

MKE Roots: The Democratizing Local History Project

Marquette University - Center for Urban Research, Teaching, & Outreach

American History & Civics Education National Activities Program Application from (1) Institution of Higher Education

- With support from Milwaukee Public Schools (LEA), Wauwatosa Public Schools (LEA), Vel Phillips Juvenile Justice Center School (LEA), St Joan Antida High School (LEA), & America's Black Holocaust Museum (nonprofit)

Project Proposal:

MKE Roots will develop and implement resources – termed a pedagogical ecosystem - to teach place-based, inquiry-centered history of Milwaukee's communities, with an emphasis on communities of color. With teachers recruited from area schools, this three-year project will improve the quality of teaching and learning of history and civics in the Milwaukee area by:

- (1) Offering place-based professional development to area teachers through the MKE Roots Summer Institute;
- (2) Curating place-based curricular materials on local history that will be freely accessible to all Milwaukee area schools;
- (3) Cultivating the MKE Roots Community of Practice among local educators to deepen content knowledge, collaborating on K12 course design, and practicing innovative instructional methods.

Grant Priorities:

While *MKE Roots* focuses on teacher learning, we propose that student learning and engagement will ultimately be transformed by teachers who are better able to engage in culturally and contextually relevant teaching. Our pedagogical ecosystem marries local history content with research-based, innovative pedagogies that engage young people in civic learning through their social studies curriculum. By focusing on both innovative civic education *and* the underserved students of MPS, **MKE Roots addresses both competitive preference priorities.**

Project Reach:

Milwaukee Public Schools serves approximately 71,000 students, who are predominantly low-income (86.5%) and students of color (90.1%). In Milwaukee County overall, there are roughly 156,000 school-age children. Our work will directly impact 25 teachers annually in our summer institute; the community of practice will potentially reach 100+ teachers/10,000 students by 2026; and America's Black Holocaust Museum serves approximately 7,000 students annually. Our curriculum will be freely available to all schools in Milwaukee.