

## YOUTH EMPOWERMENT GRANT GUIDELINES

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In 2024, Aspen Community Foundation (ACF) is offering three competitive grant programs for nonprofit organizations in the Aspen to Parachute region. These grant programs are: Early Childhood, Youth Empowerment, and Human Services. Funding for these programs is made possible by annual contributions from donors wishing to support pooled grantmaking funds.

A total of \$200,000 will be awarded to nonprofit organizations through ACF's 2024 Youth Empowerment grant cycle. One application per organization will be accepted and requests in the \$10,000 to \$25,000 range are recommended. Applications will be reviewed according to this grant program's priorities, criteria, limitations, and available funds. Past funding from ACF or the Youth Empowerment Alliance (YEA) does not guarantee funding via this process.

### **GRANTMAKING PRIORITIES**

This competitive grant program prioritizes nonprofits working in the area of youth empowerment. The objective of this funding is to support equitable access to youth-driven and culturally responsive empowerment opportunities, career connected learning experiences, and connection to critical resources that are essential to youth gaining confidence and competency to thrive, now and in the future. Working with community partners, ACF's youth empowerment efforts build resiliency, improve educational outcomes, and strengthen physical, emotional, and mental health of youth throughout the Aspen to Parachute region.

### **IMPACT AREAS**

1. Career-connected and experiential learning opportunities and postsecondary planning support.
2. Opportunities for youth to learn, explore, and discover new interests and activities outside the classroom setting, and those that intentionally serve disengaged youth.
  - a. *ACF defines "disengaged youth" as individuals who are six to twenty-four years old who do not regularly participate in programs/experiences/opportunities beyond those mandated during the school-day or are neither enrolled in an educational institution or employed.*
3. Opportunities that support physical, social-emotional, and mental health, are culturally responsive, and grounded in youth-centered needs.

### **GRANTMAKING CRITERIA**

- Alignment with one of ACF's Youth Empowerment impact areas.
- Commitment to serving disengaged and under-resourced youth in the Aspen to Parachute region.
- Programs reflect youth voice and leadership.
- Programs demonstrate meaningful depth and duration and are culturally responsive.

- Programs/services are aligned with clearly articulated metrics and demonstrate impact upon youth.
- Demonstration of operational and financial health of organization, including efficiency, solvency and sustainability, leadership strength, and capacity.

## **ELIGIBILITY**

Eligible organizations:

- Are classified as tax exempt under the provision of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, have a fiscal sponsor with a 501(c)(3), or have public agency status.
- Are located in, and whose work primarily serves youth living in the Aspen to Parachute region.
- Serve youth ages six to twenty-four years old.

## **LIMITATIONS**

1. Requests are generally not considered for:

- Organizations outside of ACF's Aspen to Parachute service area
- Projects that have been completed prior to allocation decisions
- Deficits, retirement of debt, or endowments
- Religious purposes
- Political campaigns
- Medical research or hospital equipment
- Program design, product development, or marketing and promotion
- Conduit organizations (organizations or events that pass funds to other organizations)
- Individual schools/classrooms, departments/programs of universities or colleges, or education foundations/organizations that have not coordinated the request with their central school district/university administration or fundraising arm
- Organizations, projects, or programs in operation for less than one year or are less than one year from receipt of 501(c)(3) approval
- Organizations in leadership transition
- Organizations primarily supported by tax-derived funding unless funding supports a program that is outside of the organization's operating budget

2. Aspen Community Foundation does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, physical circumstances, or national origin.

Applicants must hold and demonstrate similar standards.

## **GRANT PROCESS**

Youth Empowerment grant proposals and supporting documents must be submitted via ACF's online grants management platform. The timeline for this grant process is outlined below.

Organizations seeking funding should review grant guidelines and determine if their request aligns with ACF's Youth Empowerment priorities and criteria. Eligible organizations are invited to begin the application process by accessing the grant application portal. For 2024, all applicants will create an account in ACF's new grant management system.

### **NEW ACCOUNT CREATION/FOUNDANT GRANT PORTAL**

- Click this [link](#) and "Create New Account" to register your organization. You will need your organization's EIN/Tax ID number to complete this process. If you already have set up an account, use your same log-in credentials for this grant process.
- Upon registering, an auto generated verification message will be sent to your email. This message confirms your organization will receive system communications. All emails from the ACF grants portal will be sent by [administrator@grantinterface.com](mailto:administrator@grantinterface.com). Please add this address to your contact list.
- Your newly created account will provide online access to all ACF grant processes. To add additional users, please contact the ACF Grants Manager.
- To apply for this grant process, select "ACF Youth Empowerment Grant 2024" from dropdown options.
- Questions with an asterisk require a response.
- Your work can be saved at any time by clicking the save button located at the bottom of your screen. Please note: The Foundant system does not autosave. If you leave or time-out on a page without saving, your work will be lost and will need to be reentered.
- Click "Submit" when you have completed your application.
- Need additional support?
  - The [Foundant Applicant Tutorial](#) article provides a step-by-step guide to account creation and application processes.
  - Contact ACF's Grants Manager at [Scott@AspenCommunityFoundation.org](mailto:Scott@AspenCommunityFoundation.org) or 970-925-9300.

