CATHLEEN STONE ISLAND
OUTWARD BOUND SCHOOL

November 3, 2025

Dear Prospective Applicant,

Cathleen Stone Island Outward Bound School (CSIOBS), in collaboration with the Stone Living Lab (SLL), warmly invites qualified individuals, educational institutions, and organizations to submit proposals for the development of an Outdoor Education and the Natural World: **An Enhanced Climate Resiliency Learning Sequence for 7th - 9th grade Students on Boston Harbor Island**. This initiative presents a valuable opportunity to forge a meaningful connection between classroom education and the vibrant, real-world environment of the Boston Harbor Islands—where science, history, and culture intertwine to highlight the challenges and opportunities presented by a changing climate. The deadline for proposals is December 22, 2025 by or before 5pm.

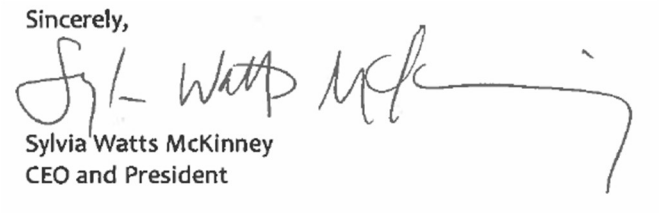
For over fifty years, CSIOBS has proudly served as a valued partner of Boston Public Schools, offering impactful educational experiences deeply rooted in **Outward Bound's experiential learning model**. Our programs emphasize the development of character, resilience, and environmental stewardship, empowering students to recognize their potential as leaders and stewards of their communities. In partnership with the Stone Living Lab, we are excited to expand our mission through a multi-year, place-based curriculum designed to enhance climate literacy, civic engagement, and innovation among Boston's youth.

The Outdoor Education and Natural World Learning Sequence is designed to utilize the distinctive ecological, cultural, and historical context of Cathleen Stone Island (CSI) and the Boston Harbor Islands as interactive learning environments. **By engaging in hands-on investigations, technological explorations, and community partnerships, students will cultivate the essential skills and insights needed to effectively address and adapt to the challenges posed by coastal change.** This curriculum aims to align with both Massachusetts and national science standards, while promoting equity, accessibility, and inclusion for Boston's diverse student population.

CSIOBS and SLL are seeking a creative and experienced partner to collaborate on designing a curriculum that is both rigorous and aligned with standards, while also fostering deep engagement. We value your expertise in curriculum development, climate education, and place-based pedagogy, as well as your demonstrated ability to work collaboratively with educators, scientists, and community stakeholders. Together, we aim to advance our shared mission, and we eagerly anticipate your innovative proposals that embody our commitment to collaboration, cultural respect, and environmental justice.
We are looking forward to the opportunity to review insightful and innovative proposals that contribute to realizing this vision. Together, we can empower the next generation of Boston students with the knowledge, curiosity, and resilience necessary to foster a more sustainable and equitable future.

We sincerely appreciate your interest in this important endeavor and your commitment to promoting climate education for everyone. Your dedication to this cause is truly valued, and we are eager to explore the potential of collaborating to create a more sustainable and equitable future. For more information, please see the contact information below.

Sincerely,



Sylvia Watts McKinney
CEO and President

Outdoor Education and the Natural World: An Enhanced Climate Resiliency Learning Sequence for 7th - 9th grade students on Boston Harbor Island

Deadline: Friday, December 22, 2025 at 5 pm

CSIOBS Contacts:
The designated individuals responsible for the coordination of the RFP are:

Joey Pellegrino – jpellegrino@cathleenstoneisland.org
Vice President of Climate Resiliency, Entrepreneurship, and Programming
617.830.5138

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Chief of Staff
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Cathleen Stone Island Outward Bound School
P.O. Box 127
Boston, MA 02127

All costs incurred in preparing and presenting the RFP should be entirely absorbed by the responding party. All documents submitted as part of this RFP will become the property of CSIOBS. Any materials submitted that are confidential must be marked as such.

