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THE
Youth Change Campaign™
An initiative for the
Social Innovation Fund

Of the Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act held by the Corporation for National and
Community Service

CALL TO GRANTMAKERS

IN PURSUIT OF LEVERAGING SOCIAL INNOVATION FUNDS
FOR SOUTHERN YOUTH

LETTERS OF INTENT DUE FEBRUARY 12, 2010



Overview

The Youth Change Campaign is intended to engage, empower and inspire community-focused youth leadership in the American South. The Campaign endeavors to demonstrate and build the power of youth leadership and the ability to change communities by developing cadres of young leaders and philanthropists. This philanthropic innovation led by Operation REACH Inc. is intended to create institutional transformation in the southern region within the philanthropic sector by giving vulnerable youth access to philanthropy as a tool for furthering social justice causes, community transformation and youth movement building. The goal is to elevate, cultivate and celebrate youth leadership, its accomplishments, and to help youth seek platforms to instigate community change. To achieve this mission, we partner with local community foundations and other progressive regional and national grantmakers and individual donors to establish youth donor-advised funds governed by local youth.

The benefits of youth engagement in philanthropy are countless and well documented in empirical studies and independent evaluation studies that provide strong evidence that youth engaged:

- Feel that their voices are heard and their opinions valued
- Gain experience addressing community problems through grantmaking
- Can make a difference in their communities by serving in leadership roles
- Learn about foundations and the non-profit sector.
- Gain leadership skills
- Expand their horizons about social conditions
- Work with others from different socio-economic, ethnic and racial, and religious backgrounds.
- Become more civically engaged throughout adulthood

Our Core Values

- Youth Engagement and Leadership
- Community Philanthropy
- Entrepreneurial Innovation
- Youth Activism

The Youth Change Campaign grantmaking and youth movement building strategy is deployed by:

- Identifying leading youth groups that have strong values for youth engagement;
- Resourcing community actions initiated and led by youth;
- Providing training and technical support to unincorporated youth groups and leaders that show the most promise;
- Leveraging cross sector support and engaging constituent in fundraising from the base to help build and sustain the fund;
- Serving as a funding intermediary for like-minded funders who want to contribute towards youth leadership development;
- Mobilizing and educating local funders and seeking allocations from their respective establishments to be deliberated by youth advisors; and
- Organizing and promoting the development of an overarching community youth development agenda.

The Context

The explanation for poverty trends in the South is represented by a demography of minority children and youth who are more likely to be born into impoverished families, an economy of persistently high underemployment rates and global changes resulting in higher unemployment, and a lagging history of poverty in Deep South states and Southern Appalachian states, where the largest shares of impoverished children have resided since the U.S. Census began keeping count. Compelling studies by reputable institutions trending social indicators in the south have consistently reported a downward spiraling of quality of life indicators for youth growing up in the south. Simultaneously, strong evidence exist illustrating regional disparities in the level of philanthropic investment leveraged to address persisting social conditions for youth in southern communities.

More than a decade of strong evidence demonstrates positive outcomes for youth and communities associated with youth philanthropy initiatives. The Michigan Area Foundations youth philanthropy initiative, capitalized by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, stands as the quintessential national and international model for what youth philanthropy can catalyze and accomplish for a region. This iconic model galvanized resources that led to the proliferation of philanthropic institutions established for the purpose of investing in youth and re-energized a base of donor investments in its youth. Nationally, youth philanthropy initiatives are geographically and indiscriminately scattered, with most efforts concentrated in the Northeast, Midwest, and metro areas of California, southern youth are greatly underserved in the youth philanthropy field. According to *Changing the Face of Giving*, a report by the Youth Leadership Institute of The James Irvin Foundation, the uneven distribution of youth philanthropy programs exists in a random geographical disbursement because of varying degrees of support. Consequently, in the southern landscape, the strong presence of youth philanthropy is non-existent.

All sources concur that youth who are engaged civically and or through volunteerism experience increased academic achievement, better school attendance and lower dropout rates, greater awareness of career opportunities, increased acceptance of diversity, improved social behavior, and greater likelihood of civic participation as adults. Youth philanthropy provides a means to an end to reversing rampant pathologic social conditions in southern communities.

