



Elevate Youth California (EYC): Standard Track Request for Applications (RFA) Questions and Answers

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APPLYING

Q: What is the best way for a new applicant to participate in the grant? Do you assist new applicants in any way prior to application submission?

A: The best way for a new applicant to participate in the grant is by reviewing the [request for applications](#) (RFA) for full information before applying and watching the proposers' [webinar](#). The Center at Sierra Health Foundation (The Center) scheduled two proposers' webinars on July 27, 2023, and August 2, 2023, to present the funding opportunity, the application process, and answered questions. Webinar recordings are posted on the EYC website under [News](#).

Q: Can you define a fiscal sponsor and who is eligible to be a fiscal sponsor under this grant?

A: A fiscal sponsor is an organization, usually a nonprofit organization, that provides financial oversight and other administrative services to support another organization or project. In this case, a fiscal sponsor will utilize its 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status as the grantee on record and accept payment from The Center. Fiscal sponsors must meet the eligibility criteria listed in the [RFA](#); with the following exception, fiscal sponsors may serve in this role for more than one EYC grant.

Q: If our fiscal sponsor is the applicant organization, do you want organizational information, annual budget and financial audit from the fiscal sponsor or our program (which is under the fiscal sponsor)?

A: Yes, whether the applicant organization is the fiscal agent or under the fiscal sponsor, The Center needs the information about the fiscal sponsor in the RFA. Review the [RFA](#) for full information about applying. The application will ask for information about both the fiscal sponsor and fiscally sponsored project. If the applicant organization is the fiscal agent, then the applicant organization information would be added in each section. Please follow the directions closely to ensure the correct information is being provided in each section.

Q: What happens if we change fiscal sponsors after we apply?

A: If awarded, The Center will work with the applicant organization's new fiscal sponsor to confirm the new fiscal sponsor qualifies and is willing to take on the fiscal sponsor responsibilities.

Q: Could two distinct youth programs in California that each operate under one national organization's EIN both apply?

A: Yes, two separate organizations using the same fiscal sponsor can apply for the funding opportunity. Please note that the implementing organization can only submit one application.

Q: My organization applied for previous rounds of funding but was not awarded. We are planning to submit another application this round; are you able to provide feedback?

A: Yes, The Center offers feedback sessions to declined applicants after the current round of funding is announced. The Center is unable to provide feedback on previously submitted applications.

Q: How do we decide whether we should apply for a capacity-building grant or the current grant? We are actively running a program and need funding for it, but we also hope to deepen and expand our program.

A: It is up to each organization to determine which funding opportunity to apply for based on the activities in the [RFA](#) that most align with organizational goals.

The EYC Capacity Building funding track is to support emerging grassroots organizations to build their operational, programmatic, financial, or organizational infrastructure to implement youth social justice programming that impacts policy and systems change.

The current Round 5 EYC Standard Track funding is to expand youth and young adult substance use prevention through policy, systems, and environmental change.

Q: Are you looking for organizations with previous experience/background in drug use (e.g., prevention, diversion, policy work)?

A: Having previous experience and a background in drug use work is not a requirement, but applicants must demonstrate experience working with young people of color and other marginalized communities disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs.

Q: How much demonstrated experience should applicants have working with young people of color and other marginalized communities that have been disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs? Should we also refer to the experience of members with long-term experience (for example, a director)?

A: There is no minimum number of years required to have worked with the proposed focus population. The Center weighs the organization's experience working with the proposed population and includes the collective experience of staff and leadership in the organization, not solely focus on one staff member. The experience provided should be suited for the work.

Q: I'm currently working on the Cohort 5 Standard Track application, and I have a question regarding narrative question 10 concerning the qualifications of the project team. I'd like to know if there are specific credentials the team should have. Should everyone be credentialed?

A: There are no specific credentials required. Your application should describe your organization's project team's capacity to implement the proposed project. The Center encourages you to provide details on how your team will carry out the proposed activities and support the evaluation and reporting requirements of the funding opportunity.

Q: Is collaboration with other agencies a requirement? Can you speak to how partnerships should be handled/managed?

A: Collaboration is not a requirement. The Center welcomes collaboration if that is your organizations approach and partnership is encouraged where it makes sense. Refer to specific requirements for collaboratives and coalitions in the [RFA](#).

Q: Who is the letter from the executive director addressed to and what specifically should it say?

A: All letters should be addressed to The Center. If an individual organization is applying, the executive director needs to indicate support for the application. If applying as a collaborative, each organization's executive director needs to indicate support and identify the role their organization will play in the collaborative project. Additionally, all letters of support should affirm the applicant's ability to submit quarterly data and financial progress reports, willingness to participate in external evaluation activities and participation at two in-person convenings held by The Center. There is no template for the letter of support.

Q: Can we submit more than one letter of support?

A: Yes, you can submit more than one letter of support, and if applying as a coalition it is required that you also submit letters signed by the executive of those partners. If you run into any technical difficulties with uploading multiple letters, please email The Center at elevateyouthca@shfcenter.org.

Q: Is a letter of intent required to apply?

A: No, a letter of intent is not required to apply; however, a letter of support is required as one of the attachments in the application.

