


LAIDLAW
FOUNDATION

STRATEGIC
PLAN 2013–2018

J U N E , 2 0 1 3



VISION, MISSION, VALUES AND STRATEGIC GOALS FOR THIS PLAN

VISION

Our vision is an inclusive society that values and supports the full engagement of young people in the civic, social, economic and cultural life of diverse and environmentally healthy communities.

MISSION

Our mission is to invest in innovative ideas, convene interested parties, share our learning and advocate for change, all in support of young people being healthy, creative and fully engaged citizens.

VALUES

Youth Engagement: Young people have important things to say and contribute and we value the participation of young people in decision making and governance.

Civic Engagement: Young people should have opportunities for meaningful participation in the democratic process and should have leadership roles in the governance of organizations and institutions that work with or make decisions that affect young people's lives.

Diversity: We recognize, respect and value the differences among us and believe that acknowledging and celebrating these differences lead to both stronger individuals and stronger communities.

Inclusion: We all have a place in the economic, social, cultural and political life of our society and, for our part, we enrich our organization through diversity.

Excellence and Integrity: We enjoy what we do and are proud of it. We mean what we say and we say what we mean. We expect the best of ourselves and of others.

OUR STRATEGIC GOALS –

BY 2018, THE LAIDLAW FOUNDATION WILL:

GOAL 1: Systems Change: Be able to identify at least one issue impacting youth where we have directly helped to make a measureable systemic change.

GOAL 2: Knowledge Generation: Have developed a robust information gathering and tracking system that will integrate information from grant recipients, data from the projects we fund and current relevant research in order to inform our granting decisions and provide a basis of our research and policy positions.

GOAL 3: Advocate and Champion: be recognized as a leader in generating useful information about the issues facing young people, in disseminating that information to a wide audience and in proposing solutions to those issues.

GOAL 4: Increasing our Reach: have doubled the financial impact of the organization through collaboration with appropriate partners, sourcing opportunities for additional financial resources and through the creative use of our capital resources.



INTRODUCTION

The Laidlaw Foundation was founded in 1949 by the Robert A. Laidlaw, President of the R. Laidlaw Lumber Company and made its first grant in 1950. Since then the Foundation has changed with the times. Through the five years of the previous strategic plan, the Foundation has focussed its efforts on supporting youth-led community change, through direct grants and supports to youth groups and through the investments in youth social infrastructure. This Strategic Plan 2013–2018 (the “Plan”) maintains our focus on young people, building on past successes.

The next five years will see the Laidlaw Foundation focus on building a robust system of information gathering from grantees and our partners. We will make assertive use of that information to inform policy makers of all political stripes and drive for changes that have long lasting, positive impact on the prospects for youth in our society.

The Plan is the product of consultation with our grantees, volunteers, stakeholders, directors, staff and others. We are grateful for their time and assistance. A list of those who participated in the process is included as [Appendix A](#).

IMPACT ON CURRENT GRANTEES

We appreciate that no one has more at stake in our new Plan than existing grantees. *All commitments to current grantees, including multi-year grantees will be met.* All payments will be made in accordance with the terms of the approved grant. However, applications for new funding after approval of this Plan in June 2013 will be assessed in accordance with this Plan.



HOW WE LAID THE FOUNDATIONS FOR THIS STRATEGY

The basis for this Strategy comes from three main sources: research and broad consultation conducted over the past two years, a major SWOT exercise conducted in consultation with our Board, staff and Advisors, and a Theory of Change based on the work of Dr. Urie Bronfenbrenner.

BROAD ANALYSIS AND CONSULTATION.

The Foundation commissioned three principal works of evaluative research, which we have posted on our website:

- » *Formative Evaluation of the Laidlaw Foundation's Implementation of the 2008–2012 Strategic and Operational Plan*, David McCoy, First Leadership Limited, March 2011;
- » *The Impact of the Laidlaw Foundation's Funding 2008–2012*, Fiona Scott, October 2012; and
- » *Strategic Options Scoping Study 2013–2018*, James Stauch, 8th Rung, December 2012

Each of these pieces of research has informed this strategy. For example, the work completed by James Stauch was based on over 40 interviews of grantees, volunteers, and supporters in the youth and philanthropic sectors. In summary, Stauch found that Laidlaw was perceived to be underachieving with many unsure of its direction. At the same time, there were accolades for some of Laidlaw's best work of the past years including the "Foundations & Pipelines Report" on Youth Social Infrastructure (also available on our website). This was important feedback from our community and was cited often as the Plan was developed.

SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT analysis both identifies strengths we can leverage to take advantage of opportunities as well as shortcomings that can make us vulnerable to threats. In order to create a useful and informed SWOT analysis, we held brainstorming sessions with the Board, staff and our volunteer Advisors. The final version of the SWOT analysis is included as **Appendix B** to this Plan.

The Strategic approach adopted by the Board embraces some of the key strengths identified:

- » Laidlaw Foundation's willingness to take risks; and
- » The "Interactive" nature of our granting system, which builds long term relationships with grantees and applicants.

These two qualities together, have allowed Laidlaw to fund "wildcard" projects, where others would not. This is an important part of our identity and one we will not lose.

We also heard our weaknesses loud and clear. Chief among them:

- » We are not collecting data in a way that is useful to a larger audience or which translates to real change benefitting young people; and
- » We are not well known outside our sector.

