

Community Investment Fund: Identify 'N Impact (INI) Grant Allocation Recommendations

Date: October 31, 2017

To: Community Development and Recreation Committee

From: Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration

Wards: All

SUMMARY

This report recommends approval of the following grants from Community Investment Funding, Identify and Impact (INI) youth-led Grant:

Of seventy-three (73) eligible submissions from youth-led groups to the Identify 'N Impact (INI) program, twenty-six (26) were shortlisted by a youth panel to proceed to the second stage of the application process. Ten (10) projects are recommended by a panel of youth for a total of \$100,000 in funding.

Information is also provided in this report about the Mental Health Skill Building Grant for Youth Workers and Community Leaders, which will strengthen the capacity of youth workers and community leaders to respond to the mental health needs of vulnerable youth and their families in support of the Toronto Youth Equity Strategy (TYES).

Grants help the City of Toronto achieve its social, economic and cultural goals for its residents. The City's goals are better achieved by supporting the work of organizations that are closer to the communities they serve.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration recommends that:

1. City Council approve total funding of \$100,000 allocated from the 2017 Identify 'N Impact Investment (INI) Program to ten (10) youth-led projects, as recommended in Appendices A and B, from the 2017 Approved Operating Budget for Social Development, Finance and Administration.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The recommendations in this report will have no impact beyond what has already been included in the 2017 Approved Operating Budget for Social Development, Finance and Administration.

This report recommends allocations for ten (10) organizations totalling up to \$100,000.

The Acting Chief Financial Officer has reviewed this report and agrees with the financial impact information.

DECISION HISTORY

The City of Toronto provides support to the not-for-profit sector through funding programs under the general authority for making municipal grants provided in Section 83 of the City of Toronto Act, 2006 (S.O. 2006, c.11).

In 2006, Council approved the Identify 'N Impact Youth Investment Program to fund youth-led projects.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2006/agendas/committees/cms/cms060608/it014.pdf>.

In 2017, Council approved a new framework for Community Investment Funding.

<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2017/cd/bgrd/backgroundfile-101395.pdf>.

COMMENTS

Identify 'N Impact (INI)

Overview

The Identify 'N Impact (INI) program provides youth-led groups with one-year grants of up to \$10,000 to lead and deliver projects promoting youth empowerment and community safety. The Community Funding Unit (CFU) and Youth Development Unit (YDU) collaborated to implement the 2017 INI program.

In 2017, projects were given priority for INI funding if they:

- Showed that youth are the leaders in project planning, management and delivery
- Involved youth from and/or based in a Neighbourhood Improvement Area (NIA)
- Were led by, or worked with, MVP youth. MVP stands for Most Vulnerable People and is the acronym used to describe "youth most vulnerable to involvement in serious violence and crime."
- Worked to advance issues outlined in TYES including: educational attainment, employment, housing, youth justice, mental health, life skills, mentorship and/or gender-based youth violence.
- Were run by groups that did not receive INI funding last year

Two different grant recommendation panels were created (one for each stage of the grant application process). Both panels were comprised of Toronto youth ages 16-29 and included youth from equity-seeking groups.

The first panel was comprised of nine (9) youth, including youth with lived experience and/or strong familiarity with the issue areas identified in TYES, members of the Toronto Youth Cabinet (TYC), members of the Poverty Reduction Office's Lived Experience Advisory Group (LEAG), and members of the Youth Health Action Network (YHAN), which recruits diverse youth living in NIAs. The second panel, the INI Judging Panel, was comprised of nine (9) new youth reviewers who are members of TYC or have lived experience and/or strong familiarity with the issue areas identified in TYES.

Application Process

A two-stage application process was used to reduce the administrative burden for applicants:

- **Brief Application:** in the first stage groups completed an online form that included questions about eligibility and their project idea. Ninety-nine (99) applications were received which city staff assessed for eligibility and completeness. A panel of youth then reviewed and assessed seventy-three (73) eligible applications to recommend a shortlist of twenty-six (26) projects for further consideration. Panel members provided insight on youth priorities, challenges and opportunities.
- **Budget and Work Plan:** the shortlisted groups were invited to submit a work plan and budget. Twenty-four (24) groups submitted completed documents. A second panel of youth reviewed and assessed the submissions and recommended ten (10) projects for funding. This means 14% of eligible applications were approved. It should be noted that the second stage was simplified for applicants. In 2016 shortlisted groups were also asked to submit a brief video about their project and this requirement was removed as a result of feedback received from applicants.