Q: If there are subcontracted services provided by a partner agency, where do we enter those costs in the budget?

A: Cost for subcontracted services provided by a partner agency, can be listed under miscellaneous. There also are specific line items for consultants. Be sure to explain subcontracted services and consulting services in the budget justification.

Q: Can a currently funded EYC organization join a consortium in an RFA as a subcontractor? Can current grantees be a subcontractor in this RFA?

A: If the organization has an active agreement as of the end of November 2023, then it would not be eligible to be the applying entity. If a new partnership is developed with a coalition, the coalition would be eligible to apply. The coalition would be eligible to apply if the applicant organization is not a currently funded EYC partner and meets the eligibility criteria set in the [RFA](#). Current funded partners are eligible to be a subcontractor on another organization's application if the activities are unique and do not overlap with current funding activities.

Q: If we are a subcontractor for another EYC grant with another organization, can we apply as a direct grantee for this specific grant?

A: If you are a subcontractor conducting training for an organization that has an active EYC grant, you are eligible to apply as a direct grantee.

Q: Can we have a subcontractor that is not based in California, but provides services in California?

A: Yes, there are no restrictions on partnering with subcontractors outside of California. The Center encourages applicants to be mindful of subcontractors that are not based in California as travel outside of California is not allowed unless prior approval is received. All services from the subcontractor must be provided in California.

Q: Do we have to identify all subcontractors in the proposal, or can they be confirmed by a certain time as we select additional coalition members?

A: The Center highly encourages applicants to list all potential subcontractors in the application. If you have not selected a subcontractor, please note the subcontractor has not been selected in the budget justification as To Be Determined. Be sure to provide information on the role of the subcontractor and how they will strengthen your organization's capacity in the application.

Q: On the budget template, how should we indicate that staff full time equivalents (FTEs) may fluctuate between years? Should the FTE column only represent Year one staffing levels?

A: On the budget template you can provide the average FTE or a range (for example 0.5 – 1.0). Be sure to include details in the budget justification and indicate the specific FTE for each staff position by year.

Q: In the budget provided, the indirect rate is set at 10%, yet it was mentioned previously that the indirect rate is 20%. Which is the correct rate?

A: Indirect costs can be up to 20% of direct costs. See page 10 of the [RFA](#). After downloading the budget template, you can revise the percentage.

Q: Can applications propose new positions?

A: Yes, new positions can be proposed in this funding opportunity.

Q: Can we hire a consultant to write grants to sustain funding for the program beyond EYC funding?

A: No, hiring consultants to write grants to help sustain future funding for the program is not an allowable expense. The goal of the EYC Program: Standard Track is policy, system and environmental change through youth civic engagement, mentorship and peer-led support rooted in social justice youth development.

Ultimately, The Center hopes funded organizations are in a stronger place than when funds were awarded. To support this, The Center offers training and technical support to funded partners.

Q: The word limits on each response seem very limited. Does this emphasize the work plan or other items for the review panel to understand the project design?

A: The review team will read the entire application package. Be precise in your description but know there are other places to paint the full picture of your project. Be consistent in the work plan, narrative, budget, and budget justification.

Q: Character limitations can make it difficult to articulate all relevant information. Do you allow us to put any attachments (e.g., brochures, milestones and accomplishment pages) in the application?

A: No, applicant organizations are not allowed to add additional attachments to their application. The proposed budget, budget justification, W-9, support letter(s), the Project Narrative questions, and Project Information sections of the application are opportunities to convey information about your organization.

Q: How is the work plan different from the overall proposal?

A: The goal of the work plan is to identify the project objectives, activities, roles and responsibilities, and timeline that will lead to strengthened programs, sustainability, and increased capacity.

The proposal or narrative allows the applicant to provide information about the organization, track record, population, and proposed program.

The work plan provides greater detail regarding program activities that the applicant is proposing.

Q: Is the work plan a yearly requirement or do applicants submit the three-year work plan with the final application?

A: Applicants must submit a three-year work plan at the time of application and will use this work plan for their program if awarded unless The Center requests changes. The full work plan allows reviewers to better understand the proposed program. There is flexibility for awarded partners to request work plan and budget modifications annually. Additional information regarding modifications will be provided to awarded partners.

Q: Will the convenings be in-person in Sacramento?

A: For now, convenings are planned to be in Sacramento. Applicants are encouraged to build in travel and/or lodging in the budget. The final plans are yet to be determined. The Center will adjust if necessary and all grantee partners will be notified.

ROUND 5 FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Q: Can our organization apply for more than one EYC funding opportunity, i.e., Capacity Building Track and Standard Track?

A: Yes, as long as the organization does not have an active EYC grant. Each EYC funding opportunity is planned in a way to allow applicants to know the result of their application prior to the release of the next RFA. If an organization is not awarded, they are eligible to apply for another funding opportunity as long as the organization does not have an active EYC grant.

Q: How many proposals will be funded in the two different EYC funding opportunities?

A: The total number of funded proposals is dependent on available funding to be awarded and the amount that applicants are requesting in their applications for each funding opportunity.

Q: How long are the grant periods for the two funding opportunities?

