



Creative Schools Fund Manager

Chicago, IL

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About Ingenuity

Ingenuity was born from a city-wide collective impact movement that coalesced hundreds of arts education stakeholders in solving a complex problem: arts inequities in Chicago Public Schools (CPS). Since 2011, Ingenuity has collected and analyzed CPS school-level data to influence sector-wide decision-making, fuel arts-supportive policies, and identify opportunities for improved resource distribution to all CPS students.

We lead collective efforts across public and private sectors to launch data-driven frameworks that are helping to close the gap to arts education access in CPS schools. Ingenuity serves as the “connective tissue” between Chicago’s arts education stakeholders, including small local arts organizations, large cultural institutions, teaching artists, CPS leadership, and the City of Chicago. Together, we advance systemic change in CPS arts education through data and research, partnerships and learning, systems building, and direct investments in CPS schools.

To learn more about Ingenuity’s work, visit our website: www.ingenuity-inc.org

Creative Schools Fund Overview

Launched in 2012, the Creative Schools Fund (CSF) has invested over \$20M in teacher-designed arts education programs within Chicago Public Schools. The Fund’s role is to accelerate and deepen the impact of Ingenuity’s other work by incentivizing arts-positive behaviors in schools and supporting specific strategies tied to [Creative Schools Certification](#) indicators. Weaving across every Ingenuity program, CSF plays an integral role in Ingenuity’s work:

- » **Addressing inequities surfaced in data.** Ingenuity’s data work shines a light on where investments might target the most impact; CSF grants then activate change within schools experiencing the least systemic arts access. Grants mimic the process of strategic planning in the arts, and they are designed to elevate the role of the Arts Liaison to lead that planning for the arts and to be perceived by peers and school administration as bringing additional funds and resources to the school.
- » **Bolstering holistic sector supports.** Ingenuity’s Partnerships and Learning team surfaces key assets, best practices, and needs within the arts sector that are, in turn, integrated into CSF investment strategies. Grants opportunities through CSF also enable deeper engagement within the partner community. This is a key organizational priority.
- » Ingenuity’s advocacy work, visibility efforts, and sector-wide collaboration are all bolstered by its philanthropic role.

Since 2012, CSF has reached over 60% of schools in CPS with investments ranging from smaller multi-year partnership grants to larger, sustained support for school-wide arts planning and capital improvement projects. Currently, CSF is supported through a mixture of

public and private funding. Contributions from the Mayor's Office of the City of Chicago, Chicago Public Schools, C3/Lollapalooza, and significant individual and institutional gifts from Ingenuity donors form the backbone of the Fund's sustainability strategy.

Philanthropic Approach

Ingenuity believes that certified arts instructors are an essential part of embedding and anchoring the arts within a school. Arts instructors provide access, minutes of instruction, and breadth and depth of instruction that students receive. More than any external providers, arts instructors understand their school's culture. As such, the Creative Schools Fund makes investments directly to schools to support teacher-designed arts learning programs that fill gaps in arts instruction for their students, expand curriculum and teacher skills, and better sustain access to the arts for every student in every grade.

While the Creative Schools Fund makes investments directly to schools, partnerships with external arts organizations form the majority of grant proposals and awards, and the Creative Schools Fund is often a key source of revenue for arts nonprofits.

Ingenuity stewards city and private funds through an objective, quasi-public process that engages representative stakeholders in strategy design and grants decision-making. Grant rubrics, strategies, and decisions are grounded in data, developed in partnership with cross-sector constituencies, and intended to support the highest grant impact without undue burden to grantees. Grant decisions are driven through a review committee of paid arts education practitioners and community members who utilize a public rubric to form grant recommendations for approval by the Ingenuity Board of Directors.

Position Summary

As an integral member of the Programs Team, the Manager of the Creative Schools Fund holds a key position in enhancing the efficacy of grant processes and strategies, thereby advancing the coordination, implementation, evaluation, and overall sector impact of the Fund. Working closely with the Programs Team, they ensure transparent, accessible grant-making, fostering equitable approaches and maximizing sector-wide impact. This involves supporting schools and arts partners in implementing successful programs, identifying opportunities for partnership development, and ensuring grant decisions are data-driven and inclusive.

Additionally, the Manager plays a supporting role in relationship development, donor stewardship, and strategic funding design within the CSF framework. Collaborating with leadership, they support efforts to create, activate, and demonstrate the value of Ingenuity's grants directly to arts education in Chicago Public Schools. They are key in driving the CSF's impact and ensuring its funds authentically build capacity in the arts education sector.

