

ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITY THAT WOULD ALLOW FOR PROGRAM FUNDING

Proposal Overview

Submission by Jobs for the Future and the Aspen Forum for Community Solutions To the Corporation for National and Community Service's Social Innovation Fund

Jobs for the Future (JFF), as implementation partner for the Opportunity Youth Incentive Fund (OYIF), and in partnership with the Aspen Forum for Community Solutions (Aspen), is proposing to expand and deepen OYIF's work in up to 12 low-income communities across the nation through a four-year, \$8 million grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service's Social Innovation Fund (SIF). \$8 million in federal dollars will be matched by \$8 million in investments by national and regional philanthropic partners joining together in the OYIF to accelerate the creation of collaborative, community-based strategies that address the barriers faced by opportunity youth – especially men and boys of color - in reconnecting with education and employment pathways, thus reducing risky behaviors and rates of violence.

Through the SIF program, the OYIF will strategically invest in a collective impact approach to drive the implementation of evidence-based interventions that accelerate advancement to educational credentials and employment for vulnerable 14 – 24 year olds who are unattached or under-attached to school and work. This social innovation strategy will deeply engage local civic and institutional leaders, private and public funders, and the organizations that work most closely with vulnerable youth in developing pathways that dramatically improve education and employment outcomes for this vastly underserved population. The SIF OYIF program sites will serve the range of populations included within opportunity youth – including those who are homeless, in foster, care, or involved in the juvenile justice system, with a high percentage of participants being men and boys of color. In response to the President's recent call to action through the My Brother's Keeper Initiative, the SIF OYIF Program will specifically track progress for men and boys of color.

Within eight months after the federal grant award, the OYIF SIF program will competitively select up to 12 sites as SIF subgrantees. In each site, a high performing local nonprofit will serve as the "backbone" organization to a cross-sector collaborative committed to a collective impact approach that will expand pathways for opportunity youth. Over the four year project period, the local backbone organization and collaborative will plan and implement evidence-based "Back on Track" interventions – enriched academic preparation, postsecondary bridging, and career pathway supports. To support implementation, each site will receive a SIF subgrant of approximately \$200,000 to \$300,000 per year, which will be matched 1:1 by locally-raised funds – a dramatic increase in implementation resources available for OYIF sites selected for the SIF program.

In addition to funding, each selected site will receive comprehensive technical assistance from JFF and Aspen through the duration of the grant. This assistance will include: individualized site coaching to support the development, implementation, and tracking of each community's strategic action plan; assistance with data collection and use; cross-community learning opportunities, including access to subject matter experts and sharing of best practices; and assistance in meeting the requirements of a rigorous third-party evaluation, which will be designed to build the body of strong evidence in support of interventions for opportunity youth.