A: The EYC Standard Track will be three years and the EYC Capacity Building Track will be two years and six months.

Q: If my organization is not selected for the EYC Standard Track funding opportunity, will we be given information about the other tracks?

A: Yes, funding opportunity information is made available to the public on the EYC website regardless of funding status. If your organization's proposal isn't selected, your organization is eligible to apply for a different track. Information on all the funding opportunities will be available once they're released on the [EYC website under "News."](#) The Standard Track RFA includes a summary of each track with the anticipated release date of the RFA(s). Additionally, you can request to receive e-blasts from The Center online at <https://www.sierrahealth.org/maillinglist>.

ELIGIBILITY

Q: Is there a minimum or maximum yearly organizational budget for agencies?

A: No, there is not a minimum or maximum annual budget restriction for the EYC Standard Track funding opportunity.

Q: For organizations that have a current EYC grant expiring on November 15, 2023, will continuation projects be competitive for renewed funding? Should such applicants propose new projects?

A: EYC funded partners whose current award ends November 15, 2023, are eligible to apply and may consider a continuation of their existing project or propose a new project; both are eligible for this funding opportunity.

Q: Can a local 501(c)(3) faith-based organization apply?

A: Yes, any 501(c)(3) organization is eligible to apply for this funding. See the [RFA](#) for more information on eligibility criteria.

Q: Are public entities eligible to receive funding as a sole applicant or lead applicant in a consortium? If so, can a consortium application be submitted between an educational entity and a community-based clinic?

A: The EYC Standard Track funding opportunity is specifically for 501(c)(3) organizations, Tribal organizations (including 638s and urban clinics) and county behavioral health organizations that are the sole provider of prevention services as the eligible applicant. Public entities that do not meet the above criteria are ineligible to apply. The Center welcomes collaborative applications where the applicant is a 501(c)(3) organization or a Tribal entity.

Q: Are Offices of Education eligible to apply?

A: No, Offices of Education do not meet eligibility requirements for this opportunity. See the [RFA](#) for more information on eligibility criteria.

Q: If we have a grant funded by Prop 64, that's not related to EYC, are we eligible?

A: Yes, an organization may be eligible for a grant under a different funding source if they do not have an active EYC grant and meet additional eligibility requirements. See the [RFA](#) for more information on eligibility criteria.

Q: The emerging entity just received its nonprofit 501(c)(3) status, but the organization has yet to build any administrative infrastructure (no payroll system, no insurance coverage etc.). For this reason, the emerging entity would still like to work with a fiscal sponsor for this grant and use some grant funds to build infrastructure. Is that permissible?

A: Yes, the organization is welcome to apply for the EYC Standard Track funding opportunity with a fiscal sponsor. Funds used to build administrative infrastructure are an allowable expense.

Q: My agency is both a federally qualified health center and a 501(c)(3). How does this impact our eligibility?

A: If your entity has a 501(c)(3) nonprofit status, you are eligible to apply for the EYC Standard Track funding opportunity as long as your entity adheres to the rest of the eligibility requirements listed in the [RFA](#). Please review the eligibility criteria listed in the [RFA](#) when considering applying for EYC Standard Track funding opportunity.

Q: If we are collaborating with several organizations, should we all submit an application or just one?

A: Collaboratives or coalitions are only eligible to submit one application. Please be sure to review the Eligibility Criteria section in the [RFA](#) before applying.

Q: Is it possible for an applicant to submit more than one proposal in response to this RFA? For example, if the same applicant has different programs that would target different populations or geographic areas?

A: An applicant is only eligible to submit one application. The exception is if the organization is acting as a fiscal sponsor for another project.

Q: Does our organization require an established social justice program to be considered?

A: No, the applicant's program does not need to be established social justice program; however, the application will need to convey expertise in this work by the applicant or partners. Please review the eligibility and selection criteria in the [RFA](#) and then make your best decision about applying.

Q: We are a collaborative of nine community-based organizations. One partner was awarded in a previous round – will they need to be omitted from participating to ensure our eligibility is not impacted?

A: It is only required that the applicant organization does not have an active EYC grant. If you are the applicant organization and do not have an active EYC grant, you are eligible as long as you meet the additional criteria. It is important to note that the work and finances being supported by active EYC funded partners may not be duplicated in this new funding. The new application must include unique activities and participants that are not already being supported by an active funded partner.

Q: Will our organization be less likely to be funded if we are in a city that was funded by other Proposition (Prop) 64 funding?

A: The Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) and The Center are aware of other state agencies distributing Prop 64 funding. Funding will be awarded based on applications received. If you know of projects you will be collaborating with within the Prop 64 revenue stream, we encourage you to list those partners.

Q: Would organizations that aren't headquartered in California, but provide services and have staff in California qualify?

A: Yes, however, the organization must have an office located in California and must provide services in California.

Q: Last year, my organization received a grant to support a program in a North Central Valley site. This year, would we be eligible to apply for a grant to support a South-Central Valley site?

A: If you currently hold an EYC grant, you are ineligible to apply. You can be a partner but cannot be the lead applicant.

Q: Our community-based organization submitted an application also from Prop 64. It is for outdoor activities. Will this disqualify us for this health-focused opportunity?

