

United Way of San Luis Obispo County Youth Board Workbook for Youth Grant Seekers



2021 Youth Board Grants

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PURPOSE OF THIS WORKBOOK	

This workbook is designed to help grant seekers in planning their youth-led project, and answer questions about Youth Board grant guidelines and the application process.

If you have other questions, please call the United Way office at (805) 541-1234 or email Linda Wingert at lindawingert@unitedwayslo.org

YOUTH BOARD GRANT PROCESS

The grant process begins when a young person or a group of youth work with an adult mentor and an agency sponsor to create a youth-led project that will positively impact their community. Youth then submit a grant application to the UWSLO Youth Board by the deadline, and board members will proceed to make the decisions about which groups will receive grants. As a group, they read each grant application and discuss the project idea. At the end of the process, youth board members will make a funding recommendation to the United Way Board of Directors for final approval. Youth board members will continue to mentor and work with the youth to see that their funded project succeeds.

YOUTH GRANT GUIDELINES

United Way of San Luis Obispo County will award up to four \$1,000 grants (depending on funding).

To qualify, projects must:

- Have a positive impact on youth (up to age 19) in the community.
- Be carried out in San Luis Obispo County.
- Incorporate some youth development principles (such as [the 40 Developmental Assets](#) or [Children’s Bill of Rights for SLO County](#)).

Additional requirements include:

- The group responsible must be located in San Luis Obispo County.
- Student-submitted applications must have an adult ally and a sponsoring organization. This organization can be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit agency, school, or faith-based organization.

Strong projects allow the youth group planning the project to gain knowledge and skills. It will primarily benefit youth in the community, not just the project planners, and should be both creative and realistic.

UWSLOC will fund:

- **Materials** for supplies or physical items you will use in order to complete your project, for example, food, drinks, art supplies, prizes, decorations, equipment rental, space rental, etc.
- **Equipment** that will likely last beyond the terms of the project, for example, books, games, software, digital cameras, sports equipment, etc.
- **Travel** expenses including bus passes, van rental, or other transportation fees within San Luis Obispo County.

- **Professional services** such as fees paid for speakers, entertainers, trainers, or other performers hired as part of your project.
- **Communications and outreach** including postage, printing, design, copying, and other costs for producing publications or fees associated with media coverage.

Items not considered for funding are:

- Any expenses that are not directly related to carrying out the program.
- Salaries, overhead, or operating expenses incurred by the sponsoring organization or school. No portion of the grant may be used to cover agency fees.
- Projects that discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs or physical and/or mental disability.
- Trips outside of San Luis Obispo County.
- Projects to raise personal funds for the planners.
- Reimbursement for supplies already purchased for the project.

Examples of strong programs and projects:

- Mural that brightens up a neighborhood, school or vacant lot.
- Gardening project that trains youth how to run a business.
- School or community magazine that showcases the art and writing of local youth.
- Campaign to promote more nutritious food options in schools.
- Research project that provides information about community resources for young people.
- Campaign to get local liquor stores to stop advertising alcohol and cigarettes to minors.

STEPS TO APPLYING FOR A YOUTH BOARD GRANT

Step One: Get Organized

Youth may choose to work individually to write a Youth Board grant, or can form a group with others who share a common goal of making a difference in their community. Next, they should team-up with an adult mentor and an agency sponsor who will work in a youth-adult partnership to assist the youth in implementing their grant project. Finally, the youth should read the grant guidelines below and keep them in mind when proceeding through the following steps to writing a Youth Board grant.

Step Two: Brainstorm and Identify a Community Issue

The goal in this step is to brainstorm and identify important community issues that youth want to change. Many youth groups start taking action by identifying a concern in their community that they want to do something about. Alternatively, a group could start with a vision of what they want to see in their community's future. Once you have a vision it can help you focus on changing reality.

Using the ideas from above, look for a challenge that all of the group members care about:

- Does it seem more or less important than the other challenges you identified?
- Is there a problem that affects your group directly?
- Who would this project benefit and how many young people would be reached?

Step Three: Research

The goal of this step is to learn about the community issue chosen through researching the topic. This allows youth to make informed and educated decisions when planning their grant project.

Tools to use in researching more about the issue:

- Talk about the issue with the group.

- Collect information from people who are impacted by the problem. For example, personally interview other youth or conduct a short survey to understand the problem from a larger perspective. Interviews help youth get in-depth information about how people feel about an issue, and also about their ideas for solutions. It's helpful to interview experts on the issue or people who are working towards finding a solution. An important strength of an interview is the opportunity to ask follow-up questions if you want a more detailed answer. You can also clarify questions if people don't understand.
- Collect information from people who are trying to address or study the issue, such as nonprofit organizations, government agencies or schools.
- Start asking "why". Asking "why" helps a group think about root causes. It helps youth go from symptoms of a problem to the deeper reasons for the problem. It's a simple process: just keep asking "why" to people's answer.

