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Dear Readers,

Five years ago, my journey with Project Invent began when it was just a seed, touching the lives of a single classroom of students. From those modest beginnings, I became a passionate advocate for the transformative potential of Project Invent.

Project Invent has the power to shape students’ lives, inspire educators, and elevate our communities, especially those furthest from opportunity. My conviction in this mission has only deepened as I’ve had the privilege of witnessing Project Invent’s incredible expansion, impacting over 800 students nationwide in FY23.

This journey, marked by exponential growth and its profound impact, fills me with an indomitable sense of pride. FY23 represents my final year as Board Chair. During my tenure, I’ve had the honor of collaborating closely with an exceptional and dedicated team. It’s been a privilege to bear witness to the organization’s remarkable journey, characterized by a continuous stream of milestones. I’m wholly confident that the work will continue to thrive in the coming years.

I eagerly anticipate continuing to contribute to the ongoing legacy of greatness being built.

With gratitude,

Aragon Burlingham
Board President

Dear Project Invent Community,

“Does your school have Project Invent?” is a question one Project Invent middle school student asked her new school this past spring. We couldn’t be happier to help make every middle school and high school answer this question with a resounding YES!

We want to bring Project Invent to every student. Our student reach and impact has increased by over 60% through our whole school model. In FY23 our whole school pilot led to 376 middle school students to invent in 5 classrooms, led by trained Project Invent educators. Our middle school pilot reached students nationally in grades 6-8 from New Jersey to California. Our semester pilot reached Title I high school students and encouraged educators to bring Project Invent into the school day as a spring elective. Across all of our pilots this past school year, we have seen a path forward for establishing our pilots as permanent programming for this next year and beyond. We are building our program that host students wherever learning is happening - from schools to after school spaces to out of school time spaces, and more! Every student can invent with Project Invent.

Our FY23 program pilots were additionally supported by a curriculum refresh that featured greater STEM representation from diverse groups, stronger on-ramps to technology and greater diversity of community partners. Last year, we saw students invent for large societal problems such as climate change, unhoused community issues and unfair conditions for migrant workers. We can’t wait to see what students will invent with community partners next!

Our impact with 800+ students this past year is only possible with the support of our Project Invent community, our Fellows, community partners, industry partners and donors. Thank you for helping us meet the challenge of bringing Project Invent to every 6th-12th student across the nation!

Gratefully,

Jax Chaudhry
Executive Director
OUR MISSION

Project Invent empowers students with the 21st-century skills to succeed individually and impact globally through invention.

OUR VISION

To create a generation of fearless, compassionate problem solvers.

THEORY OF CHANGE

We...
- TRAIN & SUPPORT teachers
- PROVIDE curriculum
- HOST Demo Day

Teachers...
- EMPOWER students
- INSPIRE impactful projects
- CONTINUE empowerment work throughout their

Students...
- GAIN 21st-century skills
- DEVELOP transformative mindsets
- CHANGE the world
Imagine a school where students don’t just take tests and read textbooks, they go out into the world to identify meaningful problems and build innovative solutions. Instead of solving problems that already have an answer in the back of a book, students solve problems that can change lives.

Project Invent’s fellowship program empowers educators to re-energize their teaching through design thinking, innovation, and social impact. Our educators adopt our program to build a classroom environment that is about tackling unsolved problems in the community, not just test-taking.

Our program provides 5 critical components to support educators in leading learning experiences that focus on real-world problem-solving:

1. Educator training and professional development,
2. A project-based invention curriculum,
3. Community connections,
4. Access to volunteers in the tech industry, and
5. National opportunities for students to be celebrated and recognized for their successes.
Our **educator training** is a weeklong immersive for teachers to experience invention for themselves. Last year we **trained 61 teachers** who learned how to apply our 6 teacher practices: *make failure ok, push to the next level, be a co-learner, let students take the wheel, leave room for exploration, challenge assumptions* in order to bring Project Invent principles into their own classrooms.

Educators were additionally supported throughout their fellowship with **professional development** in the form of regular 1:1 advisory meetings with Project Invent Program Managers, drop-in workshops, and quarterly cohort meetings amongst a national network of Project Invent educators.

Our **curriculum** is a resource to guide students through the invention process. Our curriculum has received **2,190+ downloads across the globe**. This included the teachers we trained, along with educators all over the world who are interested in bringing real-world problem solving into their classrooms.

Our curriculum integrates **design thinking, engineering, and entrepreneurship** to help students move from idea to prototype to pitch.