A: The EYC Standard Track funding opportunity does not have any impact on other proposals funded through the Governor's Office of Business Development or the California Natural Resources Agency. If you are somehow leveraging those awards, you may want to identify that, but there is no direct connection to those funding opportunities.

Q: We have three full-time staff and an advisory board of 13 youth who guide our vision, policy priorities, and coalition-building work. Would the youth on the advisory board count as leadership?

A: Yes, youth who serve as full-time staff and on the advisory board count as leadership. Please note that we do ask applicants to also look at the racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity of their full staff and board to determine if it's a reflection of the communities they plan to serve.

Q: If an organization doesn't have significant Black, Indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) representation in leadership, but has started integrating justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion work and committees within the organization, would the organization still be considered based on other application components?

A: Yes, it is not required that leadership representation of the population served be considered. This funding opportunity requires applicant organizations and collaborative partners to deeply engage and reflect the proposed communities served that are disproportionately impacted by the war on drugs. Grantee partners should have a history of working with impacted communities, including representation on the board and staff, clients served, and neighborhoods served. Not having a significant BIPOC representation in leadership will not disqualify organizations, but it is a key component that our reviewers will consider when reviewing applications. Please refer to the [RFA](#) for additional eligibility and selection criteria.

Q: For County Behavioral Health applicants, do you want the department makeup or the County Board of Supervisors when it asks for board makeup?

A: County Behavioral Health applicants should provide demographic staff makeup of the department proposing the program and implementing staff.

Q: Although our organization is not eligible for this round, we would like to be prepared in case there is a Standard Track announced July 2024, will we be able to download all RFA attachments?

A: The [RFA](#), online application, and required attachments (e.g., budget, budget justification and work plan templates) for this funding opportunity will be publicly available until the submission deadline. Please note, the application contents and format may change in future rounds.

FUNDING

Q: Does the RFA apply to the entire state of California?

A: Yes, this is a statewide funding opportunity.

Q: Can indirect funding be more than 20%?

A: No, indirect funding cannot be more than 20% of the direct costs.

Q: Will awarded funding be renewable after the three years?

A: There are no additional funding commitments as of right now, applicants should plan for three years of implementation.

Q: Is funding expected to supplement an existing program or only new programs funded entirely by this?

A: There is no requirement; this is an applicant decision.

Q: Can funds be carried forward from year one's budget to the second year?

A: Yes, unexpended funds can be carried forward to the next year after completing The Center's budget modification form and receiving approval. Additional information regarding budget modifications will be provided to awarded partners.

Q: What are the funding restrictions under this grant?

A: Please refer to page 10 of the [RFA](#) for a list of funding restrictions. If you have any specific questions on funding restrictions, please send us an e-mail at elevateyouthca@shfcenter.org.

Q: Will there be another round of funding next year?

A: This round of funding will cover the EYC Standard Track funding opportunity (2023) and the Capacity Building Track funding opportunity (tentatively early/mid 2024). Future rounds of funding will be announced by the contractor chosen by DHCS in the latter half of 2024.

[GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION](#)

Q: Are we able to focus on more than one geographic area or region?

A: Yes, applicants may provide services in more than one county and geographic area. Visit the [EYC Program Impact](#) web page.

Q: Can our program serve both urban and rural?

A: Yes. In the application, applicants can identify the urban-rural breakdown by percentage.

Q: Are rural organizations less competitive?

A: No, rural organizations are not less competitive. Applications are scored according to the requirements in the RFA and without bias.

Q: Are we required to provide evidence to demonstrate communities that have been impacted by the war on drugs in our local geography?

A: You should be able to look at population impacts of the war on drugs at the macro level. It may not be specific to local geography but may reflect data in California or in the U.S. Demonstrate your understanding of which communities have been impacted. Resources on this can be found in the [RFA](#).

Q: How do you define rural?

A: As stated in the [RFA](#):

Rural: For purposes of this grant program, The Center defines rural as a Medical Service Study Area (MSSA) that has a population density of 250 persons or less per square mile and has no incorporated area greater than 50,000 people.

Q: How many grants will be approved per geographical area?

A: Up to 85% of this funding will be set aside to support urban programs and organizations, up to 15% will be set aside to support rural programs and organizations.

Q: Will you be awarding two different organizations within the same geographical area?

A: Multiple grants in the same geography is not uncommon. It is a possibility.

Q: Are you looking for counties with a certain percentage of poverty, a section of the community, or school districts that have a high percentage of poverty?

A: There are geographic considerations for the EYC Standard Track funding opportunity; however, there are not specific areas within a community or county that we are only funding. Funding will be distributed in low-income urban and rural areas throughout California with up to 15% being set aside to support rural programs and organizations.

Q: My organization is working with a rural community but are not specifically working with any of the disproportionately impacted communities that were highlighted in the RFA (African American, Asian-American, Latino/Hispanic, Native American, LGBTQ2S+) would we still qualify for this funding opportunity?