Key Responsibilities

The Manager of the Creative Schools Fund will administer CSF investments in CPS schools, fostering equitable arts education programming while maximizing impact. They will creatively address barriers to arts access in underserved schools, ensuring funds contribute to sustainable capacity building. Additionally, they will support development strategies and cultivate relationships to enhance CSF growth and amplify Ingenuity's philanthropic impact. This may involve aligning donor interests with grant strategies and creating opportunities for connection across constituencies.

Grant Operations, Infrastructure, and Maintenance - 30%

- » Provide support in the administration of CSF investments in Chicago Public Schools (CPS), ensuring alignment with organizational priorities and equitable distribution.
- » Manage the implementation of grant-making processes, including application development, review, and decision-making.
- » Monitor grants for financial and program compliance, including but not limited to ensuring that grant requirements are correctly documented in the grant files and database.
- » Maintain grants management systems, including timelines, reports, fund allocation, staff communication, testing and troubleshooting, documentation, training, and release cycles.
- » Implement and maintain protocols for testing and reconciling data accuracy and making timely and accurate database changes.
- » Review grantee program reports and monitor progress of projects to verify that grantees are implementing grants to address agreed objectives in a timely manner and in keeping with good practice.

Grantee Support - 20%

- » Establish and maintain relationships with grantees, including information sharing, outreach regarding grant opportunities, technical support throughout the grant process, and accountability structures.
- » In tandem with the Programs team, assist in developing and implementing new or updated resources, presentations, and toolkits to support partnership health, as well as the delivery of coaching sessions, info sessions, workshops, and larger convenings.
- » Identify grantees with specific challenges and collaborate with them on appropriate action to help resolve them.
- » Carry out periodic monitoring visits to grant-holder schools, especially those that require special attention based on existing challenges.

Data + Program Evaluation - 15%

- » Assist in utilizing data analytics to inform grant-making strategies and evaluate program impact.

- » Collaborate with the Ingenuity Data team to support the development of robust reporting mechanisms and monitor progress toward CSF goals.
- » Assist in conducting program evaluations to assess effectiveness and identify areas for improvement.
- » Review data from across the portfolio and assist in the analysis of program progress, capturing program learning and preparing briefing notes.
- » Infuse each year's planning with learning from previous years and feedback from grantees.
- » Work alongside the Director of Programs to regularly prepare reports to the Executive Director and Board on Creative Schools Fund strategies and results.

Communication + Collaboration - 15%

- » Facilitate communication and collaboration between Ingenuity, CPS, donors, and other stakeholders involved in arts education.
- » At the district level, help identify opportunities for better support, clarity, or efficiencies in partnership development for schools and arts nonprofits.
- » Assist in articulating CSF's value proposition and impact to internal and external audiences.
- » Maintain continual communication with the Programs Team to ensure a cohesive CSF and Partnerships + Learning vision across school and partner constituencies and identify mutually reinforcing activities across these sectors.
- » Recruit members and coordinate an existing review committee of paid experts and practitioners who review applications, recommend grants to the Ingenuity Board of Directors, and conduct site visits with schools.
- » Work with the Director of Programs and financial administrators to properly account for and monitor CSF revenue and allocations.
- » Collaborate with the Arts Education Leadership Advisory Committee (ALAC) to inform and advise Ingenuity's Creative Schools Fund strategy.

Strategy Planning + Support 10%

- » Support the development and execution of strategic initiatives to advance the mission of Ingenuity and the impact of the Creative Schools Fund.
- » Assist in analyzing the impact of CSF strategies and articulating it for external audiences, in coordination with the Ingenuity Development, Communications, and Data teams.
- » Maintain a clear understanding of strategic objectives, tactics, and metrics and regularly track and report progress towards goals.

Prospecting + Cultivation 10%

- » Support the engagement of constituents across sectors in a shared vision for philanthropy's role in arts education access and quality.
- » Support relationship building with new prospective donors.

- » Assist in building philanthropic partnerships to expand and deepen the potential impact within CSF strategies.
- » Provide support in defining and scoping CSF activities in alignment with donor interests/designations, when appropriate.
- » Support CSF stewardship efforts by ensuring alignment with core Ingenuity values, including equity, collaboration, and data-driven strategies.

Qualifications

Skill Requirements

- » Demonstrated record of authentic, community-driven initiatives, with ties to systemic change or cross-sector priorities on a larger scale.
- » Strong fiscal management and budgeting skills.
- » Experience working with diverse stakeholders; excellent interpersonal skills.
- » Excellent communication skills, including writing, editing, proofreading, and speaking. Ability to synthesize complex information into easily understandable written products and presentations.
- » Strong project management and attention to detail, with the ability to accomplish projects with little to no supervision. Ability to manage and prioritize tasks across multiple work streams.
- » A strong work ethic, with high expectations for oneself and the quality of work.
- » Excellent relationship-building skills with all stakeholders, including colleagues, Board members, prospects and donors, key community civic leaders, and vendors.
- » Proficiency in the Microsoft Office Suite and donor databases (DonorPerfect and GiveCloud preferred) and/or the ability to quickly learn new software.