“**I CAN DO IT! I feel really confident and excited to bring this amazing program to my students. I didn’t realize how much curriculum and structure already exists, so I feel much more at ease about implementation. Also, as someone new to microcontrollers... I’m hooked.**”

- Fellow Survey
Students were connected with a community partner, a person experiencing a challenge that can be supported through tech-based solutions: examples included veterans, visually impaired individuals, and firefighters. Through monthly interviews and visits throughout the school year, students worked to understand the challenges their community partner faced, and used their empathy and creativity to come up with impactful technology solutions.

At the heart of Project Invent are the strong relationships students build with their community partners, who help to give authentic meaning to their work.

Last year all 135 student teams connected with community partners and 57 student teams were matched with community partners by Project Invent.

To ensure our students are able to identify and connect with their community partners, we partnered with organizations such as:

- Craig Sutherland, Community Partner

“My reason for mentoring and joining up is to allow me to pass on things at an earlier age so that students don’t have to go through what I did to get there. If I can give insight to help them in this opportunity to create something— that’s great.

I love talking to teams. They’re wicked intelligent— they’re amazing kids. To get students to flip a mindset and think about other ideas, it’s awesome.”
Throughout the school year students received multiple opportunities to interface with industry professionals who volunteered to host tech office hours, review student ideas, and provide coaching for their pitches.

Students met with diverse role models and built the important mentorship connections that help them move into STEM careers. We had volunteers with backgrounds in engineering, design, business, marketing and entrepreneurship who offered invaluable knowledge/expertise throughout our students’ invention journeys.

Our volunteer touch points included:
- **DEC: “Idea Review”** when students have just begun ideating their projects for their clients, we match professionals to help refine and strengthen their ideas;
- **FEB-APR: “Prototype Support”** professionals offer technical support with student’s prototypes;
- **MAR-APR: “Pitch Coaching”** professionals support students as they develop product pitches in preparation for Demo Day X;
- **MAY: “Demo Day X”** is our culminating event that celebrates and recognizes students after their year-long journey of creating social impact. Students pitch for the chance at funding, so they can further their inventions after the program’s end - volunteers serve as judges or as keynote speakers.

Last year we matched 318 volunteers with student teams from companies such as Google, Adobe, Atlassian, KLA Corporation, Ford Motor Company, Paypal, Sequoia Capital, Toyota Research Institute, Thoughtspot, IBM, Apple, Goodwater Capital, Zelle.

We grew our volunteer base by 51% since the prior year.
The year of invention culminated in our Demo Day X series, from May 13th to May 20th, 2023, a virtual or in-person opportunity where students across the country pitched their prototypes to investors for the chance at funding. In this way, students were empowered to become entrepreneurs in their own right!

135 teams participated in Demo Day X last year.

We hosted 4 in-person Demo Day X events in San Diego, Northern California, and New York City and 6 Demo Day X virtual events were hosted across the nation in regions: California, Texas, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and New York.

108% growth of DDX since the previous year.

At each Demo Day X we give out Awards:

- **Explorer Award** prioritized learning. Awarded to 7 teams.
- **Product Pivot Award** overcame many obstacles. Awarded to 5 teams.
- **Needfinder Award** really listened to their user. Awarded to 8 teams.
- **Moonshot Award** notably novel or impactful idea. Awarded to 7 teams.

“**It’s a good chance to show what we’ve learned and how we’ve grown. If we do win Demo Day X I think we would want to try and build our product and put it on the market for everyone because I honestly haven’t seen a product like this and I think it would be really helpful.”**

- e3 Civic High student

Students presented all kinds of prototypes from (Example 1) a sensory-feedback makeup palette that empowers sight-challenged users to look and feel their best, to (Example 2) a portable hand washer for removing pesticides from the hands of migrant farm workers.
NATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES TO CELEBRATE & RECOGNIZE SUCCESS

FUTUREFEST

“Seeing the Project Invent community come together was amazing because I was in a circle of people with similar interests as me. It wasn’t just, “Oh, I think inventing is cool.” We all invented something!”

- Project Invent Student

7 teams of students across the nation were also flown to Silicon Valley to join us during our weekend long FutureFest event from June 8 - 11, 2023 where they met tech companies, built their network, and presented on a live stage.

Teams flew out from San Diego, CA; Indianapolis, IN; McDonald, PA; Durham, NC; Westport, CT; Cherry Hill, NJ

71% of teams that participated in FutureFest were from Title 1 Schools.

Click here to watch our highlight reel from FutureFest!
FutureFest was also an opportunity for us to recognize and celebrate the key individuals that support our students in their success.

