



Youth Action Fund Guidelines 2024

Overview of the Fund

The Youth Action Fund (YAF), as informed by our Strategic Plan, offers grants to grassroots initiatives working with youth who are underserved by the education system and overrepresented in the justice and child welfare systems. The development of this fund was guided by a series of consultations with experts and advocates in the field.

More specifically, the Youth Action Fund grants are for grassroots initiatives to develop and lead projects where they:

- Elevate priorities and voices of youth with lived experiences in the identified systems
- Promote equitable and accountable institutions and systems
- Advocate for evidence-based policy
- Support initiatives working on, or, advocating for early intervention
- Support initiatives that are informed by youth, families, and communities

Eligibility

Initiatives must be:

- Led and informed by young people supporting youth leadership (30 inclusive and under)
- Ontario-based
- Group should be a Charity, Nonprofit, or a Grassroots Group (For-profit entities are not eligible for funding)
- Based within the communities they are serving and/or with a proven history of working with the communities they identify
- Distant programming with First Nations must be welcomed by invitation and/or in partnership with the youth and supported by their community-based allies

Grant Amount

The Youth Action Fund provides operating and project grants to organizations and initiatives working in Ontario. Groups can request up to \$100,000 per year for up to three years.

Eligible Expenses

You can apply for funding to cover:

- Salaries, honoraria, stipends
- Transportation, food, childcare and other expenses that make project activities accessible to young people and other stakeholders
- Project materials and small equipment/technology directly related to the project's administrative costs

Ineligible Expenses

As a general rule, we are unable to fund:

- Fundraising campaigns
- Capital projects
- Direct financial support to for-profit enterprises
- Endowments
- Sponsorship of events and conferences
- Ongoing operating expenses unrelated to the proposed project
- Projects involving partisan political activities
- Projects involving strictly religious purposes or activities
- Projects outside of Ontario

Note: If there are any expenses you would like to include that are outside the eligibility criteria, please let us know and the Grant Committee will review and make a decision.

Application Launch: May 7, 2024

Application Deadline: June 25, 2024 by 5PM EST

Information Session:

If you have any questions regarding the Youth Action Fund, please register for a webinar below:

- [June 4 at 12:30PM](#)

To Apply

1. Review the Youth Action Fund Guidelines to see if your group meets the eligibility criteria.
2. Create an account on Foundant, our [grant management portal](#), to access the application form.

Applicants with Limited Internet Access

Applications are submitted in writing through our [online portal](#); however, if submitting your application through the online portal is not a possibility due to inadequate internet access, please see below for a link to the application in Word.

[Here](#) is the link to the Word version of the application.

Please share the completed application to info@laidlawfdn.org.

Oral Submissions

We recognize the significance of oral transmission of stories, histories, lessons and other knowledge to sustain identities for Indigenous communities. In keeping with this, we accept oral submissions. Please get in touch with us to request an oral application process.

COVID-19

During these uncertain times, applicants are encouraged to ensure that all Covid-19 safety measures are followed. To get the latest updates and learn more on how to protect yourself and others, please click [here](#). Please reach out to Laidlaw staff if you have any questions.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What happens if COVID-19 impacts my project?

The Youth Action Fund grantees are encouraged to see which activities could be conducted virtually *i.e.*, over Zoom or other similar platforms. The Foundation also approves budget reallocations to allow for the purchase of equipment for online communication where possible.

What adjustments will the Foundation make during the pandemic?

Laidlaw adjusted monitoring of grants and program delivery to reduce additional stress. Funds should still align with the focus of the grant, however, flexibility will be extended for budget reallocation, project deliverables, granting deadlines, and project start dates. If you need to change project plans or make other adjustments to your grant, please reach out to us to discuss.

We need funding to support our core activities, not a project. Can we apply to the Youth Action Fund?

No. We do not provide core funding. However, we fund core operating costs associated with a project if they are directly related to the project.

Do we need to submit audited financial statements?