Request for Proposals (RFP)

Outdoor Education and the Natural World: An Enhanced Climate Resiliency Learning Sequence for 7th - 9th grade students on Boston Harbor Island

Cathleen Stone Island Outward Bound School (CSIOBS), in collaboration with the Stone Living Lab (SLL), warmly invites qualified individuals, educational institutions, and organizations to submit proposals for the development of **an enhanced Climate Resiliency learning sequence for 7th - 9th grade students on Boston Harbor Island**. This initiative presents a valuable opportunity to forge a meaningful connection between classroom education and the vibrant, real-world environment of the Boston Harbor Islands—where science, history, and culture intertwine to highlight the challenges and opportunities presented by a changing climate. The deadline for proposals is December 22nd, 2025 by or before 5pm.

Mission of Cathleen Stone Island Outward Bound School (CSIOBS)

CSIOBS provides transformative educational experiences that build character, resilience, and environmental stewardship based in the **Outward Bound's Theory of Change and Domains of Thriving framework**. Our partnership with Boston Public School (BPS) students reflects our core belief that all young people, regardless of background or circumstance, deserve access to high-quality, experiential learning opportunities that connect them to their local environment and empower them as agents of positive change in their communities.

Our relationship with Boston Public Schools spans over 50 years.

Mission of Stone Living Lab

The Stone Living Lab (SLL) is a partnership between Boston Harbor Now, UMass Boston's School for the Environment, the City of Boston, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, and the National Park Service that engages scientists and the community in research, education, and the promotion of equity.

Project Funding: $75,000 - $150,000 inclusive of all subcontractors. Awardee should reserve funding for consulting during pilot year.

Project Overview

Every day, the greater Boston area experiences the impacts of climate change—from stronger storms and sea level rise to coastal erosion and flooding. The Boston Harbor Islands

provide a unique location where students can see these changes firsthand and explore solutions rooted in both science and culture.

CSIOBS, in conjunction with SLL, will seek proposals to develop a series of climate education lesson plans for school students (7^{th} – 9^{th} grades) based on SLL's Nature-based Approaches focusing on the Boston Harbor islands as the focus for place-based learning.

This curriculum will combine a sustained knowledge and relationship with hands-on fieldwork, data analysis, technological tools, and diverse cultural perspectives to help students understand climate science, ecosystem dynamics, and environmental justice issues. A key goal of the program is the exploration of the role students and teachers can play in understanding human and ecological interactions and using their knowledge to effect ecological resilience within their own communities.

Multi-Year Learning Progression: This curriculum is designed as part of a three-year learning sequence:

- **7th Grade:** Foundational CSIOBS experience focusing on personal growth (Self) and environmental awareness
- **8th Grade:** Continued CSIOBS Pedagogy focusing on team building and perseverance (Others), Introduction to climate change science, coastal dynamics, and environmental stewardship through place-based learning
- **9th Grade:** Finalizing CSIOBS Pedagogy through social responsibility (Commitment to Natural World), Advanced STEM applications, climate resiliency solutions, and community action projects

Through a sequence of pre-visit classroom lessons, immersive field experiences, and pre- and post-visit reflection and action, the curriculum will empower students to become informed, engaged, and resilient stewards of their environment while meeting comprehensive state science standards. This curriculum will align with state (OpenSciEd) curriculum, Massachusetts 2016 Science and Technology/Engineering (STE) Curriculum Framework, national science standards while encouraging inquiry, critical thinking, and stewardship.

Invitation to Submit

CSIOBS invites proposals from qualified educators, curriculum developers, and organizations to design and deliver an enhanced Climate Resiliency learning sequence for

7th - 9th grade students on Boston Harbor Island. Preference will be given to applicants with demonstrated experience developing curricula specifically for BPS and similar districts in the Northeast. The program will use the unique ecological, cultural, and historical setting of Cathleen Stone Island (CSI) as a living classroom for place-based learning, helping students connect scientific knowledge to real-world environmental challenges and solutions.

Background

The Boston Harbor Islands National and State Park provide a unique environment for exploring the impacts of climate change, including rising sea levels, coastal erosion, shifting ecosystems, their underlying causes, and the ecological histories of human interaction with the harbor. Students benefit from experiential, hands-on, and locally relevant education that builds both scientific understanding, social responsibility, and environmental responsibility.