A: Yes, organizations working with youth with disabilities or those who have life experiences that increase the risk of substance use disorder, including being system-impacted and formerly incarcerated, youth who have experienced the foster care system, and youth experiencing homelessness are also encouraged to apply. Additionally, this funding opportunity has a geographic consideration. As listed in the [RFA](#), up to 85% of this funding will be set aside to support urban programs and organizations, and up to 15% will be set aside to support rural programs and organizations.

Q: Besides the 85/15 funding split between urban and rural programs/organizations, will evaluators be prioritizing proposals that target implementation in any particular counties?

A: The Center evaluators will take into consideration the proposed population to be reached in each of the counties, counties with funded projects, and counties without funded projects. While certain counties may historically have a higher number of applications, we strive for geographic coverage across the state in the final selection. The Center encourages you to visit the map on the [EYC website](#) to learn about projects currently supported.

[ONLINE PORTAL](#)

Q: I'm having a problem with the application link.

A: Feel free to e-mail The Center at elevateyouthca@shfcenter.org if you continue to have issues and can provide the link via e-mail and provide technical assistance further if needed.

Q: Do I need to make a new account to apply to this funding opportunity?

A: The online portal does not require the creation of an account. When saving your application, you will need to provide an email address and password that will be used to access your in-progress application. The application will send the email address entered the link to come back to the saved application.

Q: Are forms for budget and workplan available on portal?

A: Yes, all required documents are in the portal in the attachments section.

Q: Can you confirm if it is word count or character count in the application?

A: Word count. There is a counter inside the portal within each question.

Q: Is there an easy way to create a Google Doc with questions from the RFA?

A: We do not have a tool for this. The questions that applicants must respond to are listed in the [RFA](#).

Q: If there are multiple people working on the application, after one person saves their work, can you share the link you receive with the other people working on the grant?

A: At this time, only one person can submit an email and password per application. Consider creating a shared document to collectively work on the application questions. You may use copy and paste functions to enter your responses into the application itself.

Q: If we made an error on our budget and submitted the application early. Would we be notified so we can make corrections?

A: Due to the high volume of applications anticipated for the EYC Standard Track funding opportunity, The Center is unable to email applicants regarding suspected errors. If an applicant identifies an error before the application submission deadline (e.g., uploads an incorrect budget), they may email elevateyouthca@shfcenter.org and request that the corrected budget be added to the application.

PROJECT ACTIVITIES

Q: Is there a minimum program reach?

A: No, there is not a minimum program reach under the EYC Standard Track funding opportunity; however, we do ask all applicants to be reasonable with the amount they are requesting, the proposed program activities and their program reach.

Q: Are planning sessions to inform activities an eligible activity in this opportunity?

A: Yes, this is an eligible activity. Please review eligibility criteria in the [RFA](#).

Q: Can our program include stipends to participating youth?

A: Yes, stipends can be provided to youth for participation.

Q: Can our program include prevention education with families?

A: Yes, prevention education with families is allowable, however The Center cannot weigh in on the specifics of project design; this is up to the applicant. Family engagement can be included in the program design. Please review the [RFA](#) in detail for more information about the various components of the program.

Q: Can youth with mental and learning disabilities be the focused population for proposed project activities?

A: Yes, project activities can focus on youth with mental and learning disabilities, as long as they meet the eligibility criteria listed in the [RFA](#).

Q: Do you offer a curriculum? Or do we use our current material?

A: There is no required curriculum. Applicants may propose to utilize the curriculum they already have in place or other curricula that is culturally and linguistically relevant to the community being served.

Q: If our program primarily focuses on girls and women of color to explore the impact on gender, would our application still be competitive and eligible?

A: Yes, as long as the application describes the need, opportunity, and historical context of the disproportionate impact of the war on drugs on the community to provide rationale on the focus area.

Q: Our organization has a small program that serves 15 young people. Would we be expected to ramp up immediately or can we build up time to increase?

A: Your activities are responsive to your local environment and context. Review Selection Criteria in the RFA to guide your response.

Q: Are we required to provide advocacy on a particular issue?

A: The EYC Standard Track funding opportunity is related to substance use in the community and preventing youth substance use through policy, environmental, and systems change. Advocacy needs to focus on substance use prevention. The Center

encourages you to refer to the Glossary (harm reduction, trauma-informed practices, and recognizing developmental path young people are on).

Q: Can our project focus primarily on youth but also families outside of the age bracket?

A: Yes, the EYC Standard Track funding opportunity allows for family members outside the ages of 12 to 26 to be served by the proposed project. You are encouraged to lift up strategies around family engagement in your application.

Q: Can you define what a youth listening session is?

A: Youth listening sessions are a designated time for youth to provide feedback on the program strategies and how the implementation of the program is going. This is a unique activity separate from regular programming and is centered around youth voices. For some, a youth listening session may be called a healing circle or focus group. It should include a series of questions that seek feedback and input from youth on a specific aspect of the program, including, but not limited to, program planning, program activities, policies to change, prevention campaigns, program materials, or youth engagement.

Q: Does The Center provide support for listening sessions?

A: The Center can provide best practices, helpful resources, and tips for implementing listening sessions.

Q: Define impacted youth for listening sessions. Does this mean youth with substance use issues?