### **2024 YOUTH EMPOWERMENT GRANT ELEMENTS**

#### **Eligibility Quiz**

Organizations will be asked to affirm that they:

- Are a 501(c)(3) organization, have a fiscal sponsor that is a 501(c)(3) organization, are a public agency.
- Serve youth in the Aspen to Parachute region
- Serve youth ages six to twenty-four

#### **Application**

In the application, you will be asked to provide the following information:

- 1. Youth Empowerment Grant Request**
  - a. Type of request (General Operating or Program/Project)
  - b. Purpose of request
  - c. Requested amount (\$10,000 to \$25,000 range recommended)

- d. Upload documents:
  - i. IRS Letter of Determination
  - ii. Organization logo

## **2. Board of Directors Overview**

- a. Name of current board chairperson
- b. Email of current board chairperson
  - i. *If your organization is awarded a grant, we will require an electronic signature on the grant agreement from your board chair. This will be requested via DocuSign.*
- c. Number of current board members
- d. How many board members made a charitable contribution to your organization last year?
- e. Board governance and effectiveness
  - i. *Summarize key issues related to board effectiveness that are being addressed this year.*
- f. Upload document:
  - i. List of current board members

## **3. Organization and Staff Overview**

- a. Mission statement
- b. Organization summary
  - i. *This should include a brief history of the organization and key programs and services offered.*
- c. Number of full-time employees
- d. Number of part-time employees
- e. Number of employees who are bilingual and/or bicultural
- f. Describe how volunteers support your programs or operations
- g. Annual salary of executive director
  - i. *This information will be kept confidential and used for regional analysis purposes only.*
- h. Number of years executive director has been in their current position
- i. Number of years executive director has been with the organization

## **4. Financial Overview**

- a. Fiscal year date range
- b. Current operating budget
- c. Total revenue and expenses for last fiscal year
- d. Total projected revenue and expenses for current fiscal year
- e. Anticipated budget for next fiscal year
- f. Explain any significant budget differences
- g. Current cash reserves
- h. If your organization has an endowment, please share the balance
- i. Upload documents:
  - i. Current FY Budget vs. Actual
  - ii. Current YTD Balance Sheet
  - iii. Last FY Income and Expenses
  - iv. Last FY Balance

v. Most recent 990

5. **Demographics and Impact Overview**

- a. Tell us about the youth you serve
- b. Number of youth served by age group
- c. Number of youth served who are low income
- d. Number of youth served by geographic region
- e. Demographics of youth served
- f. Describe how you are measuring your organization's impact
  - i. *What are your results (or anticipated results if a new program/initiative)?*
- g. Describe how you collaborate to fulfill your mission and/or enhance your programs or services
- h. What challenges or barriers are most likely to prevent you from accomplishing your goals this year?

6. **Narrative.** *Based on the youth empowerment impact area/s your proposal addresses, please respond to the following questions.*

- a. **Question 1:** Describe your request and its alignment with the selected youth empowerment impact area. Please note: Requests may align with more than one.
  - i. **Impact Area 1:** Career-connected and experiential learning opportunities and postsecondary planning support.
  - ii. **Impact Area 2:** Opportunities for youth to learn, explore, and discover new interests and activities outside the classroom setting.
  - iii. **Impact Area 3:** Opportunities that support physical, social-emotional, and mental health.
- b. **Question 2:** Describe how you increase access to opportunities. How do you intentionally serve disengaged and under resourced youth?
- c. **Question 3:** Describe the depth and duration of the opportunities provided for youth.
- d. **Question 4:** Describe how your program/work of your organization reflects youth voice.
- e. **Question 5:** Describe how your program/work of your organization reflects youth leadership.
- f. **Question 6:** Describe how your program/work of your organization is culturally responsive.

7. Review your application and submit. You will receive an email confirmation once your grant has been submitted.

**GRANT REVIEW AND ADMINISTRATION**

- This is a competitive process and not all requests will be funded. Past funding from ACF or the Youth Empowerment Alliance (YEA) does not guarantee funding via this process.
- Each application is assessed on its own merit according to the scoring criteria. A maximum score of 25 is possible.

- Applications scoring 15 and above and those with a high degree of scoring variability among reviewers will be selected for discussion prior to finalization.
- Higher scoring applications may only receive a percentage of the total request, typically between 60% and 75% of the requested amount. This will vary depending on fund availability.
- ACF staff may elect at any time to schedule a meeting with the organization’s executive director and/or board chair to discuss the proposal or request clarifying information.
- If the grant’s contact person becomes unavailable after application submission, please notify ACF’s Grants Manager of a new contact. Applications will not be considered if ACF staff cannot reach the contact person.
- Grant recommendations are reviewed by ACF’s Board of Directors. Final grant approval is the sole responsibility of ACF’s Board of Directors. The Board requests that its members are not lobbied about grant proposals.
- Organizations receiving funding will be required to sign an agreement that includes the grant’s terms and conditions, including marketing and reporting requirements, limitations on grant funds, disposition of unused funds, and other conditions.

