



# YOUTH GRANT COMMITTEE

## GRANT APPLICATION GUIDELINES

### GRAND RAPIDS COMMUNITY FOUNDATION'S YOUTH GRANT COMMITTEE (YGC)

By connecting people, their passions, and our region's resources, Grand Rapids Community Foundation and our partners work toward an inclusive and equitable West Michigan. Over the last century, the Community Foundation has used the tools of philanthropy to respond to community needs. The Youth Fund was established in 1994 with a \$1 million grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. A permanently standing Youth Grant Committee was established in 1998 to advise on the fund. Today, this committee is comprised of 29 young people from throughout the greater Grand Rapids area, who are responsible for distributing up to \$50,000 in grants each year. Our YGC students remain dedicated and passionate about the work they do and welcome youth-centering organizations to apply for projects that align with the current priority areas. To learn more about YGC and the organizations they've supported, visit <https://www.grfoundation.org/apply-for-funding/additional-funds/youth-grant-committee>.

### PRIORITY AREAS

A total of \$50,000 is available to assist with enhancing or implementing youth-serving programs in Kent County. Typically, grant awards range from \$1,000 to \$5,500, with an average award amount of \$3,000.

In the fall of 2022, YGC members conducted a needs assessment of students in Kent County. Data from this survey, in conjunction with [Grand Rapids Community Foundation's values and North Star](#), addressing our commitment to racial equity, informed a request for proposals that address the following:

- Pressure to succeed academically or getting into college
- Youth access to mental health services and resources
- College and/or career preparation
- Financial literacy, including support on how to pay for college
- Housing Instability
- Immigration Status

Youth indicated that the following types of programming and activities may be useful in addressing these issues.

**This should not be seen as an exhaustive list** but rather as a springboard for ideation and creative responses and solutions:

- Art, writing, or music programs or activities
- Life skills training (ex/ managing time, financial literacy including making budgets, doing taxes, saving and investing money, building healthy habits, cooking, and other practical skills)
- College prep- SAT/ACT classes, financial aid workshops, college visits
- Developing healthy habits- fitness, diet, exercise
- Competitive sports (not school-based)
- Employment skills trainings, job placements, and internships
- Culturally competent programs that promote mental health including self-acceptance, coping skills for anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem, creative outlets for stress, and building strong interpersonal relationships and networks of support (socially and within the family)
- Homework help and tutoring
- Programs that teach youth how to plan community events, protests, read laws and policy, and/or speak to elected officials about issues important to them

Priority will be given to proposals that:

- Come from organizations led by people of color (defined as a majority in three or more of the following categories: founder, executive director, internal leadership team, staff, volunteers, and board of directors)
- Serve youth of color, and build leadership capacity in youth, allowing them to co-create and co-implement programming focused on the issues listed above

## ELIGIBILITY

501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, government entities (including schools), or community groups willing to obtain a [fiscal sponsor](#) (with help from the Community Foundation) may apply for grants for programs that benefit youth in the greater Grand Rapids area. The YGC values projects that promote inclusiveness and do not discriminate in hiring staff or providing services on the basis of race, gender, religion, marital status, sexual orientation, age, national origin, or disability. Applications from religious organizations for non-religious purposes will be considered.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

Grant applications must be submitted electronically using the online portal by **11:59 p.m. on Friday, January 12, 2024**. Students may request a brief evening meeting with a representative of your organization to learn more about your work and proposal during the weeks of February 12 or 19. Decisions are announced by the following April.

Following decisions, all partners are required to complete a partnership update (also known as a “progress report”), within two months of the project end date provided in the application. Questions from the partnership update will be shared with all grant partners following notification of a grant award.

Our [Youth Fund and Committee](#) provide a unique opportunity for high school students to learn about philanthropy and experience grantmaking firsthand. We recognize that this creates a more labor-intensive application process than you might typically expect from our Community Foundation. We appreciate our partners’ willingness to support this experience for our students. We are happy to answer questions or offer support as needed.

## NEED HELP?

- For questions related to the content of your proposal, eligibility requirements, or support identifying a fiscal sponsor, call Chantal Pasag at 616.454.1751 x 124, or email [CPasag@GRFoundation.org](mailto:CPasag@GRFoundation.org).
- For technical assistance with the online application, call Keri Jaynes at 616.284.4911 or email [KJaynes@GRFoundation.org](mailto:KJaynes@GRFoundation.org).

# YOUTH GRANT APPLICATION QUESTIONS

The grant application must be completed online. You may choose to complete a traditional written application in narrative form, or we highly encourage you to submit a video\* up to five minutes in length that addresses the questions below.

*\*Note: video applications will still require the submission of a project budget and demographic information.*

- **Youth Involvement**
  - Youth grants seek to support projects that not only have youth participants but also build leadership capacity. Please describe how youth take a leadership role in the planning and implementation of this project (Please note that youth participating in programs and submitting pre and post-survey data is not sufficient.)
  - Estimate the number of youth who will participate, including age information (based on similar or past projects completed).
  - How will youth be identified, selected, or recruited for participation in the project? How does the project engage diverse youth audiences?
  - Describe the role of adults in the project and their qualifications.
  
- **Youth Project Information**
  - Describe your project as instructed below (note that youth are reviewing your applications- please be as clear and concise in your responses as possible)
    - Provide a SPECIFIC and CONCISE description of the proposed project or program.
    - Include a timeline and expected date of completion.
    - Specify how often the activity will take place, the location, the length of each session, and on how many occasions the activity takes place. (For example, an activity occurs twice each week for six hours per week, over a ten-week period.)
    - Briefly address how you will shift your program if COVID restrictions are still in place.
    - Include a website link for additional information on your project, if available.
  - What is the goal of your project? Your goal should be Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Realistic, Time-bound, Inclusive, and Equitable.
  - What issue area or need area (from the list on page 1) does your project or program address?
  - How does your project reflect the values and North Star of the Grand Rapids Community Foundation?
  
- **Youth Evaluation**
  - What makes this project or program unique from others in the community?
  - What specific and quantifiable measurement will you use to determine if your project was successful? If it is an existing program, what actions have you taken to improve it?
  
- **Project Budget\***
  - Which specific portion of the expenses listed in your project budget would be paid for with this grant?
  - If this proposal is not fully funded, will you carry out the project? If so, where will you find funding?
  - Provide the total budget amount for the organization's annual operating budget.
  - Project Budget: List all expenses and income sources for your project, including the status of other grant sources, and specify EXACTLY how requested grant funds will be used (i.e.; 25 calculators @ \$10 each=\$250.00).
  
- **Demographics\***
  - Organizations are asked to provide gender identity and racial/ethnic identity demographic information for the Clients, Staff, Board, and Volunteers.

\*Submission of project budget and demographic information still required for video submissions

The application also includes an option to attach documents about the project or organization that you believe would be helpful for reviewers to know (*response optional*).