In short, the public is not sufficiently aware of our work in addressing issues which confront young people and it is not translating into permanent change. This is a weakness we intend to address.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Our work is informed by the work of developmental psychologist Dr. Urie Bronfenbrenner on positive youth development. His work identified three general touchstones for positive youth development:

- » All young people need the support of a significant adult in their lives who will provide unconditional support,
- » All young people need multiple opportunities to discover their talent(s), and
- » Are given the support that the young person needs to delve deeper and develop mastery.

Our granting criteria require that applications support at least one of these touchstones.

OUR GOALS AND HOW WE INTEND TO ACHIEVE THEM

We set out below our four main strategic goals for the next five years and outline how we intend to achieve them. We elaborate on the new approach in the section that follows.

GOAL 1: SYSTEMS CHANGE –

The Laidlaw Foundation will be able to identify at least one issue impacting youth where we have directly helped to make a measureable systemic change.

In particular, the Foundation will:

- » Identify key policy areas that impact the lives of young people, on which to focus our resources, and work with grantees and partners to build strong youth-led organizations in these areas;
- » Work with grantees who can provide direct input into the research and advocacy process;
- » Continue to incubate creative ideas by investing in emerging youth issues;
- » Build youth social infrastructure which relates to the chosen target areas;
- » Create partnerships and other relationships that facilitate policy change; and
- » Engage youth in civic and decision-making processes relating to policy issues;

GOAL 2: KNOWLEDGE GENERATION –

The Foundation will develop a robust information gathering system that will gather information from grant recipients and be the basis of our research and policy positions.

In order to support our ambition to be influential at a systemic level, a more robust and deliberate approach to information gathering is required. To achieve this goal, the Foundation will:

- » Work with grantees to develop a reporting system that delivers useful information and does not create an onerous burden on them;
- » Develop the capacity to translate data received into credible research by developing the Foundation's research capacity either internally or through third party partners or providers;
- » Where appropriate, partner with other organizations in the field to increase the scope of data collection.

GOAL 3: ADVOCATE AND CHAMPION –

The Foundation will be recognized as a leader in generating useful information about the issues facing young people, in disseminating that information to a wide audience and in proposing solutions to these issues.

Success in achieving goals 1 and 2 only has value if it is not kept a secret. In order to achieve this goal, the foundation will:

- » Take advantage of its relationship with multiple youth groups to ground its information and ideas.
- » Publish an annual report relating priorities and critical issues that young people have identified as impacting them and their communities ;
- » Develop an annual event at which it reports on its activities to the public, in collaboration with young people and other interested parties.

GOAL 4: EXPANDING OUR REACH –

The Foundation will double the financial impact of the organization through collaboration with appropriate partners and through the creative use of our capital resources.

In order to achieve this goal, the Foundation will:

- » Maintain its current level of program funding for the first three years of this plan;
- » Develop a strategy to increase funding available to the sector, through lead grants, matching grants, fundraising or otherwise.
- » Develop an impact investment plan that allows investment of capital for a return, in investment vehicles that further our vision.
- » Consider any other means by which the financial resources of the Foundation can be put to the service of our vision.



STRATEGIC APPROACH AND CHANGES TO HOW WE DO BUSINESS

The goals we have set are the result of a new strategic approach adopted by the Laidlaw Foundation. Our intent is to leverage our granting relationships to build enough knowledge to have an impact on public policy and to affect systemic change.

Rather than three separate granting streams (Youth Organizing, Youth Social Infrastructure and a Director's Discretionary Fund), funding will be allocated among three discrete but complimentary activities.



CAPACITY BUILDING SUPPORT

IDEATION. Laidlaw has long been appreciated as a funder for projects that are unable to find support elsewhere. It is from these programs and initiatives that unknown or underappreciated issues are likely to emerge. In addition, it is in these programs and initiatives that previously unseen connections between issues will become evident. Therefore we will continue to support such initiatives that otherwise meet the criteria set out below.

CURATION OR TARGETED SUPPORT. Laidlaw will “curate” a number of issues that it identifies as being areas of priority for advocacy in the near future. A certain portion of funds will be specifically allocated to the development of groups and initiatives that may produce successful outcomes and that are likely to yield useable data, information or insights into a particular issue. Within this phase, we will proactively seek out partnerships and other relationships that allow our efforts to be leveraged for greater impact, both in supporting the specific initiatives and in moving to advocacy. For an issue to qualify for this kind of support, we must be able to

- » Identify a gap in addressing that issue (In other words, others are not adequately addressing it on their own or are missing the mark.);
- » See the possibility of policy outcomes from supporting the initiatives; and
- » Identify a gap in youth involvement.

PERSUASION OR RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY. Once Laidlaw has gathered sufficient information through its grantees and partners, it will:

- » Analyse the data, deriving implications from that data,
- » Strategize on the best approach to effect change (e.g. lobby directly, partner with another influential organization, engage in public discussion or public relations etc),
- » Execute the advocacy approach selected, and
- » Measure the impact of the effort.



IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS APPROACH

This approach will mean some changes in the way we do business. Some of the major changes that will be made include:

HOW LAIDLAW WILL SELECT IDEATION

GRANTEES: In the Ideation phase the Laidlaw Foundation seeks to incubate new ideas. As a result the selection criteria will be broad. In particular: a qualifying application will:

- » **Advance our vision:** We should be able to see how the application advances an inclusive society which values and supports its young people in being fully engaged – that is, it must promote youth-led social change;
- » **Be consistent with our values:** Both our strategy and our individual funding decisions must be aligned with the core values of the Laidlaw Foundation;
- » **Fit our Theory of Change:** It must support (1) the creation of strong adult mentors (it includes mentorship and/or intergenerational supports); (2) the identification of talents among young people; OR (3) provide young people with an opportunity to master their talents (for example, it promotes experiential learning and skills development);
- » **Have a systemic element:** The application should have an element of reporting that allows it to contribute either to the larger policy discussions of the issue(s) it purports to address, or to the effort of identifying new issues;
- » **Be a group or organization:** Be for an organization rather than an individual; and
- » **Be ready to engage with us:** Applicants must be open to interactive participation from Laidlaw to help shape an application for maximum impact and, where risky, risk mitigation.

HOW LAIDLAW WILL SELECT TARGET ISSUES:

Since grantees working on issues chosen as target areas for development will have access to greater amount of funding from Laidlaw, we recognize the impact of the choice of these issues. We also recognize that there is a risk of choosing issues with which staff and board are comfortable, but which may not be resonating with youth. As a result, we are developing a process for annual information sharing and consultation with our stakeholders and volunteer advisors to help us identify these issues.

For the first year of this plan, we convened a grantee learning circle on April 16, which contributed additional perspective and direction to our issue-area analysis process. Participants' input is reported in [Appendix D](#) to this Plan. This feedback directly informed some of the choices we made for target issues, as more fully set out in the Implementation Plan. Our choices are also influenced by the experiences Laidlaw has had with its grantees over the last number of years. Appendix E to this Plan sets out in detail the issues with which we have been involved and the groups we have funded that grapple with those issues.

TARGETED REPORTING REQUIREMENTS:

In order to support the advocacy portion, the reporting requirements of grantees will be tailored to allow Laidlaw to receive the specific information it requires to support an evidence-based advocacy campaign.

HOW MONEY IS ALLOCATED: In the long run, the Foundation expects to support each of these activities in approximately the following proportions: 30% to Ideation, 50% to Curation and 20% to Persuasion. Political advocacy within the realm of Persuasion will be limited to 10%. The current allotment of funding to a director's discretionary fund will be eliminated. Allocation will be confirmed annually based on applications, commitments and opportunities.

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY: We are developing a new communications approach to support this Plan. The emphasis will be to promote the results of our research work that supports any policy changes we are seeking. However, our connection to a variety of youth organizations provides an opportunity to share the spotlight with them. We will use our leverage to ensure that the good news stories we know about – that rarely get air time – find an audience.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN: the staff has prepared a detailed implementation plan, which is attached as [Appendix C](#). The Implementation Plan describes, among other things, the transition from the current Youth Organizing and Youth Social Infrastructure to the new model.

CAPITAL AND FINANCIAL STRATEGY

FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

The Foundation's long-term financial strategy over the years has been to manage expenditure levels, in such we balance two objectives: first, to maintain the real value of our capital endowment over the long-term and second, to avoid major fluctuations in our charitable expenditures from year to year.

For this reason the Foundation has maintained the level of its expenditures at an average of 5.14% of total assets or \$2.8 million over the last 8 years, in spite of the market value fluctuation of total assets between a high of \$60.4 million in 2006 and a low of \$49.6 million in 2008, as shown in the chart below. The minimum distribution required by the Canada Revenue Agency is 3.5%.

| | FROM AUDITED F/S | | | | TOTAL EXPENSES | |
|----------------|------------------|----------|---------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|
| | Total Assets | % Change | Total Revenue | Total Expenses | Gain/(Loss) | as a % of Assets |
| 31-DEC-05 | \$56,489,446 | 4.64% | \$5,487,958 | \$3,145,491 | \$2,342,467 | 5.57% |
| 31-DEC-06 | \$60,436,121 | 6.53% | \$6,366,866 | \$2,549,216 | \$3,817,650 | 4.22% |
| 31-DEC-07 | \$57,106,194 | -5.83% | (\$242,820) | \$3,119,035 | (\$3,361,855) | 5.46% |
| 31-DEC-08 | \$49,620,391 | -15.09% | (\$5,138,144) | \$2,747,151 | (\$7,885,295) | 5.54% |
| 31-DEC-09 | \$53,833,143 | 7.83% | \$7,123,241 | \$2,978,909 | \$4,144,332 | 5.53% |
| 31-DEC-10 | \$54,715,471 | 1.61% | \$3,819,479 | \$2,638,038 | \$1,181,441 | 4.82% |
| 31-DEC-11 | \$53,310,204 | -2.64% | \$1,504,506 | \$2,785,103 | (\$1,280,597) | 5.22% |
| 31-DEC-12 | \$56,116,599 | 5.00% | \$5,659,875 | \$2,662,511 | \$2,997,364 | 4.74% |
| AVERAGE | \$55,203,446 | 0.26% | \$3,072,620 | \$2,828,182 | \$244,438 | 5.14% |

The Laidlaw Foundation has not reduced program spending during low return years. Rather, it has chosen to pursue a funding strategy that takes into account fluctuations in return over the long term. Consequently, in years of low return the Laidlaw Foundation draws against capital to maintain program funding. In years of high return it does not increase its expenses, thus allowing the capital to be replenished. The average total assets over the last 8 years is \$55.2 million, with a +0.26% change over 8 years and a gain of \$244,438



THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

As noted, current revenues are limited to income from investments, which vary on a year over year basis. In order to support the Plan, including its goal to double the financial impact of the Laidlaw Foundation over the next five years, we will do the following:

» **CONSISTENT GRANT FUNDING:**

The Foundation will maintain total spending levels at the current pace for the next 3 years regardless of its impact on capital. This will provide certainty for grantees and staff and planning can take place accordingly and will be reviewed at the end of the 3rd year to determine the appropriate level of funding from that time forward.