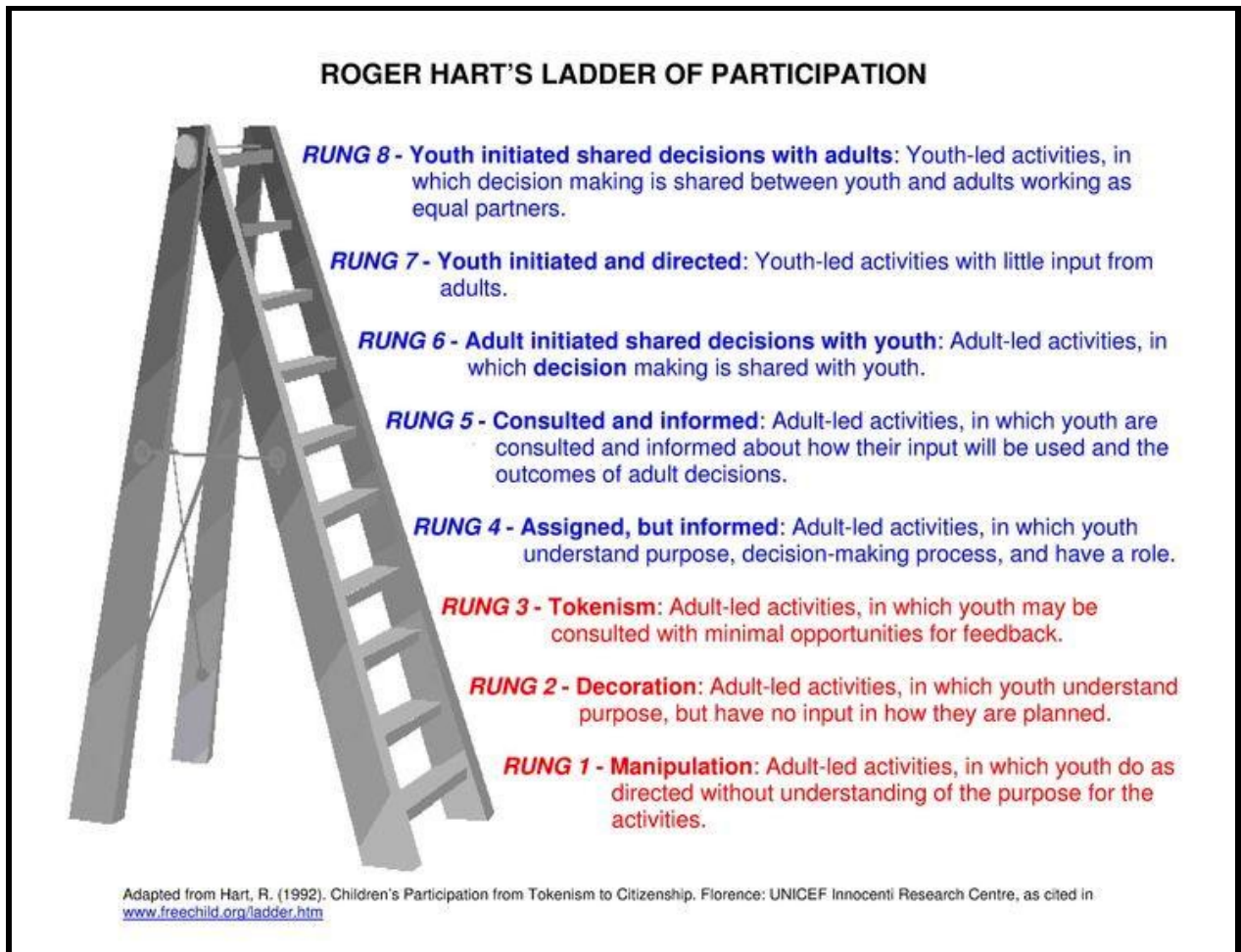
No. We do not require financial statements to apply to the Youth Action Fund.

We are a grassroots group, can we apply to receive funds directly?

No. Currently, the Foundation requires non-incorporated grassroots groups to partner with a registered charitable organization to act as a trustee and provide organizational mentorship and administrative support. The Organizational Mentor will receive funds to distribute to the grassroots group. Depending on capacity, one charity can be an OM for one or multiple groups.

What do you mean by youth-led initiatives?

Laidlaw prioritizes projects that are envisioned, developed and implemented by young people (30 inclusive and under). The image below presents eight levels of youth participation that start from manipulation and tokenism at the lower rungs, to full participation at the top. Laidlaw focuses groups within Rung 7 and 8, with a stronger preference for 7.



What is the usual percentage for admin fees, especially if working with an Organizational Mentor? Do we have to factor admin costs into our budget proposal?

The admin fee for grassroots groups generally goes towards the OM and we don't encourage more than 10% of the budget to be allocated to this line item, which you would factor into your budget proposal. For charities, and nonprofits not working with an OM, the admin fee can be between 10-15%.

We got funding from Laidlaw before, does this affect our new grant application?

Every application is evaluated on merits. Previous Laidlaw funding has no bearing on new applications unless you have an active grant (an ongoing project), and you're seeking support for the same project and activities. If that's the case, you'll

need to communicate clearly how your new application will build on your learnings from the previous project.

We understand that the Foundation will not fund capital expenditures. Are computer equipment considered to be capital expenditures?

We will not fund capital expenditures for immovable assets (*i.e.*, buildings, furniture, infrastructure, *etc.*). Small equipment including tech equipment relevant to the project could be included in the budget.

What do you mean by the justice, child welfare, and education systems?

While justice could be understood as social justice, child welfare as the wellbeing of children, and education as learning - YAF seeks initiatives operating specifically within, or, as an alternative to the legal/criminal, foster care, and education systems. For all three systems, we understand that while some work within institutions, others will seek to offer alternative systems.

We understand how youth can have lived experiences in the criminal and child welfare systems. Can you explain what you mean by education?

Projects focusing on education should be by and for young people having lived experience with the education system, *e.g.*, being at higher risk of, or already impacted by, being pushed out of the system, streaming, suspensions, detentions, expulsions, *etc.* **N.B.:** YAF seeks projects by and for young people impacted by the education system rather than broader projects seeking to educate or raise awareness.

