A total of $55,000 is available to assist with the enhancement or implementation of youth-serving programs in Kent County. Typically, grant awards range from $1,000 to $7,000, with an average award amount of $3,000.

In the fall of 2020, YGC members conducted a needs assessment of students in Kent County. Data from this survey, in conjunction with Grand Rapids Community Foundation’s commitment to equity, informed a request for proposals that address:

- racial justice via community organizing and youth advocacy
- access to mental health services and resources, particularly in response to the stress and isolation youth are experiencing as a result of COVID-19
- college and/or career preparation

Priority will be given to proposals that come from organizations led by people of color (at all levels of staff, board, and volunteers), that serve youth of color, and that build leadership capacity in youth, allowing them to co-create and co-implement programming focused on the issues listed above.

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.

- 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
- Programs where youth learn about the history of people of color and systems of oppression in the United States
- Programs promoting a climate of acceptance at youth-serving organizations, including nonprofits and schools, among students and teachers/staff (racial identity, gender identity, sexuality, body image, ability, etc.)
- 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)
- 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
- Employment skills trainings, job placements, internships

**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 that do not discriminate in hiring of 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 15, 2021. Decisions are announced by the following April.

**HELPFUL HINTS**

Historically, the Youth Grant Committee has looked more favorably on proposals for projects that:

- Have a clear-cut, organized goal with foreseeable long-term benefits for youth in the greater Grand Rapids area.
- Are original, unique, well-written and CREATIVE!
- Involve youth in program development and/or implementation.
The online application requires a project budget.

- List all expenses and income sources for your project, including the status of other grant sources (pending or confirmed).
- Specify EXACTLY how requested grant funds will be used (i.e.; 25 calculators @ $10 each=$250.00).

**NEED HELP?**

- For questions related to the content of your proposal, eligibility requirements, or support identifying a fiscal sponsor, call Erika VanDyke at 616-454-1751 ext. 135, or email evandyke@grfoundation.org.
- For technical assistance with the online application, call Keri Jaynes at 616-284-4911 or email kjaynes@grfoundation.org.

**YOUTH GRANT APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

The grant application must be completed online. The application requires submission of a budget and narrative responses to the following questions:

- **Youth Project Information**
  - Describe your project as instructed below (300 words or less)
    - Provide a SPECIFIC and CONCISE description of the proposed project or program.
    - Include a timeline and expected date of completion (projects should take place between June and November of the grant year).
    - Specify how often the activity will take place, the location, 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.
  - What is the goal of your project? Your goal should be Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely. (50 words or less)
  - What issue area or need area (from the list on page 1) does your project or program address? (20 words or less)
  - How does your project reflect the values and North Star of the Grand Rapids Community Foundation? (100 words or less)

- **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. (100 words or less)
  - Estimate the number of youth who will participate, including age information (based on similar or past projects completed). (50 words or less)
  - How will youth be identified, selected, or recruited for participation in the project? How does the project engage diverse youth audiences? (100 words or less)
  - Describe the role of adults in the project, and their qualifications. (50 words or less)

- **Youth Evaluation**
  - 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? (200 words or less)
  - Which specific portion of the expenses listed in your 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?
  - What makes this project or program unique from others in the community? (100 words or less)

- **Demographics**
  - Organizations are asked to provide gender identity and racial/ethnic identity demographic information for the Clients, Staff, Board and Volunteers.