



RIVERSIDE PUBLIC LIBRARY FOUNDATION

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September 9, 2016

Karen Smarr, Director
The Bourns Foundation
1200 Columbia Ave
Riverside, CA 92507-2129

RE: Proposal -- Riverside Public Library Foundation

Dear Ms. Smarr:

The Riverside Public Library Foundation is seeking grant funding for a collection of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art & Mathematics) books geared to early learners.

Young Children are avid STEAM investigators, eager to explore and invent. There are so many ways to engage their natural curiosity, with books geared towards their age group being a primary source.

A 2010 survey conducted by Change the Equation, a nonprofit, nonpartisan corporate initiative to advance math and science learning, found that nearly one-third of Americans would rather clean their bathrooms than do a math problem. While this may cause some to chuckle, it is also quite troubling in today's competitive economy where employers are increasingly seeking employees with more and better skills in science, technology, engineering and math. Technology is progressing at such a rate that STEM jobs are no longer in certain professions, rather, STEM jobs are present in all professions.

It has long been known that young children soak up information like sponges. Research shows that early exposure to STEM has positive impacts across the entire spectrum of learning. For example, early math knowledge not only predicts later math success, it also predicts later reading achievement. Riverside Public Library seeks to engage its youngest learners and provide materials to help them develop their STEM skills so they are better prepared to succeed in school and compete in the global economy.

Why it matters:

- Researchers have found that effective early mathematics education can enhance later learning and narrow achievement gaps.
- Approximately 40% of U.S. children are not ready for kindergarten, and too many children reach Grade 4 lacking key science and math skills and knowledge.

- Only 34% of Grade 4 students achieved a score of "At or Above Proficient" on the science portions of the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
- Only 40% of Grade 4 students achieved a score of "At or Above Proficient" on the mathematics portion of the NAEP.

The mission of the Library Foundation is to raise funds to ensure the continued excellence of public library services to Riverside residents. The limitations in funding for new collections in the City of Riverside's Budget, requires most funds be used for current best-seller collections.

Our Library Director projects a comprehensive STEAM collection will require \$18,000. A Grant of \$5,000 will allow the Library to establish a basic collection in all branches. Attached is a representative sample of the type(s) of books the Library Director has identified to begin the collection. These books will be available to any branch, as well as in the Story Mobile. Each book purchased with your grant funding will have a bookplate inside which recognizes the generosity of the Bourns Foundation in creating the collection.

The Library Foundation believes establishing a STEAM collection is vitally important for our children....in home school, public school, or day care environments. Tomorrow's engineers may be reading *The Greedy Triangle*, or, *I Like Computers...What Can I Be*, or, *Build it - Structures, Systems and You*.

Bourns has a long-standing presence in the Inland Empire, leading many engineering advances in education. It is our hope the Bourns Foundation will partner with the Riverside Public Library Foundation to bring this needed resource to our young people. Please call me at 951-684-2753 should you need additional information.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jan Lewis, Volunteer
Grants Committee

Enclosures: — Sample listing of STEAM books