**FYC**

**Request for Proposals**

The Fund for Youth Connectivity (FYC) seeks to help opportunity youth get access to mobile devices, connectivity, and gain new skills needed to use these devices to amplify their voices – creating a ripple effect so that the relatively modest number of youth that receive support through this program, may help to better the lives of many more opportunity youth across the United States. The FYC will utilize the Aspen Forum for Community Solutions’(AFCS) network of 24 Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund (OYIF) sites across the country, and our partnership with Opportunity Youth United (OYU) to accomplish this project.

1. **Background and Purpose**

In the United States, there are currently 4.9 million youth between the ages of 16 and 24 who are out of school and not working. These opportunity youth include a wide range of young people, from those nearing completion of their High School Equivalency, to those exiting the juvenile justice system, to those who have been cycling through low-wage, unstable employment for several years. If given access to personal mobile technologies and wireless services, and the skills to use devices and apps, opportunity youth will be better positioned to access jobs, education and other important life skills (such as access to banking, health, transportation, etc.). Moreover, better access to communications technology can also help to amplify authentic voices of opportunity youth to speak out, educate others, and address community issues.

In response, the FYC is committed to providing opportunity youth with access to mobile devices, data, instruction in basic use/privacy/safety techniques, as well as media production. Through the FYC, AFCS will work with selected OYIF sites and their established local youth media organization partner [in the selected communities] to provide youth access to aforementioned devices and trainings.

*Rationale:* By providing opportunity youth *a*ccess to technologies, wireless services, and devise training, opportunity youth will be more equipped to reconnect to jobs and education. Additionally, access will give opportunity youth the opportunity to further develop important life skills (such as access to banking, health, transportation, etc.). as well as amplify their voices to speak out, educate others and address community issues.

*Approach:* AFCS will utilize the network of 24 OYIF grantee communities across the country to run a competition among sites that meet our re-granting criteria for this project. These one year grants will go to the highest quality proposals from communities that have an established expertise working with low-income youth in providing access to technology and media production. The selected sites will work in partnership with AFCS and a local media organization to execute the mission of the FYC. In addition to the selected OYIF sites, we will partner with [Opportunity Youth United](https://oyunited.org/), a national youth leadership organization, to serve roughly 100 opportunity youth.

*Connectivity*: The FYC will work with selected OYIF grantee communities to help opportunity youth get access to new mobile devices/tablets and/or connectivity. The 2-3 re-grants made will serve roughly 50-90 youth per site (depending on the number of sites selected).

*Skills Development.* The FYC seeks to invest in current OYIF sites that will work in partnership with a local youth media organization to provide opportunity youth with training that will cover basic use/privacy/safety techniques, as well as a course in media production. In addition to the training, selected OYIF sites will have the opportunity to send a representative to attend the OYIF Spring 2018 convening to participate in a training session on digital literacy and competency which they will in turn take back to their communities to implement.

*Youth Voice:* Access to devices and connectivity will help to amplify authentic voices of opportunity youth to speak out, educate others and address community issues. A portion of the opportunity youth given devices and/or connectivity will create and submit a video which will be shared with the local backbone agencies, OYU and AFCS. These videos will help to lift up youth voice in our work, and further support youth to tell their stories in their own words. Youth videos will be designed with the knowledge that public showings may occur in the future.

1. **Eligibility Criteria**

*Applicants*

The FYC grantees will be selected from the 24 existing OYIF grantee communities. We will select 2-3 communities of those that apply from the OYIF network.

*Target Population*

The FYC is focused on opportunity youth. Equity is a priority of AFCS. We have a deep commitment to improving outcomes for the most vulnerable youth. We welcome applications to the FYC that focus on creating more equitable outcomes for specific groups, such as, but not limited to, young men and boys of color, young women and girls of color, youth involved in the child welfare system or transitioning out of foster care, youth involved in the juvenile justice system, or parenting youth. The FYC will provide mobile devices, connectivity and skills instruction to opportunity youth who would not otherwise have the opportunity to access or develop these skills.

*Eligibility Criteria*

1. Be a current OYIF site and non-profit organization.
2. Have an established partnership with a local media organization that has a track record of working successfully with opportunity youth.

\*An established partnership is preferred however we will accept applicants that do not have an established partnership.

1. Dedicate the large majority of grant funds to mobile devices, connectivity and local youth media partner.
2. Partner from local youth media organization has demonstrated a willingness or confirmed commitment to working on this project.
3. Implementation and opportunity youth training must be completed within 12 months of the start date.
4. Projects funded through the FYC will be documented by AFCS and its partners to be shared via presentations and reports. All applicants must be willing to collect and share programmatic and outcome data with AFCS, its evaluation partners, and have information about their project publicly disseminated.