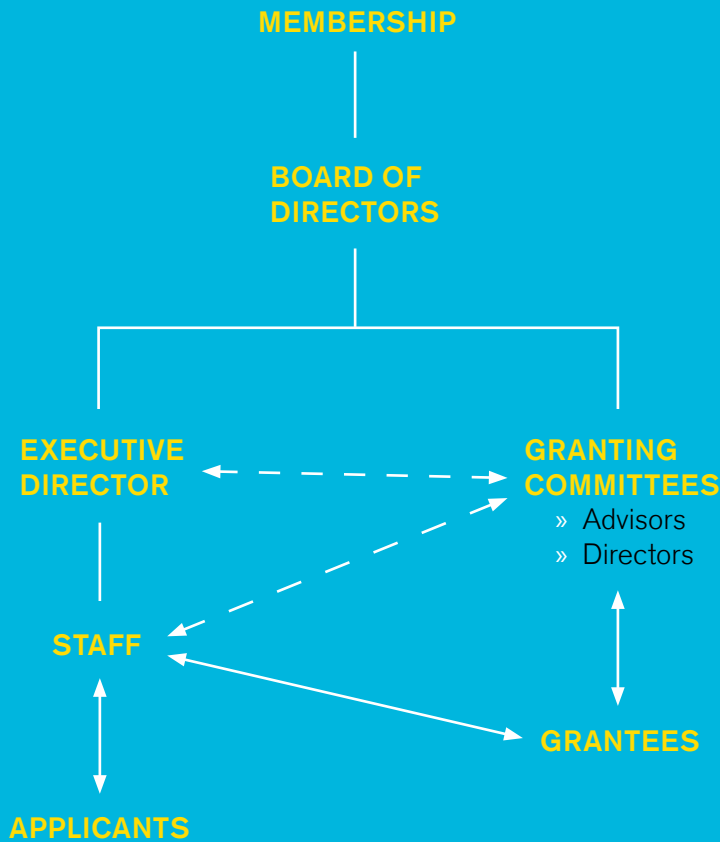
» **ATTRACT NEW FINANCIAL PARTNERS:**

The Foundation will attract other resources to the projects we support through fundraising, matching grants or other mechanisms we devise. If successful, the Foundation will have the option of replenishing capital and/or continuing to broaden its impact. The development of a network will also allow the Foundation to move mature organizations to other funders so that it can continue to invest in relatively “risky” ideas.

» **SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE INVESTING:**

The Laidlaw Foundation will look closely at means by which its capital may be deployed in a manner that advances our mission as part of its overall investment portfolio.

GOVERNANCE



The Laidlaw Foundation will continue to be governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, the highest level of governance at Laidlaw. We will make every effort to reflect our values through the Board, including ensuring a strong youth voice. The directors are accountable to the broader membership and are elected at the annual general meeting, usually in June.

The Laidlaw Foundation is among a small group of family foundations in Canada in which members of the original donor family have a minority share of board positions. We are greatly respectful of this choice and are keen to keep a strong connection to the founding family. We will continue to seek members of the family for the board. The Foundation is, after all, a family legacy of which we are all proud.

Similarly, we will continue our tradition of delegating direct funding decisions to committees comprised of volunteer advisors who have experience in the youth sector and/or are young people themselves. The committees will also include representation from the Board and will be tasked with making grant decisions that are consistent with our mission and this Plan.

While we will be introducing operational changes to the granting programs to reflect this Plan, the governance structure of the Foundation will remain unchanged. We continue to expect a high degree of interaction among staff and grantees once approved, as shown on the organizational chart below

CONCLUSION

In moving forward with this Plan, the Laidlaw Foundation will continue to rely on a skilled and motivated staff who will be responsible for achieving the goals set out in this document; a group of committed and passionate advisors and directors; and applicants and grantees who know no limits other than their own imaginations.

We believe that the goals we have set for the Laidlaw Foundation in this Plan will help us bring about a more inclusive society and one that generates opportunities for young people.

APPENDIX

LIST OF PEOPLE CONSULTED IN 2013-18 STRATEGIC PLANNING EXERCISE

BOARD

Liban Abokor
Jen Apgar
Derek Ballantyne
Andrew Bedeau
John Fox
Michael Griesz
Jessica Hammel
Ravi Jain
Hanifa Kassam
Shannon Litzenberger
Brenda Pipitone
Lyon Smith

ADVISORS

Elle Alconcel
Victor Beausoleil
Tsering Dolma
Amber Morley
Helena Shimeles
Amaree Watkis
Asha Yusaf
Dev Aujla
Arti Freeman
Chris Kang
Heather Laird
Paulina O'Kieffe
Shahina Sayani
Robin Sutherland
Andrea Zammit
Ken Gibson
Paul Naipal