- Before moving on to the next step, compile all the research and make sense of the information:
 - ❖ From the facts, what do we know about the problem now?
 - ❖ Are there different ideas about how the problem is caused?
 - ❖ What is the reason for the difference of opinions in your group?
 - ❖ What's the most accurate source of information?
 - ❖ Are there sources that are potentially unreliable?
 - ❖ What are the solutions that people suggested to help solve the community issue?

Step Four: Set Goals

The purpose of this step is for youth to use their research done in step three and set a goal that helps improve the issue. Goal setting is important because it's a big picture statement that your group can use to help guide what you do. Goals also keep the group focused on what they want to accomplish.

Step Five: Develop an Action Plan

Make a list of different actions/activities that a group of youth could implement to meet your project goal. Actions and activities come out of a good understanding of the community issue.

Use these questions to narrow down your options and select an activity for your project's goals:

- Can the group reasonably complete this action?
- Do you have the time?
- Will the action impact the lives of youth in the community?
- Does the action help create a solution to the problem?
- Will this action build the group's leadership and life skills?

Next, determine how you will make it happen. Create a to-do list to complete the action, while keeping in mind the overall goal for the project. Discuss and decide all the steps and tasks necessary for the project to be successful.

Example Tasks: Publicizing your project to youth and adults in the community, recruiting other youth to get involved, finding an agency sponsor for your project, getting permission from your school or church (if applicable) to do the project, training group members in their roles as project leaders, finding a space and buying supplies for your project.

Deadlines: In order to complete a project successfully, the project needs deadlines. Remember to refer to the grant guidelines, and to pay attention to school schedules. Please include deadline dates to complete your to-do list tasks, and a final date expected to complete the project. Make sure that the dates of the to-do list do not begin prior to the **beginning grant date of April 1, 2021**.

Assignments: Look closely at the tasks youth need to accomplish. To effectively complete the action project, assign responsibilities to members of the group. Ask if there are members of the youth group who might be good at particular parts of the project. Keep track of who is committed to completing a task of the project.

Budgeting: A budget is necessary in order to clarify what the costs of the project will be and the possibility of other funding sources. Brainstorm all the costs you think you will have for the project. Include all the supplies and services you need to buy for your project.

Grant seekers will need to determine:

- Dollar amount of costs listed; the youth will need to identify the costs of each item and the overall project costs. Call stores that sell the things or services you want to buy and get a price.
- Quantity; how many of each thing is required.
- Who's paying for what item; explain which items Youth Board grant money will pay for and if applicable, the other contributions (money or supplies) coming from sources other than the Youth Board grant. Remember to read the grant guidelines before you create your budget to be sure that type of cost is allowed to be funded by the Youth Board grant.

Step Six: Completing and Submitting the Application

Congratulations on identifying a community issue, setting a goal and completing a plan of action! Now it's time to fill out the grant application to apply for funding. By completing this workbook, the youth group will have created a youth-led project and eventually save time when explaining their project in the grant application. The Youth Board grant application can be completed online at unitedwayslo.communityforce.com.

EVALUATION

Remember that you must evaluate your project during the process and/or after it is completed. Evaluating project activities is a way of reflecting on how your project went and learning from the experience.

There are two important things to think about as you evaluate your project:

- Did you end up doing what you said you would do?
- Did your project have a real impact on the problem you were trying to address?

Ask participants, community members or others involved in the project the following types of questions:

- What did the planners learn from this project?
- What worked well about this project?
- What could be done better?
- What are the next steps your group should take?

Try using surveys, interviews or discussion groups to evaluate the project.

DEADLINES

Applicants interested in attending a **Grantee's Meeting**, where Youth Board representatives will be available to assist with applications and answer questions, should email lindawingert@unitedwayslo.org prior to **February 5, 2021**.

APPLICATIONS MUST BE SUBMITTED ONLINE BY 11:59PM on February 28, 2021

Grant awardees will be notified the week of **April 1st**. A check presentation and an oral progress report will be required on either **May 17, 2021** or **June 7, 2021**. Projects need to be completed and funds spent by **September 30, 2021**. **A final written report is due by October 31, 2021** and should address the question "What impact did this project have on the youth of San Luis Obispo County?" **The final report must be submitted electronically to lindawingert@unitedwayslo.org**