Project Goals

The proposed curriculum should include (but not be limited to):

- Build students understanding of human impacts on earth systems, climate change science, coastal dynamics, environmental stewardship, and climate resiliency with a focus on coastal and island ecosystems
- Support comprehensive STEM learning objectives aligned with Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Standards, including:
    - Earth and Space Sciences (climate systems, oceanography, geology)
    - Life Science (ecosystem interactions, biodiversity, adaptation)
    - Engineering Design (nature-based approaches, sustainable technologies)
    - Physical Science (energy transfer, chemical processes in natural systems)
- Utilize place-based learning that incorporates lessons from both STEM disciplines and **Outward Bound learning framework** to consider the climate-related challenges facing CSI and other Boston Harbor islands
- Support hands-on activities (fieldwork, data collection through technology, observation, problem-solving exercises, engineering challenges)
- Promote the development of student's connection with place

- Integrate STEM learning with social and civic dimensions of climate resiliency and environmental justice
- Foster students' sense of agency, inspiring them to act on climate-related issues in their communities and to pursue climate innovation strategies
- Create meaningful connections between 7th, 8th and 9th grade experiences, building on foundational Outward Bound skills
- Align with Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Standards and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)
- Meet the diverse learning needs of Boston Public School students

Scope of Work and Project Scale

Expected Scale

- Curriculum designed to serve primarily serve BPS students annually across multiple schools
- Programming to accommodate 12 - 15 students per pod per field experience reaching a total of 2,000 – 3,000 students every school year. It should be able to be adapted to 2 – 10 pods of students per school visit.
- Curriculum adaptable for both single-day and multi-day experiences over a multi-year progression

Delivery Model

CSIOBS' staff will deliver the curriculum in collaboration with BPS educators. The selected awardee will work closely with our curriculum committee, which includes staff and board members. Staff from UMass Boston, Stone Living Lab, and Boston Harbor Now will participate to ensure seamless integration in the development and implementation of the curriculum. The contractor will be expected to provide appropriate training and an implementation plan that will be woven into the education of climate resiliency programs. It is intended that the success of this program will be replicated with other school districts.

Settings and Locations

- Pre-visit lessons: BPS classrooms
- Field experiences: CSI and other accessible Boston Harbor Islands

- Post-visit activities: BPS classrooms and potentially community settings

Responsibilities of Selected Applicants

Curriculum Development

- Conduct a comprehensive review of existing STEM and climate education curricula that could potentially be adapted to our island-based, place-based learning environment. Awardee would be expected to come to Cathleen Stone Island to observe current programming conditions and land use
- In your proposal, identify 3-5 existing complete plans of study (curricula) and provide analysis of their potential for adaptation versus the need for original development
- Create a modular curriculum (7–9 lessons per grade level) for 7th, 8th and 9th grades, adaptable for one-day or multi-day learning experiences
- Design curriculum to build progressively on 7th, 8th and 9th grade Outward Bound foundations (teamwork, environmental awareness, personal resilience)
- Include assessment resources to extend learning
- Provide comprehensive teacher guides, student materials, and assessment strategies aligned with state standards
- Ensure curriculum accommodates multilingual learners, students with disabilities, varying technology access levels, and meets ADA accessibility requirements

Implementation Strategy Plan

- Collaborate with CSIOBS staff, educators, park personnel, and program facilitators for pilot testing
- Develop and deliver a comprehensive professional development and training program for teachers and island educators
- Identify current staffing resources, create a staffing plan, and include an onboarding program for new staff, consultants, coaches, and volunteers who will implement the curriculum
- Deliver a timeline for initial program while identifying additional resources for long term staffing support and support of program partners

Partnership Facilitation

- Consult with Stone Living Lab on Nature based Approaches (NBA) being proposed on island and tying them into curriculum framework (CSIOBS will facilitate initial introductions)
- Consult with UMass Boston School of the Environment on lesson development, workforce development, and career pathways
- Coordinate with Boston Harbor Islands National and State Park staff (connections will be facilitated by our organization)
- Engage with BPS educators and administrators (our team will provide initial contacts and ongoing liaison support)
- Coordinate with CSIOBS' Program Manager, School Programs and Curriculum to ensure proper implementation into programming (our team will provide initial contact and ongoing liaison support)

Evaluation and Assessment

- Evaluate current tools and develop comprehensive tools to assess student learning, engagement, and impact that compliment inventory
- Create evaluation frameworks for teacher satisfaction and program scalability
- Provide strategies for continuous improvement and program expansion
- Establish baseline measures and success metrics in collaboration with our team

