

Green Education | News

# NSF Pumps \$1 Million into NY Schools Sustainable Energy Pilot Program

- By Mike Hohenbrink
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[New York City Public Schools <http://schools.nyc.gov/default.htm>](http://schools.nyc.gov/default.htm) is receiving more than \$1 million in funding to support a pilot program on sustainable energy designed to draw students into STEM-related fields of study.

The [National Science Foundation <http://www.nsf.gov/>](http://www.nsf.gov/) has awarded \$1.08 million to [Solar One <http://www.solar1.org>](http://www.solar1.org), a non-profit based in New York City that promotes green energy in education, and [MOUSE <http://www.mouse.org/>](http://www.mouse.org/), a national, non-profit organization that works with underserved youth to promote the use and study of technology, for implementation of the GreenTECH pilot program that will be put into place in the school system.

The three-year pilot program seeks to have students find ways to have their schools "go green," while teaching skills related to STEM as students are asked to identify areas where environmentally-friendly improvements could be made and to suggest just how these changes could be undertaken.

GreenTECH will utilize two existing programs, including a version of [Solar One's Green Design Lab <http://www.solar1.org/programs/education-k-12/green-design-lab/>](http://www.solar1.org/programs/education-k-12/green-design-lab/) curriculum that involves STEM skills and environmental literacy and [MOUSE Squad <http://mouse.org/programs/mouse-squad>](http://mouse.org/programs/mouse-squad), a program that involves students managing a technical support desk at their schools.

With the pilot program, students will have the option of performing tasks such as undertaking a building energy audit, implementing water conservation, and designing a garden on their school's roof.

A new MOUSE Squad Specialist Badge will be offered on a starter certification basis, and squads will provide technical support for the pilot program's efforts.

Implementation will begin in October 2012.

Schools that have been identified as taking part include:

- [Philip Randolph High School](http://schools.nyc.gov/schoolportals/06/m540/default.htm)  [<http://schools.nyc.gov/schoolportals/06/m540/default.htm>](http://schools.nyc.gov/schoolportals/06/m540/default.htm), Manhattan;
- [Bronx Design and Construction Academy](http://schools.nyc.gov/SchoolPortals/07/X522/default.htm)  [<http://schools.nyc.gov/SchoolPortals/07/X522/default.htm>](http://schools.nyc.gov/SchoolPortals/07/X522/default.htm); and
- [Urban Assembly Institute for Math & Science for Young Women](http://www.urbanassembly.org/uainstitute.html)  [<http://www.urbanassembly.org/uainstitute.html>](http://www.urbanassembly.org/uainstitute.html), Brooklyn.

Approximately 675 students and 30 teachers, as well as six custodians, will be involved in the pilot program with a long-term goal of establishing a model that could someday be used in schools throughout the country.

"The National Science Foundation's vote of confidence means a great deal to us, especially since it has such a highly competitive and scientifically rigorous funding process, and we are delighted to partner with MOUSE," said Chris Collins, executive director of Solar One. "The goal of GreenTECH is to blend our new Green Design Lab curriculum, which teaches students about things like the science of energy or building performance, with the incredible empowerment and computer literacy MOUSE give to students. Students will learn they can solve the environmental issues in their schools and neighborhoods, and come to believe that science and technology is really cool, and say--hey, I'd like to do that, I'd like to become a scientist or engineer who improves the environment," he said.

"This is a critical time to prepare young people to lead innovation in their world and play a vital role in building a sustainable future," said Linda Roberts, Member, MOUSE board of directors, and Visiting Scholar, [American Association for the Advancement of Science](http://www.aaas.org/)  [<http://www.aaas.org/>](http://www.aaas.org/).

In addition to Solar One and MOUSE and the [New York City Department of Education](http://schools.nyc.gov/default.htm)  [<http://schools.nyc.gov/default.htm>](http://schools.nyc.gov/default.htm), the pilot effort will also involve partnership with the [Wallenstein Collaborative for Urban Environmental Education at New York University](http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/wallerstein/)  [<http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/wallerstein/>](http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/wallerstein/) and Gaylen Moore Associates.

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