The Youth Change Campaign provides a valuable framework by which to explore the twin goals of increasing the involvement of young people in community philanthropy and providing mechanisms for local communities to recognize and celebrate the positive role that young people can play in community life and creating social change. The Campaign seeks to establish permanent donor-advised Youth Change Funds at local foundations across the region, controlled by local youth and granted to youth groups that are exploring innovative strategies that engage youth in addressing social problems plaguing southern youth that will help them transform communities into more vibrant places where young people can live, learn, lead, thrive and grow.

Southern States of Interests

Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, Florida, Texas

About the Social Innovation Fund

The Social Innovation Fund, a new public-private collaboration created by the 2009 Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, is designed to create new knowledge about how to solve social challenges in the areas of economic opportunity, youth development and school support, and healthy futures, and to improve our nation's problem-solving infrastructure in low-income communities.

In Fiscal Year 2010, the Corporation will award up to \$50 million in Federal funding to an estimated five to seven intermediary organizations. Annual awards, which will extend for five years, are expected to be in the range of \$5 to \$10 million and must be matched 1:1 in cash.

Community organizations will receive financial support from intermediaries on the order of no less than \$100,000 per year for three to five years, as well as strategic support in areas such as management, and evaluation. Community organizations must also provide a 1:1 cash match for the total amount—Federal and private dollars—they receive from the intermediaries. For more detailed information and to view the draft funding notice, visit the Corporation for National and Community Service Website <http://www.nationalservice.gov/about/serveamerica/innovation.asp>

A Collaborative Funding Model

The Youth Change Campaign is based on a collaborative funding model with progressive public and private funders interested in catalyzing movement-building and community organizing that inspires populations across race, ethnicity, class, age, gender, and sector to engage collectively on behalf of vulnerable children and youth. Operation REACH Inc currently has two partnering options for collaborating grantmakers:

1. Catalytic Funders- Funding partners that will make grants/donations of not less than \$500,000 toward matching requirements of the Social Innovation Fund and will use the Youth Change Campaign as a strategic intermediary . These collaborating funders will help capitalize this effort with an initial total investment of \$6 million to launch the fund. This initial investment will be leveraged as a dollar for dollar match request from the **Social Innovation Fund**. Securing a match from the Social Innovation Fund has the potential for increasing this fund to \$12million in total seed funds raised. The Social Innovation Fund requires dollar for dollar matching of federal dollars at every level towards the end of expanding public private investment.
2. Sub-grantees- Local foundations interested in replicating this strategy and hosting an endowed Youth Change Fund. As a requirement of the Social Innovation Fund, these partners will be responsible for getting resources on to the ground for implementation of local innovations by deploying the Youth Change Campaign movement building and grantmaking strategy.

In order to further multiply this fund, increase the collaborative effort and mobilize donors across sectors, gender, race and class, local foundations (sub-grantees) will be challenged to respond to a rallying call (Campaign style) to raise dollar for dollar matching funds in select southern cities/towns to establish an endowed *Youth Change Fund* as part of their respective portfolio. The Youth Change Funds will be established in perpetuity and governed by local youth advisory groups. The annual yield will be granted to seed innovation by local youth who otherwise would not have access to philanthropic resources. Grantmaking will be done strategically according to a locally developed “*youth community change metric*,” developed by community youth. Institutionalizing the Youth Change giving strategy within the fabric of communities will minimally ensure a stable and permanent source of funds available to youth living in vulnerable communities. High priority will be given to establishing Youth Change Funds in rural communities. Furthermore, the multiplicative factor of providing funding into perpetuity ensures a 100-fold return on the initial investment and the promise of continuous social impacts for vulnerable youth growing up in the Deep South.

This approach will provide an effective, efficient and sustainable strategy to increase philanthropic investment and social impact for vulnerable children and youth residing in the Deep South.

Operation REACH is currently identifying local grantmaking entities that can serve as potential subgrantees that are able to accept and re-grant federal dollars. Our goal is to establish 12 funds of up to \$1M in each priority southern state. We are also seeking catalytic funders that can provide non-federal matching dollars. Interested grantmaking entities can join this initiative at either level or both. Operation REACH will:

1. Provide Sub-grantees with challenge grants ranging from \$100,000- \$500,000 that are intended to magnetize deeper investment in youth in communities across the south.
2. Ensure that the agreement between the co-funders is clearly articulated and operates effectively.
3. Provide training support in an advisory role to foundations in youth development and empowerment strategies.
4. Allocate sufficient funds within the established grant pool to ensure that each participating foundation can appoint a youth philanthropy support worker on a part-time basis.
5. Serve as the central project management and support team to ensure compliance and documentation of impacts and outcomes.
6. Provide a national and regional platform to elevate progressive funders and innovative regional strategies at work to address youth engagement in social problem solving.

