NOTE: This document was updated on 4/28/2022 to reflect a change in timeline for the web-based sessions and specific guidance for the applying team. The application deadline is September 8, 2022 at 5 pm ET.

What is a virtual learning excursion?
Innovative Schools Virtual Learning Excursions give educators and partners the opportunity to go beyond observing to directly engaging in the work of reimagining how education happens. Guided by adult learning facilitators, the excursions give educators the opportunity to learn with and from the game changers who are driving innovation, and to take a pause from their daily lives and become learners themselves.

With virtual learning excursions, participants are able to learn about the host schools and districts by reading stories, listening to podcasts, and participating in interactive virtual sessions with students, teachers, and school leaders at each site. While this approach is not quite the same as visiting schools in person, the stories we developed in collaboration with our school and district partners provide rich examples and first-hand accounts of the learning model and a core set of unique components—those that make the schools and districts effective and special.

Which schools or districts are hosting the virtual learning excursion?
The sites hosting the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 virtual learning excursions provide noteworthy examples of next gen learning. Each demonstrates a different combination of characteristics of next gen learning—student-centered, personalized, competency-based, equitable, experiential and authentic, technology-enabled, and organized around broader, deeper definitions of student success.

- In the 2021-2022 school year, we co-designed a virtual learning excursion with Blackstone Academy Charter School.
- For the 2022-2023 school year, we are co-designing a virtual learning excursion with Mission Vista High School & Vista Unified School District.

To decide whether or not to apply for the learning excursion featuring Mission Vista and Vista Unified, consider the fit between their learning model and your team’s learning goals. We strongly recommend that you read the overview, including the multimedia stories and podcasts provided to help you make sure there is a meaningful connection between the host’s strengths and your team’s needs.
Who is the Mission Vista & Vista Unified Virtual Learning Excursion for?
This experience is designed for high school educators and diverse stakeholders, including students, across New England who are interested in redesigning the high school experience.

What should our team membership look like?
The virtual learning excursion to Mission Vista High School and Vista Unified School District is best for larger “multi-stakeholder” teams from a district. Teams should be focused at the high school level and be comprised of 6-12 members.

Teams must include an equal distribution of members that are district-based (must include district leadership), high school-based (one or more principals, and at least two students), and community-based (including but not limited to workforce and industry partners, parents, and school committee/school board members). Also, because fostering collaboration and alignment between middle and high schools is an important support for ensuring student success, teams may include 1-2 middle school based participants (such as a middle school principal).

Who can apply?
Lead applicants for the learning excursion may be from a school, a district, or a community-based organization. What matters most is the collaboration among the assembled team members and the team’s readiness to work together to impact the learning experience for students within the district and/or high school(s).

Before applying, please bring together a representative group of stakeholders to collaboratively complete the application process. This group may include one student, one educator, and one community member working in partnership, or it may be a larger group, or even your full team. The application should not represent the work of one person applying on behalf of a team.

What support will my team receive?
Each team will receive:
- A mini-grant at $500 per team member to support learning, collaboration, engagement, planning, and implementation of learning
- Multimedia stories and podcasts: Students, teachers, leaders, and other key partners from the host site share the story of their innovative next gen learning approach in their own words so you can see their learning model come to life
- Quality time with host sites: Interactive web-based sessions designed to connect to your learning goals and inquiry questions
- Connection with teams across New England: Get to know and engage with innovation-minded colleagues who are doing similar work in your region
- Support from NGLC: Our experienced facilitators will help you develop learning goals, connect with other participating teams to develop and refine your ideas, and provide coaching along the way

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Support to develop a plan for using what you see, hear, and learn: Your team will walk away from the virtual learning excursion experience with a plan to test new approaches, strategies, or practices and ideas to help you engage your wider community in innovative redesign

Tell me more about the interactive web-based sessions.
NGLC and the host site will organize and facilitate a variety of virtual, interactive, web-based sessions. These sessions will afford participating teams the opportunity to engage with members of the host school community and dig more deeply into the topics, approaches, and strategies employed by the host school or district. Teams will receive support from NGLC to develop their learning goals, refine their challenge questions, and devise a plan for implementing strategies or approaches learned during the VLE.

The interactive web-based sessions co-hosted by NGLC, Mission Vista High School, and Vista Unified School District will take place using the following approach:

- NGLC will offer a kick-off session on September 28, 2022 from 3:30-5:30 pm ET.
- NGLC, Mission Vista and Vista Unified will co-host five sessions from October-December 2022. These sessions will be deep dives into MVHS and VUSD and will include both collaboration with other district teams and home-team time.
  - NGLC will assign your team to attend ONE of the following sessions based on the cohort you are placed in: October 18, 19, OR 20 from 3:30-5:30 pm ET; November 14, 15, OR 16 from 3:30-5:30 pm ET; and December 13, 14, OR 15 from 3:30-5:30 pm ET.
  - All selected teams will attend sessions on October 11 and November 1 from 3:30-5:30 pm ET
- All selected teams will attend a Learning Showcase session will be held on April 5, 2023 from 3:30-5:30 pm ET. All teams will come together to share their work and the impact to students.
- The information above should be taken into consideration as you contemplate submitting an application. If each team member cannot commit to all the session dates and times, that will impact your team’s ability to fully engage in the deeper learning the sessions make possible. Please note that registration will be required and more information will be shared with teams upon selection.

What commitments do members of my team need to make?
The following commitments and actions are expected from each team member and the team as a whole:

- Complete all pre-work, such as reading the school and district stories and listening to related podcasts
- Each team member attends all interactive web-based sessions (registration required) facilitated by the host site and NGLC
● Work with your team before, during, and after the interactive web-based sessions to complete your team’s learning log
● Each team member completes participant surveys after the web-based session(s) and at the end of the virtual learning excursion experience

The mini-grants to selected teams, totalling $500 per team member, will be awarded in two grant installments: half at the beginning of the Learning Excursion and the remainder when all commitments have been fulfilled. The grant will be issued to the school or district upon the team lead or financial designee submitting the required information (W-9, ACH information, and other relevant details).

How does my team apply?
Application is required. Each team must complete an application form by the specified deadline:

● Vista Unified School District and Mission Vista High School: Application is open and is due no later than 5:00 pm ET on Thursday, September 8, 2022
● Blackstone Academy Charter School: We are no longer accepting applications for the virtual learning excursion, but you can still learn about the school’s model through the freely available multimedia stories and podcasts.

The application form collects basic information about your team members, the name of your organization, and e-mail addresses. The applying team must provide a thorough description of the team’s composition, identify your team’s inquiry questions (what we call Brave Challenge Questions) of what you hope to learn by engaging in the virtual learning excursion, and your intended outcomes for participation.

Application is open to all public high school governance types (traditional, innovation, charter).

How will teams be selected?
NGLC staff will work to make equitable selections. Quality of responses on the application will be taken into consideration.

This opportunity is aimed at high school educators and their partners and community stakeholders. Teams comprising high school educators and those who focus their Brave Challenge Questions at the high school level will be given preference. Additionally, applying teams should carefully review the team membership requirements listed above. Preference will be given to teams that meet these requirements.

Ready to apply?
When the application period is open for each excursion, you can find a link to the application form on the Virtual Learning Excursion page of the Innovative Schools Stories & Virtual Learning Excursion website.
Teams will be informed of selection decisions by Stef Blouin, NGLC Senior Program Officer, via email sent to the team member that is listed as team lead on the application.

**Questions?**
Please contact Stef Blouin at sblouin@nextgenlearning.org with any questions.