Desired Background + Experience

- » A grasp of multifaceted fundraising practices and supporting donor engagement events.
- » Experience developing and managing data-driven initiatives.
- » Some fundraising/development experience with a community-based, nonprofit, or service organization.
- » Some experience in arts education program design and implementation.
- » Well-versed in mission-centric writing.
- » Previous lived experience, interest in, or connection to Chicago's arts/arts education, youth development, and/or civic community.
- » Demonstrated commitment to anti-racism, diversity, equity, and inclusion practices.
- » Familiarity with public school systems, preferably Chicago's, is preferred.
- » Familiarity with the Chicago philanthropic community is preferred.
- » The ideal candidate is expected to have a Bachelor's degree.
- » Candidates without a degree who have significant relevant work experience will also be considered.

Ingenuity recognizes that there is no such thing as a perfect candidate. Even if you do not meet all the requirements for the position, we encourage you to apply. You might just be the candidate we are looking for!

Reporting Relationships

The Manager of the Creative Schools Fund reports to the Director of Programs, with a matrix report to the Chief of Staff.

Leadership

(Please do not contact the organization or its leaders directly)

Courtney Cintrón (she/her) **Director of Programs**

Courtney Cintrón is an advocate of mission driven organizations in the arts. She has had the pleasure of managing an array of arts programs and projects, from youth arts education initiatives and art exhibitions, to poetry, theater, and music programs. Her dedication to tackling complex social issues and promoting deep learning and critical thinking through the arts has illuminated her path.

Courtney joined Ingenuity in 2019 as Partner Engagement Specialist and later, Director of Partnerships + Learning before transitioning into her current role as Director of Programs in March 2024. As Director of Programs, Courtney oversees and unites two of Ingenuity's cornerstone initiatives, the Creative Schools Fund and Partnership + Learning Programs, under a cohesive vision to drive strategic alignment and maximize impact.

The Director of Programs plays a pivotal role in ensuring that these initiatives work in tandem to achieve our overarching goals. By uniting the Creative Schools Fund and Partnership + Learning Programs, the Director leverages synergies between the two to amplify their impact and reach. This strategic alignment enables us to better serve schools and communities, fostering a holistic approach to arts education that integrates innovative programming with collaborative learning opportunities.

Prior to joining the team at Ingenuity, Courtney was a HATCH Curatorial Resident with the Chicago Artists Coalition. In her most recent role, she was the Program Director for ProjectArt Chicago, where she oversaw visual arts programs and projects for youth in partnership with the Chicago Public Library.

Courtney holds an MA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's Department of Arts Administration and Policy, an MM in Classical Voice/Opera Performance from Roosevelt

University's Chicago College of Performing Arts, and a BM in Classical Voice/Opera Performance from the Boston Conservatory at Berklee College of Music.

Lupe Jimenez-Pinto (she/her)
Chief of Staff

Lupe Jimenez-Pinto is a mission-driven, solution-oriented strategist, and nonprofit expert with a proven record of creating innovative educational experiences. In her previous role as Senior Director of External Affairs, Lupe returned to her alma mater, Perspectives Charter Schools, where, for a decade, she cultivated an organization-wide passion for social-emotional well-being and advancement. She worked diligently as an adept brand and marketing strategist while crafting thoughtful messaging and communications and was instrumental in the successful planning and execution of fundraising activities and community events. She effectively built relationships with community partners, funders, city leaders, and elected officials to further advance the organization's mission. She is skilled at navigating the political and philanthropic landscapes of the city, never hesitating to leverage her relationships to positively impact Chicago students.

Lupe brings her passion for equity in education, strategic thinking, and a fresh perspective to continue advancing our mission. She will develop and support the organization's strategic priorities, and above all, she will empower and expand the groundbreaking opportunities that we offer to schools and youth across the thriving city of Chicago.

Lupe graduated with a BA in Marketing Communications with an emphasis on Public Relations from Columbia College Chicago in 2006.

Nicole Upton (she/her)
Executive Director

As Executive Director of Ingenuity, Nicole is responsible for driving the strategic and operational progress toward Ingenuity's mission of ensuring every Chicago Public School student has access to a high-quality arts education. Nicole has been with Ingenuity since 2015, first as Director of Partnerships and Professional Learning and then as Managing Director, prior to becoming Executive Director in February 2022.

Nicole joined Ingenuity from the Chicago Public Schools (CPS) Department of Arts Education, where she oversaw projects, programs, and initiatives for CPS students, teachers, principals, and school community stakeholders. Her focus areas included curriculum, instruction and assessment, professional development, partnership, strategic planning for the arts, and the CPS Arts Education Plan. She works with both CPS and Chicago's arts and cultural community to build capacity, strengthen leadership, and create collaboration and knowledge sharing within and among organizations to bolster existing arts programs and reduce arts deserts across CPS.

