

TWIN CITIES PUBLIC TELEVISION ED ABSTRACT NARRATIVE

Project Title: Superhero School: Harnessing the Power of Science, Literacy, and Media

Superhero School uses the power of narrative storytelling and interactive media, across multiple platforms, to engage the target audience (children ages 5 to 8 from low-income families) in building key science content and thinking skills, learning related academic vocabulary, improving their reading and writing abilities, and gaining experience using new technology. Television, games, and print materials will be provided in English and Spanish to support children with limited English proficiency. *Superhero School* will reach low-income communities through TPT's extensive, well-established partnerships with schools as well as organizations focused on informal learning, including libraries, science museums, out-of-school time programs, Hispanic-serving organizations, and PBS member stations.

The project will build on evidence-based research on the most effective uses of television and interactive media to significantly improve educational outcomes and narrow achievement gaps; create innovative approaches and uses of new technology to maximize engagement and learning; and use formative research as well as embedded analytics and assessments for continuous review and improvement of all project components. An independent agency will conduct both summative and formative evaluation.

The proposed project meets the purpose of the RTL program by facilitating school readiness among the target audience by: (1) developing and nationally distributing 40 episodes of educational television along with a suite of 24 interactive games, half of which will be developed as apps, for children and parents; (2) developing and broadly disseminating outreach materials and programs, including blended professional development training and a range of activities and events that extend the reach and effectiveness of the television series and interactive media; and (3) establishing an extensive community nationwide—in person, online, and through social media—of educators, parents, and children devoted to supporting academic achievement through the television, interactive, and outreach resources.

Invitational Priorities Addressed:

- 1: Focus on science (scientific thinking and skill development) and literacy (reading, writing, speaking, listening, and vocabulary)
- 2: Educational television and accessible interactive media that use analytics and embedded assessments

Project Goal: Improve the school readiness and academic achievement of children ages 5 to 8 living in low-income households in science knowledge (earth and space science, life science, physical science, engineering design), scientific thinking, and literacy.

Expected Outcomes:

- More children will participate in media-enhanced formal and informal science and literacy education opportunities.
- More children will demonstrate measurable increases in science knowledge and literacy fluency.
- An increased number of parents/caregivers will value and support science learning and literacy opportunities for their children.
- An increased number of underserved children from minority and immigrant populations will engage in science and literacy opportunities.
- An increased number of educational organizations will offer science and literacy content across multiple media platforms.
- An increased number of formal and informal educators will be trained in best practices around science, literacy, and cultural competency.