



Frequently Asked Questions

(updated 3.19.19)

How does XQ+RI connect to other initiatives and efforts ongoing in Rhode Island already?

XQ+RI builds off and supports the ongoing initiatives and efforts in Rhode Island education; through XQ+RI, school design teams will better be able to leverage their current efforts, capitalize on the flexibilities provided through the RI Secondary School Regulations, and help drive toward (and then surpass!) our three state goals articulated through the Rhode Island ESSA plan: proficiency, work-based learning, and Diploma Plus. (More on that in the application itself which can be found [here](#).)

What exactly do you mean by “design” in our high schools?

We are grounding our design thinking for the XQ+RI Challenge in [XQ Institute’s Knowledge Modules](#). These modules are grounded in research and support school teams in deepening their background knowledge of the needs students have for the 21st century and the science of adolescent learning; discover what students in their communities experience, aspire to, and need; design a school mission and vision and teaching & learning and student-engagement strategy that best fits those needs; and develop the full plan and collaborations needed to make these design successful.

What is XQ?

XQ is a growing and passionate network of educators, students, families, and civic-minded citizens reimagining high school education in the United States. Their mission is to fuel America’s collective creativity to transform high school so every student succeeds - no matter their race, gender, or zip code. XQ pledges support to see that change underway in every high school and in every community — all 14,000+ school districts.

What is the selection committee most looking for when reading Planning Grant applications?

XQ+RI is a chance for design teams representing school, community, parent, student, and teacher voice to think boldly about what the high school of the future could and should look like. The approaches and models of the Planning Cohort will include plans and ideas that are exciting to communities and challenge the status quo. Additionally, selected design teams will demonstrate visions that connect to the three overarching XQ+RI Challenge goals: Proficiency, Diploma Plus, and Work-Based Learning. Each awardee will demonstrate alignment to increasing proficiency and demonstrate connection to Diploma Plus and/or WBL. The planning grant cohort will include a variety of high school design approaches, models, and plans.

Are only current school teams eligible to apply?

We encourage applications from design teams that are looking to both create new schools and support improvement in current schools. However, the selection committee will prioritize applications from



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teams supporting existing public schools, including comprehensive high schools, charter schools, and career and technical education centers.

Who can join a design team?

All are welcome to join the Design Teams. Design Teams consist of students, parents, employers, school staff and leaders, and community members at large. Are you passionate about transformative learning experiences for students and helping to build schools that meet the needs of all students? Join a Design Team!

How large should design teams be?

There is no set number that is ideal for a design team. Design teams should be representative of the community in which the school and school team are located—with representatives that can speak from the different and varied perspectives necessary to support implementation of a strong high school design. What that looks like, exactly, will vary from community-to-community. And don't worry: You don't need to have your full team assembled before you submit an application to a planning grant team. There will be time to further grow your design team during the planning process.

How will the winning design teams be chosen?

The XQ+RI Planning Grant selection committee members will rate each of the applications using the XQ Planning Grant Application Rubric. The selection committee will score all applications independently and then meet to recommend a planning grant cohort to the XQ+RI leadership team. Leadership from the RI Department of Education, in consultation with the XQ Institute leadership, will make the final determination on which teams are invited to join the XQ+RI Planning Cohort. The selection committee will comprise of XQ+RI team members.

Are teams from all over the state eligible to apply?

Absolutely! The XQ+RI team seeks a cohort of design teams that represent all of Rhode Island, including each of our regions; our urban, suburban, and rural communities; and our racial, ethnic, and economic diversity.

My school is slated to get School Improvement Grant, Charter School Program, state funding for facilities, or other funding from the state; are we still eligible to apply?

Yes. All current schools are welcome to create and/or partner with design teams to apply for the XQ+RI Challenge. Schools that are receiving other additional sources of funding from the state will have the chance during the planning phase of XQ+RI to prepare for integration and collective impact of the



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various funds being awarded. The RIDE team will be on hand to help with this strategic thinking for all in the Planning Cohort.

Can more than one team apply to support a single school?

We ask that design teams wishing to support efforts at a given school work together. This will help ensure the clearest message to the school community and ensure that teams are representative of the full swath of diverse ideas, needs, and skills of all community members. If two teams do submit applications to work with one school, the XQ+RI staff will connect them offline to support potential collaborations.

No member of my team or school community attended a Design Day workshop. Can our design team still apply?

We expect at least one member of each design team to have attended a Design Day workshop. If extenuating circumstances have precluded all members of your school community from being able to attend, you may submit a letter of explanation along with your application to xqri@ride.ri.gov.

What restrictions is RIDE placing on how teams use the planning grant funds (\$25,000)?

The selection committee is instructed to evaluate each application's budget as a part of the selection rubric. The budget should cover activities and needs that are reasonable and necessary to accomplish visioning and planning.

When is the deadline for the planning grant application?

All applications must be submitted through the XQ+RI application portal no later **on or before May 24, 2019**. Winning teams will be notified in early June.

How many design teams will be selected for the planning grant cohort?

The selection committee will recommend--and the RIDE leadership will ultimately select--up to twenty schools to join the Planning Cohort. If fewer than twenty schools apply, or if fewer than twenty applications are deemed complete and sufficient, RIDE leadership will choose fewer than twenty schools to join the Planning Cohort. If this is the case, the XQ+RI team will work with winning teams to determine if and how additional funds will be distributed to the Planning Cohort teams.

What happens to my application after I submit it?

In order to ensure objectivity, members of XQ+RI staff will anonymize all applications (as much as possible) before sharing the final applications with the selection committee. Please note, however, that



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while we will work to ensure anonymity during the selection process, all XQ+RI applications submitted to RIDE are subject to the Freedom of Information Act and may be made public at a future date if requested.

How will funds be distributed to winning teams?

Funds will be distributed through the design team's fiscal agent in one lump sum upon execution of the final grant agreement. Acceptable fiscal agents for the design teams are: public K-12 districts or their designated entities (e.g., individual school or education foundation) or local nonprofits with a pre-established agreement with a school and track record of strong partnership.

How long are schools part of the Planning Cohort? What is the next step after the Planning Cohort?

Schools participating in the planning grant phase of the XQ+RI Challenge will have six months to complete the plans for their school designs. They will work together to build deeper community collaboration and buy-in, concretize their implementation plans for their school designs, and create their final applications for larger implementation grants through XQ+RI. Teams that choose to submit applications for the implementation phase of XQ+RI will be eligible for up to \$500,000 over three years to support that work. Implementation grant applications will be due on December 15, 2019.

We're interested in submitting a planning grant application. What exactly does my design team receive as part of the Planning Cohort for XQ+RI?

Design teams for XQ+RI will receive a \$25,000 planning grant to support the further creation and build of their school design plans. Additionally, they will receive supports through four in-person workshops designed to support teams in further fleshing out their plans that will be hosted by RIDE, the XQ Institute, and the RI Office of Innovation throughout the planning phase of XQ+RI. Design teams will also participate in and receive results from a school-wide Education Opportunity Audit conducted by the XQ Institute, and connection to additional supporting organizations and individuals in Rhode Island who can help teams with individualized supports that fit the specific needs of each design team.

Who can I contact for more information or additional questions?

If you have any additional questions, please email the XQ+RI team at xqri@ride.ri.gov, visit our website <http://ride.ri.gov/xqri> or follow the XQ+RI conversation on social media using the hashtag #XQRI.