Depending on the needs of each foundation, the support from Operation REACH would include:

- Technical advice to assist in the development of the grantmaking strategy.
- Small grants to foundation partners to cover initial costs of setting up the program.
- Access to national experts in the youth development/leadership field

Identifying Matching Funds

Subgrantees may consider a range of options for mobilizing local community supports and magnetizing matching funds for the endowment of a Youth Change Fund. Funds may be provided as cash matches from private, public (non-federal) sources. Additionally, foundations may consider the following:

- Internal reallocations/reprogramming of existing grantmaking portfolio supporting youth
- Internal reallocations of diversified funding portfolios
- Soliciting new donors or encouraging support from existing donors
- Securing funding from local municipal or state government

Essential Requirements of Collaborative Funding Partners:

To become a collaborative partner in this initiative will require the commitment and active support by the foundation's board to the involvement of young people in the organization's philanthropic activities, which will be crucial to the launch and sustainability of the Youth Change Fund. The Youth Change Fund requires a dedicated staff position (part-time) to recruit, train and support the young people, and needs to be someone with the appropriate skills and experience. In order to ensure the success of the replication:

1. Sub-grantee must have or be willing to build capacity to implement the initiative in a way which assists the foundation's growth rather than depletes existing resources.
2. Organizational/board commitment to involving and supporting young people.
3. Proposed strategy and partnerships with progressive youth networks within the community to facilitate implementation.

Added Value to Youth and Foundations:

In order to maximize the social and educational opportunities offered through participation in the Youth Change Campaign, annual forums will be held to bring the young people together to share their experiences and learn about the different approaches and activities being undertaken by Youth Advisory Committees across the southern region. The Youth Change Campaign will also:

- Increase the involvement of young people in community philanthropy, in particular through the establishment of permanent youth committees within established community foundations.
- Involve youth committees in creating a long-term vision for their communities, mapping community needs and gaps, raising funds, and making grants to support their vision. These youth committees will add different perspectives, higher visibility and new vitality to existing community foundations through increased youth engagement in their activities.
- Provide an effective mechanism for local communities to recognize and celebrate the positive role young people can play in community life.

Letters of Intent

We are currently seeking foundation partners who are willing to lead with bold strategies to turn the dial on spiraling quality of life indicators for southern youth by creating inclusive communities where youth can participate in community philanthropy and lead with ideas of how to address the myriad of issues plaguing today's youth. To show your support for this initiative, please forward us a letter of intent. This letter of intent is not a binding agreement. Pending an award from the Social Innovation Fund, formal memoranda of understanding (M.O.U.) will be later negotiated with funding partners. We realize that this document may stimulate a larger conversation within your institution that may warrant a longer period of due diligence. However, because time is of the essence, all interested partners must submit a preliminary letter of intent addressing the following:

In a letter of interests (not to exceed two type-written pages):

- Describe current efforts and/or your foundation's commitment to involve youth
- What is your current disaggregated level of investment in local youth programs (if data is available).
- Describe your foundation's willingness to secure a dollar for dollar match through internal reallocations or donor outreach.
- Identify your funding territory with a brief overview of assets and needs.
- Include contact information and email address of the contact person submitting

Letters of intent are due by *February 12, 2010*. Submissions may be sent electronically or by mail. A follow-up conference call will be convened with all parties interested in joining this initiative.

For electronic submissions:

Hamilton Simons-Jones,
Chief Development Officer
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Mail to:

Operation REACH
National Headquarters
1700 Josephine St.
New Orleans, LA 70113

Current Support

Operation REACH Inc. is a national service organization that is supported by the Corporation for National and Community Service to engage, empower and inspire youth leadership across the American South. Through its grantmaking strategy, Operation REACH Inc. has invested more than \$500,000 in support to youth leadership groups across the south. Operation REACH Inc. has received generous support from the W.K Kellogg Foundation, Foundation for the Midsouth, 21st Century Foundation and the Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation to increase philanthropic investment in vulnerable children and youth across the American South by building networks of progressive funders and establishing “Youth Change Funds”. Operation REACH Inc. is currently seeking partnerships with progressive national and local funders with a priority focus on vulnerable youth, particularly those residing in the Deep South, who will invest, as catalyst funders, in the launch of the Youth Change Campaign.

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