LIDLAW PAST CHAIRS

Alina Chatterjee
Brian Chu
Phillip Haid
Walter Ross

FOUNDATIONS/PHILANTHROPY

Rahul Bhardwaj and Mini Alukkutserry, *Toronto Community Foundation*
Ian Bird, *Community Foundations of Canada (formerly with Sport Matters)*
Alan Broadbent and Ratna Omidvar, *Maytree Foundation*
Stephen Couchman, *PQR Foundation*
Stephen Huddart and John Cawley, *J.W. McConnell Family Foundation*
Sandy Houston, *Metcalf Foundation*
Elisa Levi, *Circle on Philanthropy and Aboriginal Peoples in Canada*
Ruth Richardson, *Small Change Fund (former Laidlaw advisor)*
Ed Skloot, *Center for Strategic Philanthropy and Civil Society, Duke University (former CEO of the Surdna Foundation)*
Shelley Uytterhagen, *Carthy Foundation*

SOCIAL INNOVATION

Tim Draimin, *SiG at MaRS*
Tonya Surman, *Centre for Social Innovation*

In addition, information was culled from grantee reports from 2008 to 2012 and select interviews were undertaken by Fiona Scott in the production of her evaluation dated October 2012.

YOUTH-ENGAGED PARTNERS

Julian Caspari, *Schools Without Borders (SWB)*
 Jenny Katz, *Frontline Partners with Youth Network (FPYN)*
 Che Kothari, *Manifesto*
 Phyllis Novak, *Sketch*

OTHER YOUTH-ENGAGEMENT ACTORS

Larry Ketcheson, *Parks and Recreation Ontario*
 Karen Kun, *Waterlution (also former Editor of Corporate Knights Magazine)*
 Marc Langlois, *Heartwood Institute*
 Alison Loat and Fiona O'Connor, *Samara/ Democracy Talks*
 Tim Merry, *Myrgan Inc. (assisted with YSI development process)*
 Jenn Miller, *The Base (Tides Canada Initiatives; formerly with Ontario Trillium Foundation)*
 Kevin Millsip, *Next Up (and founder of Check Your Head)*

TORONTO/ONTARIO CIVIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Pedro Barata, *United Way of Toronto (formerly with Atkinson Foundation)*
 Mitzie Hunter, *CivicAction*
 Heather Laird, *Ontario Non-Profit Network (ONN)*
 Elizabeth McIsaac, *Mowat Centre for Public Policy*

GOVERNMENT

Denise Andrea Campbell, *Community Resources, City of Toronto*
 Irwin Elman, *Provincial Child and Youth Advocate*
 Darryl Sturtevant, Rachel Simeon, and Sean Twyford, *Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services*

APRIL 16TH, 2013 GRANTEE CONSULTATION

A, Alyssa
 Akinsanya, Segun
 Bekzadeh, RickiCajucom, Nicole
 Chandler, Clarissa
 Daniel, Natasha
 Davies, Mathew
 Dyer, Cathy
 Elliott, Jaime
 Estacio, Kat
 Fitzsimmons, Janet
 Fofana, Mariama
 Gagliardi, Nicole
 Gowie, Nicky
 Hagos, Dahab
 Hosotsugi, Amy
 Hotta, Yumi
 Laird, Heather
 Linares, Esther
 Lowe, Alana
 Jegatheesan, Vathanan
 Morley, Amber
 Morris, Adiyana
 P, Kelisha
 Paczay, Dylan
 Rocha, Janine
 Samilski, Jason
 Sayani, Shahina
 Sutherland, Robin
 Wardell, Emma
 Wardell, Norah
 Yusuf, Juwaher
 Zammit, Andrea

APPENDIX

STRENGTHS

Risk Tolerance: We not only have a high tolerance for risk, we are known for this. More specifically, we try things and support activities/groups that others won't

Flexibility: We aren't rigid about what we do and are able to adapt to changes or opportunities and to react to youth issues.

Connected: Both to others in the field, to influencers and to what's happening.

Change agent: We are and are seen as being an agent of change for youth.

Smart people: Both internally and among our advisors, volunteers and board, we're blessed with smart people invested in our success.

Committed to Youth: Both as fact and reputation, giving us permission to truly care.

Egalitarian: This is a philosophy that translates into process and reputation.

Assumption of Talent: We assume youth have talent that can be developed and harnessed, distinguishing us from pathologized approaches.

Creative funding: In the evolving world of social entrepreneurship and youth development, we find ways to participate.

Supportive of execution: We not only fund, we help with how-tos.

No unnecessary bureaucracy: We avoid layers that slow things down or intimidate fundees.

Institutional Memory: We know more than most about this field.

Youth Leadership: We have youth participate in the organization.

We are able to identify successful wildcards: Some of our big wins have been wildcards that we identified and developed.

Information & stories: This provides us data and perspective to help influence policy

Ability to convene

Unique positioning in underserved space: Both of these allow us to understand issues, develop solutions, advocate for change and take leadership positions.

We are a granter: This provides us with respect and a "right" to be at the table.

Low Ego: We're able to work with others, yield the field where appropriate or strategic.

Engagement: We help shape the project before the application is finalized

Relational Funder: Because we build relationships, we acquire both credibility and knowledge

Duration: We are a rare multi-year funder

Innovation: We believe in, value and foster innovative solutions

Learners: We are a learning organization

Adaptable: Part of being a learning org'n is to take the learning and adapt accordingly

We fund hubs

WEAKNESSES

Unrecognized: Outside of our field, we're not recognized, which restricts collaborations and constructive relationships. Our brand awareness is low

Don't have/use data: We have stories/knowledge but not enough hard data to support our work or our advocacy.