A: Impacted youth is defined by the applicant. This is based on the youth population your program focuses on in your proposal.

Q: If our organization has youth directly leading activities, can youth listening sessions include youth not working with us?

A: Yes, youth listening sessions can include youth who are leading activities within your program or youth who are not a part of your program. The structure of youth listening sessions are determined by the applicant organization and should help inform the program's implementation.

Q: If an organization is led by current and former foster youth, can listening sessions be hosted with community stakeholders?

A: A minimum of one listening session is to be held annually with youth and young adults ages 12 to 26. Additional listening sessions can be held with community stakeholders; however, these sessions will not be counted toward the annual youth listening session requirement.

Q: When you mention direct services, I assume you mean using funding for youth advocating for direct services, not using funds to actually provide direct services?

A: Direct services can be a balance between policy, systems, and environmental change and making sure young people are supported through direct services to meet their immediate needs. We encourage you to visit the EYC web site to read project summaries from previous cohort of grantee partners at <https://elevateyouthca.org/program-impact/>.

Q: Can you explain more about youth activism for policy, system, and environmental changes with examples?

A: The EYC website includes summaries of previously funded projects for examples. Youth activism can include a youth organizing model or it can look like system-impacted youth leading campaigns against substance use, housing insecurity, and access to shelter, as examples. The policy campaigns do need to be connected to addressing substance use.

Q: As a grassroots organization, what would demonstrating partnering with young people of color look like?

A: Demonstrating partnering with young people of color includes, but is not limited to, describing how young people are involved in your organization's proposed programming and sharing whether young people have leadership roles. If youth do not have a leadership role, describe your plan for engaging youth, including recruitment, training, and leadership development opportunities.

Q: Is it mandatory to partner with schools?

A: There are no specific requirements on who organizations must partner with.

Q: Do the policy changes need to relate to the war on drugs, or can they be centered around racial equity as a whole?

A: The policy changes do not need to directly relate to the war on drugs and can be centered around a variety of topics including racial equity, substance use disorder prevention, access to services, etc. We invite applicants to think about the specific needs and changes needed for the youth and young adults they are working with and propose a policy goal that will help address those needs.

Q: For campaigns, can it be something such as a social media campaign led by youth surrounding the issue of substance abuse and mental illness/health? Not necessarily to push for a local policy change but more for awareness/peer support.

A: Yes, the media campaigns can include a social media campaign and is not limited to local policy change. The EYC Standard Track requires policy, systems, or

environmental change goals and objectives. Many programs have social media campaigns in addition to a specific policy change.

Q: Can the youth-led activism be campaigning or is it required to be policy change in the community?

A: Applying organizations should consider 501(c)(3) limitations around campaigning, especially public office elections. The EYC Standard Track does require a specific policy, systems, or environmental change goal.

Q: Generally, the specific policy change goals of our youth leadership development and public advocacy projects are defined by the youth participants themselves. How should we address the policy goal section, given that the policy goals will be defined as part of the project activities?

A: The Center anticipates and encourage applicants to consider the policy, systems, or environmental goal(s) the young people they work with will want to achieve. If this is the case, please propose a goal at this time and note the final goal will be determined with the young people after the program begins. Please be sure to list the specific activities that will need to occur for the proposed policy goal. For example, list the activities that will need to occur to train the youth and young adults in the program and for the proposed goal.

If an applicant is awarded, the organization may update the work plan if its goals or activities change after consulting the young people in the program.

Q: Is a family engagement strategy now required?

A: Yes, family engagement strategies should be incorporated in the proposed program. Family is defined broadly in the [RFA](#) on page 3 .

Q: Can we propose to implement prevention programs for children in elementary school or are we restricted to serving youth aged 12-26?

A: Not at this time. EYC is a statewide program addressing substance use disorder by investing in youth leadership and civic engagement for youth of color and 2S/LGBTQ+ youth age 12 to 26 living in communities disproportionality impacted by the war on drugs.

Q: We focus on American Indian and Alaskan Native youth for participants, but also provide community events. Should we list 100% American Indian or estimates of the community population?

A: Please enter estimate percentages that best represent the community population that will be affected by the proposed project.

Q: Can evaluation be a funded expense?

A: Yes, evaluation is an allowable cost and applicants can add as a funded expense within their budget. Please include in the proposed project budget justification how you arrived at the request amount, how the evaluation will be conducted, and the purpose. Additional information on the budget justification can be found in the [RFA](#) and budget justification template.

Q: If you are still working towards a policy/environmental goal as part of a current award, can you continue to work on the same goal for this new round of funding?

A: Yes, all organizations can continue working towards the goals they have already started. A new goal or new program is not required for this program.

Q: For this grant, are youth the ones who lead the activism, such as advocating for policy change at the state supervisor meetings or school board meetings?

A: Yes, youth and young adults (ages 12 to 26) are expected to lead the implementation of policy change and civic engagement work.

Q: Can we refer participants to a partner we have for their harm reduction resources or do we need to supply the harm reductions with the funds we get?

A: Yes, funded organizations may use a referral system to a partner to connect young people with services (e.g., substance use disorder treatment). Applicants may expound upon partnerships in the narrative section of the application.