What types of initiatives can be funded?

The Youth Action Fund grants to a variety of initiatives, *e.g.*, research projects, policy and advocacy work, and programs. For examples of funded grantees, click [here](#).

Can our project focus on multiple regions or does it have to be only one?

Yes. Projects can focus on an individual or multiple regions, neighborhoods, and/or cities within Ontario. All activities must be conducted in ON.

How do we submit an application?

Submit an application online, via email, or paper mail if you have limited access to the internet. You can also request an oral application process. For online submissions, create an account on [Foundant](#), the Foundation's online grant management portal.

When using the portal, can we leave the application unfinished and return to it later?

Yes. Your application will remain in draft form until you hit submit. You can return to your draft application at any time.

What happens after we submit an application?

- We send an email confirming receipt of application.
- Laidlaw staff review each application for eligibility.
- Eligible applications that align well with the Youth Action Fund priorities will be shared with the Granting Committee (GC).
- If we and/or the Granting Committee have follow-up questions about your application, we will reach out.
- The GC will review shortlisted applications and then meet to consider them. Together, they decide which projects to recommend for funding and amounts of funding provided.
- The GC recommends projects to the Foundation's Board for ratification.
- Following the Board's ratification, we will contact you to share decisions made.

How many Youth Action Fund grants does the Foundation intend to make through the current call for applications?

This depends on the number of eligible applications and the budget that potential grantees need to do this work. On average and during an open call year, over 100 applications are received and around 10 projects are funded.

How do I learn about the outcome of my application?

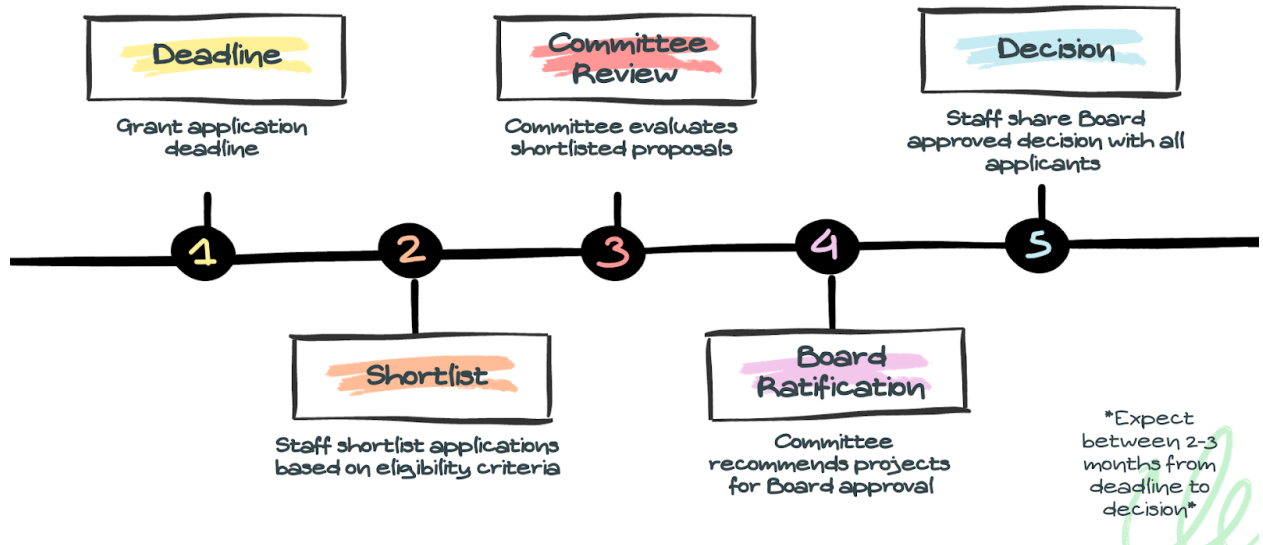
After a decision is reached on your application, you will receive an email notification. We do not release results by phone unless you went through an offline application process.

How long will it take to find out the outcome of my application?

In general, expect between 2-3 months from deadline to decision. Applications go through a series of evaluation:

Grant Timelines

From application to decision



Our grant application has been approved – what happens next?

Congratulations! You will be asked to review and sign an agreement, which may have special conditions attached that are specific to your grant. Generally, the first installment is paid soon after the receipt of the signed agreement and the remaining installments are paid according to the payment schedule drawn up to suit your particular project.

What is a payment schedule?

A payment schedule outlines dates and grant amounts made to your group by the Foundation for the approved budget. It is developed by taking into consideration the information provided in the work plan, and often also in consultation with the grantee.

Our application did not get accepted. Is there somewhere I can get feedback?

You can contact us directly. We will provide you with feedback on your application based on Granting Committee deliberations.

We have some questions. Who can I contact?

For more information, please contact the Director of Grants & Community Initiatives, Aldeli Albán Reyna, at aalbanreyna@laidlawfdn.org.