The following table shows the number of applications at each stage of the assessment process.

Table 1: Number of Applications at Each Stage of Assessment Process

Stage of Assessment Process	Number of Applications
Brief Applications Submitted	99
Eligible Applications	73
Shortlisted Applications	26
Full Applications Submitted	24
Applications Recommended for Funding	10

Applicant Support

The twenty-six (26) shortlisted groups were all matched with volunteer "Project Idea Mentors" who were recruited from KPMG Canada, Seneca College and City Divisions including SDFA and Toronto Public Health (TPH). The mentors provided feedback to help groups strengthen their project design and develop an effective work plan and budget.

INI grant recipients will also be supported through the Council-approved Organizational Mentor Pilot Project. A community organization with expertise providing capacity building supports to youth leaders and youth-led groups will mentor the youth leaders through the life of the grant and ensure the funded projects are implemented successfully.

Allocation Recommendations

Of the twenty-four (24) completed shortlisted applications, ten (10) are recommended for one year funding of \$10,000 each by the INI Judging Panel.

Recommended Projects will reach young people who are reflective of a number of equity-seeking communities, for example: Black youth living in Jane-Finch, Muslim women who have experienced poverty and trauma, and Spanish-speaking youth who are at risk of dropping out to school. Over 500 youth will be reached by the projects and all projects will engage youth living in NIAs.

The anticipated benefits for youth involved in the ten (10) recommended projects include:

- Opportunity to develop mixed media and performance arts skills while sharing culturally significant stories
- Mentorship and counselling for female youth who self-identify as surviving sexual violence
- Capacity building and networking for MVP youth who are in post-secondary education

The list of projects recommended for funding is provided in Appendix A. Brief summaries of the 10 recommended projects are provided in Appendix B. A list of the recommended declined shortlisted projects is provided in Appendix C.

Mental Health Skill Building Grant for Youth Workers and Community Leaders

During the summer of 2017 SDFA began collaborating to develop a grant to support the mental health of MVP (Most Vulnerable People) youth and their families. A literature review was conducted to identify best practices in mental health promotion. Key informant interviews were also held with a wide range of stakeholders, including representatives of youth-serving agencies, youth-led agencies, SDFA, TPH and other funders. This process identified the potential to improve mental health outcomes for MVP youth by leveraging the important role youth workers and community leaders play

in their lives. It was found that the provision of mental health skill building training would help youth workers and community leaders achieve this potential.

In response, the Mental Health Skill Building Grant for Youth Workers and Community Leaders was developed to strengthen the capacity of youth workers and community leaders to respond to the mental health needs of MVP youth and their families. This initiative reinforces several recommendations in TYES and aligns with the mental health promotion work that TPH is doing. The grant process will result in one agency being selected to receive up to \$100,000 in 2017. This grant will be made from the 2017 Approved Operating Budget for Social Development, Finance and Administration. The successful agency will develop and deliver a community-based mental health literacy and skills development pilot program, support trainees to utilize the skills they have learned and share knowledge they have developed with other agencies to enable replication of the program. The program will consist of evidence-informed group sessions designed to train youth workers and community leaders.

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SIGNATURE

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ATTACHMENTS

Appendix A: Identify 'N Impact Program - 2017 Allocation Recommendations
Appendix B: 2017 Summary of Projects Recommended for Funding – Identify 'N Impact (INI)
Appendix C: 2017 Shortlisted Projects Recommended for Decline – Identify 'N Impact (INI)

APPENDIX A

Identify 'N Impact Investment Program - 2017 Allocation Recommendations

	2017 INI Grant Recipients	Ward *	2016 Approved Allocation	2017 Amount Requested	2017 Amount Recommended
1	Avenida Latina Magazine	9	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
2	Camp Kinfolk	7	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
3	Female Youth Sexual Violence Program	7	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
4	Lay-Up Youth Basketball	22	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
5	Legacy Pieces	34	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
6	Ogaden Youth Forum (OYF)	12	\$0.00	\$12,200.00	\$10,000.00
7	Oxum Creative Collective	40	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
8	SoundCheck Youth Arts	7	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
9	Street Voices	19	\$0.00	\$10,140.00	\$10,000.00
10	West Side Scholars	8	\$0.00	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
	Total			\$102,340.00	\$100,000.00
	INI 2017 Budget				\$100,000.00

* Wards represent the mailing address of the applicant group. Project service locations vary considerably.