Prior to working at CPS, Nicole served as the Senior Director of Education at the Auditorium Theatre of Roosevelt University, where she launched ArtsXChange, a collaborative professional development program for classroom teachers, and directed Hands Together,

Heart to Art, an arts-based summer camp for children who have experienced the death of a parent. She has also worked as a director, stage manager, and high school theatre teacher.

Nicole holds a BA in Comprehensive Theatre Studies from Northern Illinois University and an MA in Educational Theatre from New York University.

Compensation + Benefits

This is a full-time, salaried position with a salary range of \$65,000-\$70,000.

Ingenuity offers a generous health insurance and benefits package, matching retirement plan contributions, personal days, and paid vacation and sick time.

A competitive benefits package is provided, including:

- » Medical*, dental*, and vision* insurance
- » Life insurance*
- » Short- and long-term disability insurance*
- » Paid vacation time (accrue up to fifteen (15) days in year one)
- » Paid sick time (accrue up to six (6) days in year one)
- » Paid personal time (accrue up to six (6) days in year one)
- » Twelve (12) standard company holidays per calendar year
- » Pre-tax Commuter Expense Reimbursement Plan
- » IRA retirement plan with up to 3% employer match
- » Funds to support professional development related to work
- » Employee Assistance Program

* Medical, dental, vision, life insurance, and short- and long-term disability are provided at no cost to the employee.

Please note that all employment-related pay and benefits provided to Ingenuity employees are subject to all applicable policies, practices, processes, and legal requirements, including changes to them that may occur from time to time.

As a reflection of our firm's commitment to equity and equal pay for all, Cooper Coleman requires that salary ranges or salary starting points be published for every search we conduct. The practice of not posting salaries perpetuates the gender and racial wage gap and discriminates against women, people of color, and other historically excluded populations by causing individuals to negotiate from a disadvantaged starting point.

Location + Travel

Ingenuity's offices are based in Chicago's River North neighborhood. Minimal travel outside of Chicago may be expected occasionally and may include participation in professional conferences.

Ingenuity employees are currently expected to work in the office two days a week (Tuesdays and Wednesdays), with a strong likelihood of adding an additional in-office day TBD. Employees will be given as much notice as possible as expectations change.

EEO + Diversity, Equity + Inclusion

Ingenuity is an equal-opportunity employer. Ingenuity encourages qualified candidates of any gender, race, class, sexual orientation, faith, disability, or age to apply, including ALAANA candidates, transgender and gender non-conforming candidates, as well as candidates from all socio-economic backgrounds. All applicants will be evaluated on a merit basis.

In 2020, Ingenuity partnered with the Morten Group, a Chicago-based consulting firm with expertise in racial equity work. As a result of that partnership, Ingenuity launched our first-ever Equity Action Plan in the fall of 2022. It includes our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion vision, values, and goals and serves as a tangible roadmap for our equity journey, with metrics and accountability measures. However, we know this work is never "complete." We see our plan as a living document that will serve as our steadfast beacon for monitoring progress, implementation, and continual prioritization of our DEI vision, values, and goals. Read it [here](#).

Background Checks

Before sending your resume for this position, please read it over for accuracy. Cooper Coleman verifies its candidates' employment and academic credentials at the time of offer.

As a current Chicago Public Schools vendor, Ingenuity may be required to submit annual background checks for all employees.

Submission Instructions *(please read carefully)*

[Cooper Coleman](#) is leading this search on behalf of Ingenuity. To apply, please [visit this link](#) (www.coopercoleman.com/current-searches). Inquiries and nominations of qualified candidates can be sent to:

Paul Towne

paul@coopercoleman.com

Kindly use the position title as the subject line of your email. All inquiries will be held in confidence.

A cover letter is not required with your initial application but is welcomed to help us understand your fitness for this role during our initial evaluation. Candidates invited for interviews with the Ingenuity team will be asked to provide a thoughtful letter of interest indicating their specific qualifications for the opportunity, desire to join Ingenuity, and connection to its mission.

Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the successful candidate has been selected.

Cooper Coleman LLC is committed to providing equal employment opportunities to all qualified candidates and will refer candidates without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation or identity, age, ability, veteran status, or any other legally protected basis.

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About Cooper Coleman

Cooper Coleman is a full-service recruiting and consulting firm partnering exclusively with nonprofit organizations, foundations, and research and academic institutions to drive meaningful growth. We move organizations *forward* by placing the right leaders in the right roles at the right time, and we help to strengthen management and fundraising capacity to amplify their mission and impact.

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