Equity, Accessibility, and Student Needs

BPS Student Population Considerations: Boston Public Schools serves a diverse student body with significant populations of:

- Multilingual learners requiring curriculum materials in multiple languages and scaffolded language support
- Students with disabilities needing differentiated instruction and accessible materials
- Students with limited technology access requiring low-tech alternatives and offline resources
- Students from communities disproportionately affected by climate change, bringing valuable lived experiences to discussions

Accessibility Requirements: All curriculum materials and field experiences must comply with ADA requirements and provide multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression following Universal Design for Learning principles.

Resources and Standards Alignment

Available Resources:

- Stone Living Lab's Nature-based Approaches (NbA) toolbox: [Link to be provided upon award]
- Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Standards: [massachusetts.gov/info-details/massachusetts-science-and-technology-engineering-standards]
- Boston Public Schools curriculum frameworks and pacing guides: [Link to be provided upon award]
- Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS): [nextgenscience.org]
- OpenSciEd Curriculum: [https://openscied.org/]

Standards Alignment: Curriculum must demonstrate clear alignment with state and district standards, with specific attention to BPS pacing guides and assessment requirements.

Proposal Requirements

Proposal Format: Maximum 19 pages (excluding appendices), 12-point font, single-spaced

Proposals should include:

1. Organization/Individual Overview (2 pages max): Qualifications, relevant experience, capacity, and specific experience with BPS curriculum development
2. Existing Curriculum Review (2 pages max): Analysis of 3-5 existing STEM/climate education curricula, assessment of their adaptability to island-based place-based learning, and recommendation on adaptation versus original development approach
3. Curriculum Approach (4 pages max): Instructional design for 7th, 8th and 9th grade sequences, lesson themes, student activities, connections to comprehensive state science standards, differentiation strategies, and integration with **Outward Bound pedagogy**.

4. Partnership and Collaboration Plan (2 pages max): Approach to working with our curriculum committee, Indigenous partners, park staff, and BPS educators
5. Timeline (1 page): Development phases, pilot testing, revisions, and final delivery milestones
6. Implementation Plan (2 pages max): Identification of resources to deliver as well as detailed continuing education training and onboarding approach for educators and staff
7. Equity and Inclusion Strategy (2 pages max): Specific approaches for engaging diverse learners and ensuring accessible, culturally responsive experiences
8. Evaluation Plan (1 page max): Assessment tools, success metrics, and continuous improvement strategies
9. References (2 - 3 page): At least three examples of prior work in curriculum development, climate education, place-based learning, and/ or BPS partnerships. This should include writing samples of previous curriculum and highlight an exceptional ability to collaborate effectively with various stakeholders including committees comprised of CSIOBS' Board of Trustees and Advisor members, CSIOBS staff, and external partners.
10. Budget Proposal: Comprehensive cost proposal including all fees, personnel, materials, transportation, and overhead expenses. ***Please submit costs as a separate addendum to the proposal.***
11. Financial Qualifications: Proposers must include a statement of financial qualifications demonstrating sufficient resources and capacity to successfully complete the scope of work. This should confirm the organization's financial stability and ability to manage the contract requirements effectively. ***Please include financial qualifications as a separate addendum in the proposal.***

Deliverables

Format Requirements: All materials must be provided in both digital (editable formats) and print-ready versions. Digital materials should be compatible with common Learning Management Systems.

Required Deliverables:

- Draft curriculum package (for review and pilot testing)

- Final curriculum package with comprehensive student and teacher materials
- Professional development session plans and materials
- Staff onboarding and training resources
- Evaluation tools and assessment rubrics
- Final project report with recommendations for scaling and continuous improvement

Success Metrics

Student Outcomes

- Demonstrated understanding of comprehensive STEM concepts (climate science, ecosystem dynamics, engineering design, environmental stewardship) through pre/post assessments
- Successful progression from 7th to 8th to 9th grade learning objectives
- Increased environmental stewardship attitudes and behaviors
- Enhanced sense of agency and community connection
- Meeting state science standards benchmarks

Program Success

- Teacher satisfaction scores of 85% or higher
- Curriculum adoption by additional BPS schools
- Positive feedback from students, teachers, and families
- Successful integration with existing school schedules and requirements

