

NSF Grant to Interdisciplinary Team

EFFORT TO BOOST SCIENCE EDUCATION, VOCATIONAL PREPARATION

The National Science Foundation has awarded a three-year \$1.35 million grant to an interdisciplinary team of educators, scientists, and psychologists to enhance the quality of urban science education and vocational preparation.

The grant will allow the team, led by Mike Barnett ([profile](#)), assistant professor of Teacher Education, Lynch School, to increase the breadth and depth of their work by combining two successful programs:

- the Lynch School's Tools for Tomorrow Program, led by David Blustein ([profile](#)) and Maureen Kenny ([profile](#)), both professors of Counseling Psychology, Lynch School, and
- the [Urban Ecology Institute](#)'s Field Studies Program, led by Charles Lord and Eric Strauss, research associate professor of Biology (College of Arts & Sciences).

This funding will expand the University's partnership with the Boston Public Schools (BPS) as the team develops novel student-centered and technology-enhanced curricula and vocational training for BPS students in the 7th-12th grades.

Building on the theme of urban field-based science education pioneered by the Urban Ecology Institute, the instructional materials and supports to be completed through this grant will focus on improving students' capacity to internalize the connection between their academic work and their future career options while providing opportunities for students to work alongside teachers, scientists, and educators through summer institutes and technology-enhanced curriculum materials and resources .

The NSF grant will support an expansion of the existing program of teacher workshops and summer institutes to include additional opportunities for students and teachers to work together to develop more effective science curricula and to immerse young scholars in field-based urban ecological research.

[bc home](#) > [schools](#) > [Lynch School](#) > [resources](#) > NSF Grant >

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