Communications: The good news of our work isn't spread.

Insufficient resources: We aren't able to do everything we want to pursue.

Lack of continuity of support: We don't continue in our support of some fundees who need it and aren't helping them to transition to stable support.

No "marketplace of opportunities": not creating relationships that allow us to bring opportunities to others who'd like to support the sector.

Losing alumni: We aren't following alumni as they age out.

Not playing leadership role: despite uniqueness and the lack of others in the field, we aren't playing as strong a leadership role as we could.

Vague policy impacts: We're unclear on how our work is or can affect policy

Insufficient reporting: Our fundees aren't asked to provide the reports we need to acquire good data

Insufficient "bureaucracy": Our trailblazing approach creates some lack of predictability.

Points of access: Marginalized youth don't know how to connect to us or to support generally.

Limited financial resources: there is a limit to what we can do given our capital.

Lack of clarity about capital strategy: there is no overt agreement as to whether we should be preserving, using or supplementing the capital.

YSI Can Appear Incestuous: People on committee approve each other's projects; there's a need to rotate people

YSI: Principles unclear: Even members unclear of principles driving it.

Opaque structure: Youth don't know how to navigate Laidlaw

Haven't graduated YSI's: Projects and groups haven't graduated out of this program

Projects aren't Linked to Policy: We don't strategically select groups to achieve policy objectives, nor do we evaluate projects with an eye on policy implications as thoroughly as we might.

Single funding model: We haven't engaged in micro-loans or other alternatives

YO & YSI divide: Those focused on one or the other have little knowledge/awareness of the other

Communications: Our communications strategy is lacking and our communications generally to the community are not as effective as we'd like

Knowledge Mgmt: While we are a learning organization, our institutional ability to capture that learning is not strong enough.

Succession: There has been little planning for personnel succession

We lack a formal evaluation process

OPPORTUNITIES

Lease expiring: could potentially find space with room for young people and their initiatives.

Data collection: With all the groups/projects in which we participate, we can collect meaningful data for programming, advocacy or strategic decision-making.

Create systemic change: where little else is being done, we can exert influence.

Leverage our alumni: they have experiences, contacts and insights.

Policy impacts: We can have greater impact simply by focusing on it.

Increase access points: Help the marginalized more by improving their ability to connect.

Fundraising: We have not previously done fundraising but given the small numbers of participants in the field, there is an opportunity to access potential funders.

Leverage supporters: We have supporters who would like to participate in policy and advocacy particularly but we haven't yet leveraged them.

We can focus on any of 3 types of support:

- » fundee capacity
- » leadership capacity
- » sectoral or system capacity

Wildcard support: We've enjoyed success with wildcards, but haven't strategically sought them out.

Clarify capital strategy: This would put clear parameters around our activities

Leveraging Success: we could enhance our profile and advocacy

Develop Metrics: Getting numbers on our performance helps focus, enhance profile, and advocacy

Promote Intergenerational conversations: About how change is made

Youth in Policy: Develop and involve youth leadership at policy levels

Promote success outside GTA: Sharing success models outside the GTA can inspire youth-led initiatives elsewhere

Clarify Laidlaw Role: Are we funder, advocate, convener of youth mentorship

Youth Outreach: You could help access our programs by having proactive outreach

Traumatic events: We can take positions on traumatic events and provide support in those crises.

Increase sustainability: Helping org's endure.

Leveraging alumni: Alumni can be helpful in reaching out to youth otherwise disconnected

Connecting to other org's: Helping fundees connect to other supportive org's

Connecting: advisory committees and advisors with community

Convene more

THREATS

Lease is expiring: Need to find space and keep costs manageable.

Contraction of the space: Dialogue on youth organizing/engagement/ leadership is dwindling and leading to fewer players.

Changing political climate: (Both Ont. & Federal), including competition from (voting) seniors for dollars.

Reduction in public/private funding: (eg Youth Challenge Fund's \$47 million is gone).

Investment performance: could impact ability to fund.

Public Perception of Youth: Those in power still don't appreciate the challenges and opportunities in youth

Poverty in the Sector: There is not enough money in the sector to address all the needs

APPENDIX

C :

15

GRANTEE
LEARNING CIRCLE
DISCUSSION HARVEST

APRIL 16TH, 2013

FRAME FOR THE EVENING:

WHAT ARE THE KEY ISSUES THE FOUNDATION SHOULD PAY ATTENTION TO, TO BOLSTER OUR GRANTEES AND PARTNERS WORK?

Purpose:

- » Tap into the wisdom of the group to hear about the issues facing the sector
- » Learn about individual issues that affect grassroots groups
- » Share where we are headed at the Foundation
- » Networking and connecting

WHAT DO YOU NOTICE HAPPENING IN THE SECTOR OR COMMUNITY AROUND YOU?