Q: Is treatment eligible for funding under this RFA?

A: No, treatment services, including Medication Assisted Treatment are not eligible for funding under the EYC Standard Track RFA. There are a variety of other funding opportunities for such activities. Education, prevention, and early intervention activities are allowable.

Q: Is counseling considered treatment?

A: Not all forms of counseling are considered treatment. Counseling for substance use disorder that is beyond early intervention is not eligible for this opportunity.

Q: In designing our proposals, is there any preferred combination of the three implementation strategies (youth activism, mentorship/relationship building, peer-led support)?

A: The application requires proposed projects to utilize at least two of three implementation strategies 1) youth activism for policy, system, or environmental change, 2) mentorship/relationship building, and 3) peer-led support. Youth civic engagement is required. We do not have a preferred combination of implementation strategies. Applicant selections should reflect the program's design and align with the work the organization is doing or aspires to do.

Q: Can you please explain in detail the services required to be provided under the program?

A: The Center does not have specific services that are required. There are key components and deliverables applicants should note (e.g., participation in two in-person convenings, listening sessions, etc.). Regarding the services or program activities being pitched, this will need to be determined by the applicant. We encourage applicants to review the RFA for more information about specific requirements.

PROPOSERS' WEBINARS

Q: Where can I find information on the proposers' webinars?

A: Proposers' webinar recordings and slides are posted on the EYC website under News: <https://elevateyouthca.org/news/>.

REPORTING

Q: Can you provide more details on quarterly reporting requirements? Can we access the templates beforehand?

A: Reporting templates are not publicly available. Awardees will be required to report data to better understand the youth populations that are engaged from racial, ethnic, and gender backgrounds, as well as the various systems the young people are touching. There is also an effort to understand the capacity that organizations may have from an organizational policy standpoint (e.g., professional development of staff, mentors, etc.). The Center will provide trainings and technical assistance for funded partners to complete the narrative and financial reports.

BUDGET/ALLOWABLE PROGRAM EXPENSES

Q: Can you define the budget years?

A: The first budget year begins in state Fiscal Year 2023/24 on November 16, 2023, and ends June 30, 2024. The budget template is broken down by budget years and defines it further.

Q: Is there an administrative budget line-item limit? (e.g., 15% administrative cost max)

A: No, there is no line-item limit in the budget for administrative costs. Competitive applications will include a budget justification with specific details on how they arrived at

the budget amounts. There is a maximum for indirect costs (20%) which is detailed in the budget template.

Q: Is match funding required?

A: No, match funding is not required.

Q: If we want to pay the students for their work, will those funds come out of our proposed budget? Or will there be additional funds available to pay the students?

A: Stipends for youth participation should be included in the proposed budget. No additional funding available beyond the awarded amount. The Center highly encourages providing incentives for youth and young adults who are engaged in this programming. Please include this in the proposed budget when submitting the application.

Q: Do you provide a sample for the proposed budget? We are a small organization, and this is somewhat new to us.

A: The Center provides a budget template that applicants should use when submitting their application. This can be found in the Attachments section of the application. The budget template includes common line items that program budgets includes. If additional support is needed, please register and attend one of the office hour sessions listed in the [RFA](#).

Q: Is there extra funding for other expenses? For example: printing, meeting room rentals, food for meetings, other.

A: No additional funding is available at this time. All expenses should be included in the proposed budget.

Q: Does the budget justification need to be for each year or for the total budget (all three years)?

A: The Center asks that you cover all three years in the budget justification. For example, if you have rent in the budget for Years 1 and 2 but not Year 3, explain that. You must also explain in-kind resources that are included in the project budget.

Q: Will we need to expand on the computations in establishing the indirect cost ratio, or is it an educated estimate?

A: Please include an explanation for the indirect cost ratio in the budget justification document.

Q: Is salary for a development director an indirect cost?

A: If a development director is working directly on your program and has a specific role in the program, this will qualify as a direct expense. If they do not have a direct role in the program, this will be an indirect expense.

Q: Does this grant allow for construction or renovation of classrooms, overnight stay facilities and retreats? For example, weekend counseling on privately owned property by the nonprofit organization.

A: No, renovation, construction, and building of new facilities is not an allowable expense.

Q: Is a van purchase for youth transportation an allowable expense?

A: No, the purchase of a vehicle is not an allowable expense.

Q: Can we use the funding to provide transportation access to program activities (e.g., Uber)?

A: There is a limitation of \$50 per youth per year for transportation incentives (e.g., Uber, Lyft, taxi). However, if the organization provides transportation services or does mileage reimbursement, there isn't a limitation around this. Organizations should apply the CalHR state rate for travel/mileage reimbursement.

The application should include details on anticipated mileage reimbursement expenses and transportation stipends in the budget justification.

Q: Is there a maximum percentage of funds that can be put toward salaries? (e.g., 20-30% max can be used toward salaries to support staffing on proposed project)

A: There are no line-item limits in the budget for salaries or other line items. The only maximum set is 20% for indirect line items. Competitive applications will include a budget justification with specific details on how they arrived at the budget amounts.

Q: Our organization has a small staff who have essentially received stipend wages. Are we able to raise salaries with portions of this funding?

