

PROJECT ABSTRACT: DESIGN2LEARN: The After-School Corporation (TASC) is responding to the U.S. Department of Education’s Investing in Innovation Fund (i3) to launch Design2Learn, a development grant project under Absolute Priority 2—Improving Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Education. Design2Learn will demonstrate that a replicable science intervention that features a combination of: 1) collaborative teaching; 2) curricular bridging; and 3) design-based learning delivered in out-of-school time will positively impact student interest, engagement and academic performance in science in middle school, a period during which student performance in science sharply declines.

Design2Learn will serve 15 schools from the highest-need districts in New York City that serve a disproportionate number of minority students traditionally underrepresented in the sciences (i.e. black and Hispanic students, students with disabilities and English Language Learners). The project will serve a cohort of 300 students per year for three years (6th – 8th grade). Students will participate in weekly, design-based science instruction during the after-school hours. Instruction will be jointly facilitated by a three-person educator team (one certified teacher; two informal educators) and designed to connect science learning goals to real-world activities.

The short-term project goals are to: (1) improve students’ academic achievement in science; and (2) increase students’ level of interest and engagement in science. The long-term project goal is to equip high-need students with the science skills and sustained interest to compete for and succeed in 21st century jobs. The project will engage the following partners: the New York City Department of Education (LEA), the New York Hall of Science (science-rich institution) and the Research Alliance for NYC Schools (evaluator).