Systems Change Barriers

- » lack of engagement from politicians and decision makers
- » current political priorities disconnected from communities
- » deeper root issues getting lost in just delivering the programs
- » need a broader lens to measure and evaluate success
- » fear to address policy in the youth sector
- » the accepted notion that individuals are accountable for their own problems
- » being in the 'not for profit industrial complex'
- » colonization
- » capitalism
- » living in a police state
- » lack of self determination
- » gender, sexism, homophobia
- » lack of education
- » lack of fair wage
- » classism

Community Care & Self Care

- » burn out
- » mental health issues for youth and the added stigma in marginalized youth
- » undiagnosed mental health issues
- » healing the healers

Organization and Sector Capacity

- » lack of knowledge transfer
- » hard to get established and move to the next level
- » difficulty working collectively
- » founders syndrome
- » not returning skills, confidence, experience to community
- » how to support transition from volunteering to leadership

Funding

- » lack of funding and cuts to funding
- » no obvious long term plans from funders
- » importance of capital funding not invested in
- » need for Laidlaw to create alliances
- » sustainability
- » Corporate Social Responsibility – an oxymoron? Corporate funding isn't ethical and can even contravene the mandate of a not for profit org.
- » lack of sustainable support

Issues facing groups working with youth

- » access to youth spaces, lack of space, no place to be vibrant, should be able to exist fully everywhere at all times
- » lack of visibility of support services/ease in accessing support services
- » youth seen as hoodlums
- » lack of connections between geographic communities
- » family/parenting issues
- » intergenerational tension, need for mentorship, relationship building, allies
- » conflict between baby boomers and millennials
- » gap between youth artists becoming professional emerging artists, youth artists stigmatized/not respected by adults
- » hard to get youth motivated

WHAT WOULD YOU WANT TO BE DIFFERENT IN 5 YEARS?

Changes in the funding landscape

- » increased accessibility to funding for grassroots orgs that aren't charities
- » more sustainable funding—cycle of fundraising distances you from the program
- » change funding city wide
- » create funders collaborative
- » make funding, support and networking more available to rural youth and more specifically Northern Ontario youth
- » funders trained on youth issues
- » capital funds for self-determined space
- » more social enterprise solutions and more funders willing to fund it

Working Collectively

- » established agencies less hesitant to develop relationships
- » decisions made based on a common voice rather than org status/structure
- » finding a way to quantify the work collectively
- » build a community of learning
- » partner with different networks to host conversations
- » create places for people to share their stories
- » be holistic

Mandates drawn from community

- » more decisions made based on community needs
- » valuing people more than profit

Capacity Supports

- » need for a fundraising network
- » more financial literacy workshops
- » midway meetings to get info feedback from others
- » more training
- » creating a network of support

WHAT IS LAIDLAW'S ROLE?

- » Tell the overarching story about how youth organizing is a game changer
- » Research on how to measure weird and wacky outcomes
- » Create partnerships/pool resources — media, equipment, chairs, etc
- » Keep seeding projects in a bigger way
- » Work with a developer on a physical space
- » Publish papers on the significance of the work
- » Act as a conversational transitioner
- » Have conversations with other funders to get them to change their ways
- » Act as an introducer
- » Use social media to highlight funded groups
- » Help with capital funding

“Laidlaw grantees have trust by association, implied legitimacy”

APPENDIX

D :

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**FOUNDATION
INVOLVED
ISSUE AREAS
ANALYSIS**

2008 - PRESENT

OVERVIEW

This is an analysis of policy, equity, social justice and community health issues the Foundation has been active in during its 2008–2012 strategic plan. The Foundation has supported community & youth identified priorities as a funder, convenor and stakeholder:

- » **Funder:** providing grants to groups to address issues that concern them. In this document, special attention has been given to areas where there is significant grantee activity as well as outliers/wildcard issues.
- » **Convenor:** convening stakeholders to develop action plans/working groups around issue areas and priorities identified by the Foundation, grantees and other partners.
- » **Stakeholder:** Foundation staff have been sought to participate in working groups/advisory committees, to share expertise and provide insights.

In reviewing the breadth and depth of issues the Foundation has been involved in, two broad themes have emerged:

- » **Issues related to changing the sector:** Our work is focused on changing the overall landscape of the non-profit sector to become more inclusive and accessible to young people and grassroots leadership. This includes capacity strengthening strategies focussed on youth-led group as well as the Not for Profit sector as a whole.
- » **Issues related to systemic marginalization and social exclusion:** We invest in community organizing around particular social justice and equity issues such as groups that seek to change the education system, the justice system, settlement and integration, so that young people who face systemic forms of marginalization are able to become empowered, have opportunities to engage and are included in society.

This report provides a detailed overview of these themes. It includes specific examples of grantees, partners and Foundation strategies that highlight ways young people and community partners are taking action on issues that effect community health and wellbeing. This is not an exhaustive list as it does not include every group the Foundation supports or project it has been involved in. It is a resource to inform priority setting for how the Foundation can build on its networks and partnerships to deepen its reach.

ISSUE AREA ANALYSIS

SECTION I: OVERVIEW OF FOUNDATION INVOLVED ISSUE AREAS RELATED TO CHANGING THE SECTOR

The Foundation and its partners are working to change the sectors that young people work/organize in to be more supportive of youth-led leadership and community-based strategies in general. This includes promoting youth engagement, investing in administrative platforms to support grassroots leadership, developing accessible funding and financing models, and supporting health and wellness for community organizers and frontline workers.