A: Applicants may include salary raises or new positions with this funding. Competitive applications will include a budget justification with specific details on how they arrived at the budget amounts.

Q: Is there a required minimum salary for employees (i.e., Project Coordinator) implementing our proposed program?

A: While there isn't a required minimum salary for employees, The Center highly encourages applicants to provide a livable wage and consider the cost of living based on the geographic area where the organization provides services.

Q: Can you share any examples of stipend amounts for youth?

A: Stipend amounts vary based on program designs. Please be sure to include a detailed rationale for the stipend amount in the budget justification.

Q: Is travel allowed for staff and/or youth?

A: Yes, applicants are required to affirm participation in two in-person convenings as listed in the RFA. Travel costs to attend the convenings are the responsibility of the funded organization and must be included in the proposed budget. Travel outside of convenings is allowable, however, it must be within California.

Q: Can an organization apply without having a financial audit?

A: Yes, there is no requirement that applicant organizations must have a financial audit.

Q: Can funding be used for building and providing housing for young people?

A: No, funds is not an allowable cost for the purchase of property. Applicants are encouraged to explore resource and referral partnerships to support young people experiencing housing hardships.

Q: We plan to work with several partners who will be listed as subcontractors in the proposed project. Some of my colleagues participated in the RFA Review Webinar last week and we are wondering if there is a dollar limit or maximum percentage of funding that can be directed to a partnering subcontracted organization?

A: The Center does not have a specific dollar limit or maximum percentage of funding for partnering organizations. As stated in the [RFA](#), if you are subcontracting a portion of this funding, please provide a list of secured or pending partners and describe the process you will use. Additionally, ensure the budget and budget justification submitted alongside your application adheres to the funding guidelines and aligns with the proposed project plans.

OTHER

Q: Is there an email we can contact if we have any questions in the future?

A: Please direct your e-mails to elevateyouthca@shfcenter.org if you have any questions regarding EYC funding opportunities.

Q: Can you share excellent programs and outstanding outcomes from the past year?

A: 246 amazing partners have joined the EYC network of funded partners. Brief information about the programs funded through EYC can be seen on the [Program Impact](#) webpage and through the annual reports on the [News](#) webpage.

Q: Is there any advice on how we can be more competitive on our application when we are already in a competitive county?

A: In counties with a higher number of funded partners, applicants are encouraged to specify the specific communities to be reached within the proposed county or counties.

Overall, the application should demonstrate the ability through staffing, program strategies, and approaches to provide comprehensive prevention, education, and early intervention for youth substance use disorder that is culturally responsive, linguistically appropriate, and reflects the community served. Applicants are encouraged to review the Selection and Evaluation Criteria section of the [RFA](#) (page 13). Applicants are also encouraged to have someone unaware of their proposed program read the application to ensure it's clear and covers all components.

Q: Can you update my e-mail address on file to receive e-blasts from Sierra Health Foundation and The Center?

A: You can request to receive e-blasts from The Center online at <https://www.sierrahealth.org/maillinglist>. You also can use this link to make updates to your information for our mailing list.

Q: Can you speak more to the type of evaluation designs that you are looking for?

A: The evaluation design needs to be responsive to your approach. Explain why your evaluation plan is the right approach for your project.

Q: If one becomes a grantee, are there any restrictions on an organization's hiring of people who may have past digressions on their background under this grant? We like to hire people with lived experience.

A: No, there are no restrictions hiring people with lived experiences with this funding. It is the organization's policies and practices that determine who is eligible to be hired.

Q: Who determines who will be awarded? If we are not awarded, will we be notified why not?

A: DHCS holds final decision-making authority in selecting funded projects. Organizations that are not awarded can request feedback from The Center after the application review process. A scoring rubric will not be shared.

Q: Do organizations that have other funding committed to the project have a higher chance of getting funded compared to organizations that don't?

A: No, having other funding committed to the project does not increase an applicant's chances of being awarded.

Q: How is payment for the funding being distributed? Will payments be reimbursed after the project period ends?

A: Understanding that a significant infusion of resources upfront may be a challenge for program implementation, The Center will offer flexible and phased payments. Payments will be issued based on the achievement of a set of agreed-upon deliverables as defined in the grant. Each grant will be divided into a minimum of three payments: (1)

upon execution of grant agreement, and (2) and (3) based on conversations with partners demonstrating progress and approval of deliverables. Specific payment amounts will be determined through the proposed budget and in collaboration with awarded partners. If a grantee partner achieves all required deliverables by the end of the grant, the entire grant amount can be paid.

Q: When will we know if we have been funded?

A: The approximate timeline for award announcements is October 2023. The award period begins November 16, 2023.

Q: Does the state do an audit after the program is done?

A: The Center ensures all our funded partners are in compliance with their EYC funding. All programs are subject to a desk review/audit and must submit annual financial reports.

Q: Are insurance requirements included in the RFA?

A: Insurance requirements are located on pages 23-24 of the [RFA](#). Awardees must submit insurance compliance documents to The Center within 30 days of executing the subcontract agreement and maintain insurance coverage throughout the duration of the project.