Timeline

- **RFP Release:** November 3, 2025
- **Deadline for Questions/Clarification of RFP:** November 24, 2025
- **Responses to Questions and other materials will be emailed:** December 5, 2025

- **Proposal Submission Deadline:** December 22, 2025
- **Interviews Conducted for Finalists:** January 5 - January 9, 2026
- **Selection of Awardee:** January 19, 2026
- **Project Start:** February 2, 2026 (or earlier)
- **Pilot Curriculum Due:** July 2026
- **Final Curriculum Delivery:** August 2026

Proprietary and Intellectual Rights

All information contained in this RFP is proprietary and confidential to CSIOBS. By receiving this RFP, the recipient agrees that the information contained herein is to be used solely for the purpose of developing a response to this RFP. The information may not be disclosed to any other party without the prior written consent of CSIOBS. The recipient shall not use this information for any other purpose or in any way that would be detrimental to CSIOBS. All material deemed confidential must be clearly marked to protect sensitive information. All copies of this RFP and any information derived from it must be returned or destroyed upon request.

Intellectual Property: Cathleen Stone Island Outward Bound School and UMass Boston will retain full ownership of all developed curriculum materials

This project is funded by a generous grant from the Stone Living Lab and the James M. and Cathleen D. Stone Foundation.

Appendix A: Proposal Evaluation Rubric

Proposal Evaluation and Scoring: Each firm must provide a narrative response addressing the following requirements. We have listed the highest score that each proposal can receive in each category.

Curriculum Design & Alignment (30 points)
Proposals will be evaluated on the quality, coherence, and innovation of the proposed curriculum design and its alignment with the stated goals of this RFP. Reviewers will assess the proposer's ability to design an engaging, inquiry-based, and standards-aligned curriculum that integrates **Outward Bound pedagogy**, place-based learning on the Boston Harbor Islands, and Stone Living Lab's Nature-based Approaches. Proposals should demonstrate clear alignment with Massachusetts Science and Technology/Engineering Standards, Boston Public Schools curriculum frameworks, and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS).

Strong submissions will show a thoughtful, multi-year learning progression across grades 7–9 and the inclusion of equitable, accessible, and differentiated learning strategies for diverse learners. Evaluation will also consider the effectiveness of proposed teacher materials, student activities, assessment tools, and the curriculum's capacity to foster climate literacy, environmental stewardship, and student agency.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Statement (20 points)

Please provide information on your company's approach to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB). If you do not have a statement or plan regarding DEIB, please provide an overview of how you strive to implement and promote these values within your organization and who leads this initiative within your company.

Additionally, please provide information on any partnerships your company may include in this proposal, including whether these partners are women- and/or minority-owned companies. If you plan to engage these companies as subcontractors, we kindly request that you provide essential information regarding these partners.

Professional Development, Implementation Support, and Evaluation (20 points)

Proposals will be evaluated on the quality and feasibility of their professional development plans, implementation strategies, and evaluation frameworks. Strong proposals will include

a comprehensive approach to training CSIOBS' Program staff to deliver the curriculum. Reviewers will assess the clarity of implementation timelines, staffing support, and the extent to which professional development promotes long-term capacity building among program staff. Proposals should also include robust evaluation and feedback mechanisms to assess student learning, teacher satisfaction, and program impact, as well as strategies for iterative improvement and scalability. Preference will be given to proposals that demonstrate a clear plan for continuous learning, adaptation based on pilot outcomes, and sustained integration of climate change science and coastal dynamics across multiple school years.

Scalability of Curriculum (20 points)

Proposals will be evaluated thoroughly based on the scalability of the curriculum across all Boston Public Schools serving students in grades 7 through 9. We also encourage you to explore how this curriculum can be adapted to meet the needs of other public school systems throughout Massachusetts, thereby positively impacting a wider range of students. Additionally, please explain how artificial intelligence (AI) can be utilized to help students learn to use these tools effectively and ethically.

Bonus Points (10 points):

Each committee member will have the opportunity to add up to 10 additional points to any one of the above areas of evaluation. In the event of a tie, the committee will review and score a second time. If a tie still occurs, the CEO and President of Cathleen Stone Island Outward Bound School will make the final decision.