**TIMELINE**

- **July 8, 2024**
  - Process opens
- **July 8 – August 9, 2024**
  - Applications accepted, office hour sessions, applicant support
- **August 9, 2024**
  - Process closes at 5pm (Mountain Standard Time)
- **August 12 – September 6, 2024**
  - Application scoring and recommendations completed by ACF review committee
- **September 9 – 20, 2024**
  - Grant recommendations reviewed and approved by ACF board
- **September 23 – October 4, 2024**
  - Grantee notifications, declination calls, grant agreements, fund distribution

CRITERIA	EXCELLENT - 5	ABOVE AVERAGE - 4	AVERAGE - 3	BELOW AVERAGE - 2	POOR - 1
<b>Priority Area Alignment</b>	Demonstrates exceptional alignment with one or more priority areas	Demonstrates strong alignment with one or more priority areas	Demonstrates moderate alignment with one or more priority areas	Demonstrates some alignment with one or more priority areas	No explicit alignment with priority areas
<b>Disengaged and Under-Resourced Youth</b>	Demonstrates exceptional commitment to serving disengaged and under-resourced youth	Demonstrates strong commitment to serving disengaged and under-resourced youth	Demonstrates moderate commitment to serving disengaged and under-resourced youth	Demonstrates some commitment to serving disengaged and under-resourced youth	Does not demonstrate commitment to serving disengaged and under-resourced youth
<b>Youth Voice and Leadership</b>	Demonstrates exceptional commitment to engaging youth voice and leadership	Demonstrates strong commitment to engaging youth voice and leadership	Demonstrates moderate commitment to engaging youth voice and leadership	Demonstrates some commitment to engaging youth voice and leadership	Does not demonstrate commitment to engaging youth voice and leadership
<b>Depth, Duration, and Cultural Responsiveness</b>	Demonstrates exceptional depth, duration, and cultural responsiveness in its contact with youth	Demonstrates meaningful depth, duration, and cultural responsiveness in its contact with youth	Demonstrates moderate depth, duration, and cultural responsiveness in its contact with youth	Demonstrates some depth, duration, and cultural responsiveness in its contact with youth	Does not demonstrate depth, duration, and cultural responsiveness in its contact with youth
<b>Metrics and Impact</b>	Applies outstanding metrics and demonstrates exceptional impact on youth	Applies strong metrics and demonstrates effective impact on youth	Applies average metrics and demonstrates moderate impact on youth	Applies some metrics and demonstrates some impact on youth	Does not apply or describe metrics. Lacks impact on youth or how it would impact youth is unclear

Criteria	Higher Scoring Organizations Will:
<b>Priority Area Alignment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly articulate the request's alignment with one or more priority areas</li> </ul>
<b>Disengaged and Under-Resourced Youth</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate at least 10% of youth served are disengaged -or-</li> <li>Demonstrate that at least 10% of youth served are economically disadvantaged</li> </ul>
<b>Youth Voice and Leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate how (and the extent) youth are involved with influencing, participating, and or leading the work of the organization</li> </ul>
<b>Depth, Duration, and Cultural Responsiveness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Demonstrate regular, consistent, and culturally responsive interactions with youth</li> </ul>
<b>Metrics and Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly define and demonstrate the metrics used to determine impact</li> <li>Articulate how/in what ways the organization/program is impacting youth and/or a target population</li> </ul>

*Each application is assessed on its own merit against the scoring criteria. Applications scoring 15 and above and those with a high degree of scoring variability among reviewers will be selected for further discussion prior to finalization.*

**ORGANIZATION NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**REQUEST AMOUNT:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**REQUEST PURPOSE:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**REVIEWER INITIALS:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**TOTAL SCORE:** \_\_\_\_\_

ELIGIBILITY*	YES	NO
Organization is a 501c3, public agency, or has fiscal sponsor		
Organization is headquartered in Aspen to Parachute region		
Organization primarily serves the Aspen to Parachute region		

LIMITATIONS**	YES	NO
Project completed prior to allocation decisions		
Deficits, retirement of debt, endowments, capital campaigns		
Religious purposes		
Political campaigns		
Medical research or hospital equipment		
Conduit organization (intending to pass funds to other organizations)		
In operation for less than one year		
In leadership transition		

**CRITERIA – 25 Points Total**

- Priority area alignment
- Serving disengaged and under-resourced youth
- Commitment to youth voice and leadership
- Depth and duration of interactions and cultural responsiveness
- Measurement and Demonstration of Impact

***	YES	NO	N/A
Requests from schools: coordinated with district leadership?			
Requests from government: program/project outside the operating budget?			

CRITERIA	EXCELLENT 5	ABOVE AVERAGE 4	AVERAGE 3	BELOW AVERAGE 2	POOR 1	COMMENTS
Priority Area Alignment						
Serving Disengaged and Under-Resourced Youth						
Youth Voice and Leadership						
Depth, Duration, and Cultural Responsiveness						
Measurement and Demonstration of Impact						

**QUESTIONS/COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATION:**