st Century Community Learning Centers

List all organizations partnering with this project: EASEL Lab at Harvard, Abt Associates, Nebraska 21st CCLCs, Nebraska DOE, and University of Nebraska Medical Center Munroe-Meyer Institute.