Our **Community Partner of the Year**, Shelly Loose:

As President of Ms. Wheelchair America, Shelly empowers women who are wheelchair users to educate and advocate for people with disabilities. This past year, she served as a Project Invent Community Partner with four fellows and their students, sharing her story and inspiring their inventions. Shelly’s dedication extends beyond her assigned teams; she volunteered her time to improve our community partner matching system and provided invaluable feedback. Notably, she invited a Project Invent team to present their prototype at a Ms. Wheelchair America event, fostering connections and collaborative innovation.

Our **Volunteer of the Year**, Killian Evers:

With extensive experience in design and managing UX teams at tech giants like Google, Oracle, and PayPal, Killian has generously shared her industry knowledge and expertise with our students through multiple mentorship and advisory roles. This includes serving as an idea review and pitch coach and as a judge at our Demo Day events. She’s committed nearly 30 hours to mentoring our students and has actively recruited new volunteers from her network. We deeply appreciate her unwavering dedication and pivotal role in nurturing our students’ growth.

Our **Fellow of the Year**, Taiwo Togun:

Taiwo is dedicated to ensuring all students receive meaningful & empowering invention experiences like Project Invent. As an educator in his second year of leading Project Invent at Pierrepont School in Westport, CT, Taiwo inspires his students to recognize and utilize their strengths to build diverse and close-knit student teams. This approach has inspired his students to overcome challenges, build empathy, and develop the creative confidence needed to successfully invent together. In addition to Taiwo’s exceptional commitment to Project Invent within his school, Taiwo also serves on the Project Invent Educator Steering Committee, where he helps guide the strategic direction and design of Project Invent’s programming and initiatives.

Our **Emerging Fellow of the Year**, Flor Rekani:

Flor has wholeheartedly embraced resilience, boundless curiosity, unwavering ambition, creative confidence, remarkable agency, and deep empathy from the very outset of her journey with Project Invent. Throughout her inaugural year as a Project Invent Fellow Flor has continually fostered an environment with her students at Bostonia Global in El Cajon, CA, where failure is seen as a stepping stone to success, while fearlessly challenging assumptions alongside her middle schoolers.
Last fiscal year, we extended our reach to more states, schools and students than ever before!

**FAST FACTS**
- 23 states represented
- 890 students nationwide
- 83% of students from a Title 1 school
- 47% of students at Demo Day X identified as female or non-binary
- 41% of students were from a household where they would be the first generation to attend college
At Project Invent, our team motto is that we are always in beta because we are constantly adapting our program to meet the needs of our stakeholders. Our program expansions represent our commitment to this motto, which have been key to our success.

**MIDDLE SCHOOLS**

In response to the long-standing demand from middle school educators to bring Project Invent to their students, historically targeted to high schoolers, we launched our pilot middle school program last year. This expansion received an overwhelmingly positive response, representing approximately 33% of our FY23 teacher Fellowship and contributing to more than 40% of our total Project Invent student count.

We tailored and adapted our program in order to ensure we were fitting the needs of our younger, and more expanded audience. Key adjustments included creating separate categories for Demo Day X awards to ensure a fair selection process. Additionally, we integrated Micro:bit into our curriculum, a microprocessor with a more accessible entry point for learning coding. These changes yielded significant benefits, with approval ratings and retention rates on par for both middle and high school educators.

With such success, we are excited to build upon our middle school pilot by introducing new initiatives and expanding our recruitment efforts among middle school educators nationwide!

**SEMESTER MODEL**

One of the key tenets of what makes Project Invent work for so many educators is its flexibility to adapt to various classrooms, maker spaces, and academic standards. To enhance this flexibility and address the challenges of fluctuating educational schedules, testing windows, and teacher shortages, we introduced a Semester Model. This model allows for alignment of events and deadlines with both the Full Year and Spring Semester schedules, empowering educators to choose the timeline that suits them best or switch as needed.

This change not only allows for flexibility with lesson planning but also allows us to retain teachers who couldn't meet Full Year deadlines. Participants in the Semester Model received equal access to events, professional volunteers, curriculum, and support materials in half the time. About 40% of our Fellows last year opted for the Semester Model, and there was no significant difference in Net Promoter Scores between the two timelines. We look forward to continuing to offer this option for our fellows.
OUR IMPACT.

“For the students it truly teaches empathy, it gives students a platform to take on a steep challenge, and through guidance of a mentor, create a product that no one in this world has ever before imagined.

For educators, Project Invent will make you want to take everything else in the curriculum and see how you can make it more engaging and able to solve real world problems.

For a community, Project Invent can help individuals in need for sure, but it can also promote to a community the idea of working together to solve tough problems. In the process of doing just that, community members will be astounded by the work students can do and the sense of agency they possess!”

