University of Illinois at Chicago
Learning Sciences Research Institute

October 24, 2014

Dear Collaborative Lead,

The National Girls Collaborative Project and the CryptoClub Project from the University of Illinois at Chicago are seeking Collaboratives to participate as CryptoClub hubsites, pending funding from the National Science Foundation. CryptoClub developers will train hubsite staff to train CryptoClub program leaders. Collaborative hubs will recruit, train, and support programs in their regions to use the CryptoClub curriculum in middle-grade afterschool programs.

About CryptoClub

Cryptography, the science of secret messages is an intriguing STEM topic and an important application of mathematics. The CryptoClub Project develops materials to teach cryptography and mathematics. The CryptoClub Afterschool Curriculum was developed with NSF support and has been nationally field-tested.

A typical CryptoClub afterschool program lasts about 16-20 sessions and uses games, treasure hunts, and other informal activities to engage students in cryptography and mathematics. It applies topics from the middle-school curriculum, such as decimals and percents, division with remainder, common factors, negative numbers and pattern recognition. It also includes computer cryptography games and activities from the CryptoClub website, CryptoClub.org.

Commitments.

This 5-year project will train a new cohort of hubsites each year. Collaboratives will be asked to commit to participate for two years, with the first Cohort beginning in the spring of 2016. Participation will involve the following:

- Recruit a minimum of 20 programs per year from your collaborative for at least two years (40 programs total, with a minimum 10 students per program).
- Send two collaborative members to a 3-day trainer-training in Chicago in the spring of the cohort's first year (travel will be reimbursed).
- Train program leaders during the summer following the Chicago training. Leader trainings last about 2 ½ days, which can be scheduled to match the hubsites' typical program scheduling.
- Provide support to CryptoClub programs beginning in the fall following training. First year clubs may continue in the second year, however at least 40 clubs should participate over the two-year period.
- Participate in monthly webinars hosted by the CryptoClub developers for hubsites and leaders.
- Participate in evaluation activities.

Materials and Expenses

- Travel will be paid for hubsite trainers to attend the Chicago training.
- A stipend of about $3000 will be paid to hubsites for participation.
- The cost of Leader Materials is approximately $50 per leader.
- A student book is needed for each student participant, however published book prices are not available at this time.
- Leader trainings should have access to computers. Students in CryptoClub programs should have access to computers for at least one fourth of the sessions.

Trainer/leader Qualifications

- CryptoClub leader-trainers should be comfortable teaching mathematics at the high school level. No prior cryptography knowledge is required.
- CryptoClub program leaders should be comfortable with mathematics at the middle-grade level and believe that working with secret messages can be fun. They do not need to be math teachers.

Procedure to indicate interest:

We would like to know of your project's interest at this time, so we can document this interest in our proposal for NSF funding. Applications and assignments of Collaboratives to cohorts will take place after funding is approved. Final commitment will be requested in the year prior to the start of your project's cohort.

At this time, we are requesting letters of interest from Collaboratives. If you are interested in being a CryptoClub hubsite, please do the following:
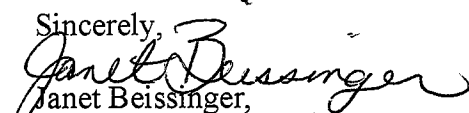
- By **Friday, October 31, 2014:** Send an e-mail message to Karen Petersen (kpeterson@edlabgroup.org), from the National Girls Collaborative, saying that your organization would like to participate. You will be sent a template for a letter of interest.
- By **Wednesday, November 3, 2014**: Email the letter of interest to Janet Beissinger (beissing@uic.edu). Please copy Karen Petersen (kpeterson@edlabgroup.org) from NGCP when you send this letter.

For questions about the CryptoClub Project, contact one of the CryptoClub developers, Janet Beissinger (beissing@uic.edu) or Bonnie Saunders (saunders@uic.edu).

You may also find additional information, including documents "Mathematics in CryptoClub" and "CryptoClub Connections to CCSSM" on our project website, www.math.uic.edu/CryptoClubProject.

For information about signing up to be a hubsite, contact Karen Petersen (kpeterson@edlabgroup.org) at NBCP.

Sincerely,

Janet Beissinger,
Director, CryptoClub Project