*Technology & Program Design Specifications*

1. The youth who receive the devices and connectivity do not need to be the same youth who receive the media production training.
2. Basic skills training should include how to use the device, general online safety training, and privacy training, at minimum.
3. Media production training should include approximately 2 sessions, and include production of a 2-3 minute biographic video which will be shared across partners in the project (local organizations in the grant, OYU, and AFCS) and which can be used by any of these partners. The media production training organization will secure appropriate releases and copyright assignation as needed.
4. Buying new plans/devices for youth recipients is **not a re-grant requirement.**  FYC funds can be used to reimburse youth who already have plans to assist them in their payments.
5. Selected OYIF sites will send at least one representative to attend a session at the OYIF Spring 2018 convening on digital literacy and competency which they will take back to their communities to teach and integrate into their youth development and training efforts.
6. **Selection Criteria**

AFCS and its partners have identified the following selection criteria for the FYC and will assess eligible applicants on the strength of their proposal in these areas:

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| 1. **Experience and Track Record**  i. Serving an opportunity youth population  ii. Commitment to youth voice, ownership, and engagement in the opportunity youth effort  iii. Established relationship with local youth media organization working with opportunity youth  iv. Previous expertise working with low-income youth and providing access to technology and media production |
| 2. **Feasibility: is the project accomplishable given the resources and the time available?** |
| 3. **Impact: is the project likely to produce the impact it seeks? Does the applicant have a plan to collect data that will demonstrate that impact? (Data includes the number of youth-receiving phones, signed up for courses and completing courses)** |
| 4. **Preference will be given to applications that prioritize vulnerable groups (i.e. boys and young men of color, girls and young women of color, youth involved in the child welfare system or transitioning out of foster care, youth involved in the juvenile justice system or parenting youth).** |

1. **Required Application Components**
2. **Application Cover Sheet**
3. **Proposal Narrative that responds to Section III: Selection Criteria and addresses the prompts and/or questions raised below** —in less than 5 pages
   1. Experience and Track Record (not to exceed one page)
      1. Describe your experience serving the opportunity youth population and how you or your selected partner have previously provided access to technology and media production.
      2. Describe your partnership with the local youth media organization and how you have previously collaborated to serve opportunity youth.
   2. Design and Implementation
      1. Describe the proposed project in detail, including:
         1. How many total opportunity youth will be served, over what time period? If there are particular sub-populations of opportunity youth that will be focused on, what are they?
         2. Describe how you will identify which opportunity youth will receive devices and how you will engage them throughout this grant.
            1. How will you identify opportunity youth to provide devices to?
            2. How will you distribute devices to opportunity youth?
            3. Describe your approach to securing devices and connectivity, detailing probable device types and connectivity plans to be secured. Include cost estimates for both.
            4. What types of supports will be available for youth as they get their devices, sign up for their course and complete the course? What kind of basic device use, and safety/privacy training will be provided? Who will provide it, in what kind of setting?
            5. What kind of support will be available to youth throughout their one year connectivity contracts, should problems arise? Who will provide help?
         3. Describe how you will partner with the local youth media organization, including:
            1. What is your existing relationship with this organization?
            2. Describe the qualifications of the youth media partner to provide the designated training. Have they worked with opportunity youth before? Have they provided media production classes to youth before?
            3. Describe the curriculum/approach for the media production class. Briefly, what will happen in each session? (If an existing syllabus exists, please attach.)
            4. How will youth sign up for courses?
            5. What space will be used for the course?
            6. How you will partner to ensure youth are attending/completing their courses?
   3. Reporting
      1. Describe how you will track youth that receive devices/connectivity and participate and complete the media course. Describe whether your data collection system will be able to report results of the project, including total numbers of devices/connectivity contracts, total numbers of youth served (with demographic information such as race, gender, etc.), completion rates of training etc.
   4. Plan for Financing and Sustainability
      1. Describe any other public and private funding streams that will be used for the project.

**III. Budget and Budget Narrative:** Please attach/provide a budget narrative [12 months] for the proposal.

* Provide a budget narrative describing the total budget ($40,000-$70,000), the amount of funds requested and their proposed use. Budget narrative should not exceed one page, single spaced and should include, at minimum, specific line items for:
  + Devices
  + Connectivity
  + Backbone costs (may have sub-category costs)
  + Youth media training partner costs/contract (may have sub-category costs)
  + Other costs as appropriate to your project

**IV. Evidence of Non-Profit Status**: Please provide evidence that the fiscal agent (grant recipient) meets the requirements of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Please include a copy of your 501(c)(3) determination letter with your application.

**V. Attachments:**

* Please attach a letter of commitment and/or Memoranda of Understanding from the local youth media organization who you will partner with on course content, schedule and space.

**Proposals must be submitted to Christina Kostuk at** [**Christina.Kostuk@aspeninstitute.org**](mailto:christina.kostuk@aspeninstitute.org)**. Deadline for submission is August 31st, 2017 by 3:00 p.m. Eastern Time.**