– Matt Strine, Project Invent Fellow

TEACHER IMPACT

89% of educators said they are more excited about teaching than they were at the start of the year.

94% of educators reported improving their ability to prepare students for future success.

100% of educators new to our program improved their confidence to build 21st century skills in students (resilience, ambition, and empathy).

STUDENT IMPACT

85% of students believe they can increase their intelligence by challenging themselves.

88% of students say they are capable of learning anything.

94% of students identifying as female rated Project Invent in the top 50% or higher of their learning experiences.

99% of students identifying with backgrounds underrepresented in STEM rated Project Invent in the top 50% or higher of their learning experiences.
This past year Taiwo Togun supported his student team at Pierrepont School in Westport, CT to build Adapt-a-brella, a smart wheelchair attachment that empowers users by providing them with an efficient, lightweight and aesthetic tool to enhance mobility and independence in various weather conditions. Through the invention process Taiwo facilitated experiences that allowed his students to take the wheel.

One student noted, “He ensures that all of the decisions and tasks within each group are spearheaded by students, but [are] still more than adequately supported.”

Another student noted Taiwo’s commitment to fostering student agency, stating “He allows us room to make mistakes and to get into disagreements, and resolve them on our own. Taiwo will listen to our ideas and thoughts on something before offering up his own.”

Flor joined Project Invent in July 2022 and immediately hit the ground running! Her positivity and creative problem-solving were evident in her early interactions with our curriculum - she made sure to adapt our program to fit her students’ needs.

One of her 7th grade students said, “She takes us through the Project Invent process...instead of just doing everything at once, and not knowing where to start with our projects, we do it level by level... And even when we think we are done or can’t do more, she is there to help us keep learning and creating.”

Learning to code is daunting for anyone, let alone as someone who is supposed to then teach it to middle schoolers. But for Flor this was an opportunity to show vulnerability and encourage real collaborative learning with her students.

Another one of Flor’s students reflected, “Profe always says that’s perfectly fine, you can learn from that mistake” reflecting to her students how easy it is to make failure ok.
A remarkable team of five girls from e3 Civic High invented “Guard D-rink”, an electronic device crafted to shield college students from the dangers of drink spiking. Cleverly disguised as a watch with GPS capabilities, their device not only detects tampered drinks but also swiftly notifies emergency contacts, pinpointing the user’s location and the precise moment of the positive test. Their mission? To fortify the safety of college students in the face of drink spiking while igniting awareness about this paramount health and safety issue.

From June 8-11, 2023 this student team joined us in Silicon Valley for FutureFest. For one student on their team, this was her very first time getting on a plane! On our gala stage, they bravely shared their Project Invent journey, inspiring an audience of more than one hundred, including engineers, product visionaries, and venture capitalists.

Today, Team Guard D-rink is partnering with a law firm to file a patent and bring their lifesaving product to market!

When asked if she would recommend Project Invent to other educators, Melissa Woods, their Project Invent Fellow, expressed the program’s transformative impact, stating: Project Invent “helped us take our program to the next level. More importantly, it helped me go to the next level. Each year I tried my best to push my students past their ‘I can’t’ to ‘Wow I can.’ Why Project Invent? Because it develops an innovative mindset..makes the impossible - possible, it validates the creative ideas of students!!”
A team of six students partnered with Belmont Beach, a historically significant location that served as the sole recreation water access for African Americans during segregation. Sadly, the beach then became a dumping ground for pollutants. Determined to restore its natural beauty, the team harnessed their creativity, resilience, teamwork, empathy, and STEM skills acquired through Project Invent to develop “Clean See,” a water purifier designed to aid Belmont Beach’s revitalization and the city’s environmental efforts. They utilized Arduino to develop their invention, with inputs comprising water and pollutants entering the purifier, and outputs delivering clean water and a water purity reading.

The students of Team Clean See applied to attend FutureFest. When asked why they wanted to attend they said, “We would like the opportunity to get the word out on our invention and showcase how it helped Belmont Beach. It also gives us the opportunity to collaborate with other groups and potentially share ideas. Finally, we will have the opportunity to get others excited about clean water and hopefully help create a community focused on environmental sustainability.” We were so inspired by their application that we invited them to join us at FutureFest where they networked with individuals from Google, Zelle, StackOverflow and attended an Adobe career panel at their Corporate Headquarters with representatives from UX Research, Product and Engineering teams. After the panel, we were thrilled to see students of Team Clean See rush over to the panelists to connect more deeply and ask follow up questions.

