Sonoma County Imagination Chapters
Application

Background on Imagination Chapters

In 2012, the short film Caine’s Arcade charmed the world with its message of creativity, handwork, perseverance and community. The film sparked a global movement and launched the Imagination Foundation, a nonprofit organization to foster creativity and entrepreneurship in children. The Global Cardboard Challenge (GCC) followed, and in 2013, 86,000 children from 46 countries joined in, building whatever they could dream up using cardboard, recycled materials and imagination.

Building from the inspiration of Caine’s Arcade and the success of GCC, the Imagination Foundation is now launching Imagination Chapters. Chapters are community-organized learning spaces that foster creativity, entrepreneurship, and critical 21st century skills in children through Creative Play. Chapters are volunteer-led and can start anywhere, including schools, homes, libraries and community spaces.

Beginning in fall of 2014, there will be pilot Chapters at 30 different sites in approximately 7 cities internationally. During the pilot program, Chapters will be primarily school-based, each serving roughly 20 children over 9 months.

Sonoma County Imagination Chapters

Due to the generosity of donors from Sonoma Country Day School along with contributions from Community Foundation Sonoma County and the Sonoma County Office of Education, two of the initial pilot Chapters will be located in Sonoma County. One of the Chapters will be housed at Sonoma Country Day School and the second will be determined through a competitive application process.

The Sonoma County school selected to participate in the Imagination Chapter pilot program will receive all of the required funding for the initial year’s activities as well as intensive training and support in the dynamics of Creative Play, logistics of Chapter startup and sustainability, research on creativity and learning, and specialized support for Common Core alignment. Multiple opportunities for collaboration between the two “sister” Sonoma County Chapters will take place over the course of the pilot year.

Support to Pilot Chapters Includes:

- 6-hour initial training, including the Chapter Toolkit.
- Other resources for Creative Play (to supplement cardboard and recycled materials), such as materials from littleBits and MakeDo.
- Weekly and personal coaching for Chapter leaders throughout 9-month pilot (72 hours in total per Chapter).
- Facilitation of peer-to-peer learning online between Chapter leaders.
- Summit for Chapter leaders (hosted in Los Angeles) to share best practices and meet with renowned educators.
- Support alignment of Chapter activities to Common Core standards in Math and ELA and to Next Generation Science Standards.

Organizers of the pilot Chapters will have a rare professional opportunity to play a leading role in valuable research on creativity, the design of new measures to assess entrepreneurial thinking, and dialogue with students and educators from around the world. Cities and regions that participate in the pilot program will have access to all the tools, measures, and other relevant material to support further growth of Imagination Chapters beyond the pilot program.
Application Process

The following factors will be strongly considered in determining the location for the second Imagination Chapter in Sonoma County:

- **Capacity of Leadership & Key Staff** (as demonstrated through application responses)
- **Need** (as determined by the Human Development Index from the recently published *Portrait of Sonoma County* report)
- **Level of Interest** (as determined through application responses)

The application process will involve two stages:

1. Submission of a written application (including cover sheet) addressing the questions below
2. An in-person or Skype/Google Hangout interview for all finalists under consideration

**NOTE:** Please limit application responses to a maximum of 250 words per question.

**Questions for the school leader:**

- Name of school (and, if applicable, partner organization):
- Do you have a venue for your chapter?
- Would your Chapter activities be in-class or after school?
- Why are you excited to start an Imagination Chapter at your school?
- Tell us a little bit about the community (of kids) you would be working with (including the grade level range).
- Please briefly describe the “team” that will be developing/implementing your school’s Chapter.
- Participation in the Imagination Chapter pilot is an intensive experience with a significant amount of time needed for professional development. How will you support your Chapter leader(s)’ ability to find time to participate in the required professional development and other Chapter-related activities?
- What kind of support would you have from your school, parents, and partner organizations?
- What steps/actions will you take during the pilot year to ensure sustainability and expansion in future years?
- If selected as a finalist, would you be available for an interview during the week of July 7-11, 2014?
- Anything else you’d like to share? Anything you wish we’d asked?

**Questions for the proposed Chapter leader:**

- As a facilitator, what do you hope to take away from leading a Chapter?
- What skills, interests, strengths, obsessions, experiences would make you a great Chapter leader?
- What’s the absolute best teaching/learning experience/activity you’ve had in your life?
- The success and sustainability of Imagination Chapters is largely dependent upon the Chapter leader’s ability to build a team of people to support Chapter activities. Please describe any previous experience you have in bringing people together in support of a common objective.
- How will you measure your success as a Chapter leader?
- If selected as a finalist, would you be available for an interview during the week of July 7-11, 2014?
- Anything else you’d like to share? Anything you wish we’d asked?

For additional information about the Imagination Foundation and Imagination Chapters that may assist you in completing your application, please visit:

- [www.imagination.is/our-projects/imagination-chapters/](http://www.imagination.is/our-projects/imagination-chapters/)
- [www.imagination.is/storybook/](http://www.imagination.is/storybook/)
Application Timeline

- Application Released: Thursday, June 19, 2014
- Application Deadline: Wednesday, July 2, 2014
- Finalists Notified By: Thursday, July 3, 2014
- Finalist Interviews: Week of July 7-11, 2014

The second Sonoma County Chapter will be announced by July 11, 2014

Ongoing Timeline For Pilot Chapters

- Summer 2014:
  Training of Chapter leaders will be conducted online and in-person
- September 2014 to June 2015:
  Chapters operate with 9 months of regular programming
- Saturday, October 11, 2014:
  Chapters participate in the Global Cardboard Challenge along with over 100,000 children in more than 50 countries
- Winter of 2015 (date TBD):
  The Imagination Foundation will host a Summit for Chapter leaders (a gathering for all leaders in Los Angeles)
- January 2015:
  The full Chapter Toolkit is made available to pilot Chapter regions for soft launch of additional Chapters
- July 2015:
  Pilot program ends and formal program is rolled out at over 100 sites worldwide

FINAL NOTE: The two Sonoma County schools participating in the pilot will be expected to use the training and experience received during the pilot program to help with the launch of additional Imagination Chapters in Sonoma County through trainings, peer-to-peer support, and sharing of best practices beyond the end of the 2014-15 pilot year.

Contact

For questions about the application process, please contact:

Mickey Porter
Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services
Sonoma County Office of Education
mporter@scoe.org
707-524-2786