One member of their team, Mark, expressed an interest in pursuing a career in Cybersecurity after his Project Invent experience. Mark actively engaged with our industry volunteers, networked and made a strong connection with Senior UX Designer at Google. Additionally, Mark is exploring ways to bring Project Invent to other after-school communities in Indianapolis, spreading the spirit of innovation and empowerment further!
This past year Bostonia Global, a TK-12 charter school, where 90% of students identify as minorities and 70% qualify for free or reduced priced lunch, embarked on an inspiring journey with Project Invent. 14 teachers, coaches, and support educators guided over 200 6th, 7th, and 8th-grade students through our program.

This partnership gave us many opportunities to learn and iterate, both with our new Middle School Program and as a model for partnering with an entire school! Our commitment to ensuring all Bostonia Global middle school students experience our program to its fullest led to a unique school-wide event prior to Demo Day X. This event allowed every student to present and receive feedback from professionals, serving as both a valuable warm-up and a platform for teams to present at Demo Day X San Diego, alongside our national, high school partners.

“Incorporating the program on a larger scale has broadened the impact because now we have many different teams working hard on different community issues. For example, two classes are working on water preservation projects, while another two classes are working on bringing irrigation and electricity to our high school greenhouse; yet other classes are working on products that could help amputees and people with rheumatoid arthritis.”

- Delia Gallardo, Bostonia Global Educator, Project Invent Fellow

For their remarkable invention ideas, Bostonia Global students earned Product Pivot, Explorer, and Needfinder Awards at Demo Day X San Diego. A standout moment was when one student spoke at a district-wide TEDx event, highlighting their work with their Community Partner, Gary Miracle, advocating for a more inclusive world for people with disabilities while showcasing their innovative toothbrush prototype.

We are thrilled to see our partnership with Bostonia Global expand, with more middle school educators to train and plans to extend our impact to their high schools next year. Together, we are empowering entire communities, at an even younger developmental age, to become fearless, compassionate problem solvers!
FINANCIALS

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY
FY23 (JULY 2021 - JUNE 2022)

REVENUE

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EXPENDITURES

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OTHER REVENUE

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STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
As of June 30, 2023

ASSETS

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LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

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<td><strong>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</strong></td>
<td><strong>$845,763</strong></td>
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In FY24, we’re on an exciting growth trajectory. We’re deepening our regional growth by expanding our Whole School model and culminating Demo Day X events.

Project Invent began as a teacher fellowship informed by teacher observation, the iterative invention process, and the ingenuity of students. The Project Invent whole school model trains every teacher across disciplines in Project Invent. We introduce the student invention process as a capstone in a core course chosen by the school, ensuring that invention and student agency become integral to the school’s culture. This empowers every student to embrace invention and STEM as part of their identity. Already in FY23, we successfully piloted our whole school model at Bostonia Global’s middle school and are forging partnerships to expand the model further, reaching more districts and schools nationwide!

In addition, we are thrilled to expand our in-person Demo Day X events to more regions across the country. In FY24 we are set to host Demo Day X Los Angeles, San Diego, New York City, and the Bay Area!

We will also host a grand unveiling of our Demo Day X Night of Innovation in New York City and the Bay Area. This night will be an extraordinary opportunity to bring our expansive Project Invent community together. Our full Project Invent community will join us including: donors, corporate and foundation partners, volunteers, community partners, educators, principals, superintendent, district leaders, and passionate advocates all coming together to honor and uplift our remarkable students. The Night of Innovation is not just another evening; it’s a gala of inspiration. It will be a cocktail fundraiser held directly after our students have pitched their groundbreaking products at Demo Day. But that’s just the beginning, the ensuing weekend will promise immersive experiential learning. Students will have exclusive opportunities to connect with industry professionals and embark on site visits to engineering and technology corporate headquarters. This will be a celebration of innovation and a testament to the endless possibilities of STEM learning. We are bursting with excitement as we unveil the Demo Day X Night of Innovation, a momentous occasion that will create new pathways for our students to explore, engage, and excel in the world of STEM. Our goal is to host Demo Day X Night of Innovation in more regions across the nation in years to come.
OUR DONORS.

CHAMPION - $100K+
Barbara & Bill Heil
Best Buy Foundation
KLA Foundation

INVESTOR - $25K+
Albert and Julie Lee
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Google
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Laura Finnigan-Heil and Patrick Heil
Madeleine Heil and Sean Petersen
Matt Gallatin and Molly Gallatin Glover
Steelcase

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Darrell and Lisa Benatar
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Laurel and Steven Miranda
Leslie Wise
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