1.1 YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

Description:

- » Lack of meaningful engagement of young people in decision-making related to policy, services and organizational governance that affect their lives
- » Need for models, tools and resources to support young people and adult-allies to work collaboratively & in participatory ways

Foundation supported strategies:

- » Promote youth engagement as a best practice when working on issues that impact young people
- » Increase the capacity of organizations and institutions to share power with young people

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| YSI Collaborative | The Laidlaw Foundation was a co-initiator of the the YSI collaborative (with the Ontario Trillium Foundation). The YSI Collaborative aims to accelerate and amplify the conditions for youth engagement & youth organizing in the province. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » youth-led and youth serving sectors |
| OYM! | Ontario Youth Matters! (OYM), a provincial campaign, sought a comprehensive provincial outcome-based youth policy framework. Young people co-managed the organizational development of OYM. A legacy of OYM is the continued inclusion of young people at decision-making tables provincially. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » provincial » municipal |
| Collective Impact | Youth Change Lab co-initiated with United Way Toronto and the City. Intention is to create a shared vision that results in large scale social change for youth in Toronto. Collective vision results in creating a shared measurement system, mutually reinforcing activities, ongoing communication and a backbone organization to aggregate data. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » cross sectoral (youth, community, agency, funder, government, private sector) |

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|--|--|---|
| <p>New Mentality</p> | <p>A YSI funded group, NM is a provincial network administered by Children’s Mental Health Ontario. NM is a community of practice in youth engagement that ignites change in the mental health system. Youth are mobilized to help decrease stigma surrounding mental health, increase youth leadership and influence within community-based counselling centres in Ontario.–mental health sector.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » youth leadership » mental health service providers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » mental health sector » mental health service providers |
| <p>City of Toronto Recreation Policy Advocacy</p> | <p>In 2012, Laidlaw helped connect Public Interest and CUPE 79 to youth-led groups in order to support youth-led responses to proposed changes to the City’s Recreation Policy. Through convening and sharing of networks, the Foundation helped connect groups like the South Etobicoke Youth Assembly (SEYA) to this process. Young people made deputation to the Community Neighbourhood Committee & the City’s Executive Committee.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » municipal policies |

1.2 ADMINISTRATIVE PLATFORMS

Description:

- » Grassroots groups without charitable or nonprofit status have few options beyond 'trustee' models to receive financial and administrative support
- » Trustee models often don't work, do not specify what services are available, nor do they allow for autonomy for the grassroots group to conduct their project
- » A model is needed that has an embedded understanding of shared power and decision making with young people, resident led and community-based groups, while furthering the mandate of the administrative partner

Foundation supported strategies:

- » Create alternative, accessible administrative/ shared platforms to support community-based, grassroots groups
- » Increase the capacity of organizations to transition from a 'trustee' approach to a shared platform approach to better support youth-led and community based groups
- » Identify key learning and benefits of model to influence policy of private and public funding agencies, to recognize the admin platform model

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|---|--|---|
| Shared Platforms Community of Practice/Ontario Nonprofit Network Constellation | A Laidlaw co-convened group (with Tides), the Shared Platforms Working Group is seeking to increase access to community-change making by collaboratively researching & exploring shared practices, impacts, challenges of the shared platform model in Ontario's nonprofit sector. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » sector-wide implications » nonprofits sector represented, including arts sector, funders, municipal gov't » as ONN constellation, activities reach provincial level |
| The Base at Tides Canada | A YSI funded group, the Base is a platform within a platform (Tides), that is an innovative model providing space for youth-led groups, grassroots initiatives to sit within a well-developed administrative platform. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » local to Toronto, as this is a pilot for Tides; has potential of National expansion |
| Schools without Borders | A YSI funded group, SWB provided significant administrative & mentoring support to youth-led groups, including YO funded projects. Learning from the SWB model informed the creation of the Base at Tides. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » local to Toronto; administrative support also provided to international partners in Kenya |
| Neighbourhood Trust/East Scarborough Storefront | Staff sit on the operations committee of the NT. The NT is an innovative platform that supports resident-led projects, providing capacity support as well as administrative support. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » neighbourhood-based » has sector implications |

1.3 ACCESSIBLE FUNDING AND FINANCING

Description:

- » Most funding programs are not accessible to young people, especially marginalized youth, non-incorporated groups and grassroots groups that can't demonstrate an administrative history
- » There are few micro-loan programs directed at young people, and so few opportunities for young social entrepreneurs to access financing and loans

Foundation supported strategies:

- » Create accessible funding models
- » Partner with key stakeholders to inform appropriate financing models for young social entrepreneurs

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| ArtReach Toronto | A YSI funded initiative, Laidlaw was part of the initial funders collaborative that developed ArtReach. ArtReach was administered by the Foundation and continues to be funded through YSI. Artreach Toronto is a program designed to support arts initiatives that engage youth who have experienced exclusion in under-served areas of Toronto. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » funder policies: promoting collaboration among funders |
| CUE Collective | A YO multi-year grantee, CUE is a radical, youth-led arts initiative dedicated to mentoring, supporting and providing arts project creation opportunities for marginalized young artists in Toronto. The Foundation works with CUE to reach and invest in young people who would be unlikely to connect with the Foundation directly. CUE works with youth who are homeless/insecurely housed, and living marginally. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » funder policies » youth and arts sectors |
| Youth Microloan Project | A YSI funded initiative, the YML project is a partnership between the City, Alterna, Laidlaw, TCHC, YCF. The City provided a \$50,000 surety loan, that allowed for \$2-5K loans of \$2-5 to 10 youth developed social enterprises. UrbanArts managed the pilot project. The partnership is currently interviewing organizations that can continue the micro-loan in partnership with Alterna. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » (Alterna) micro-loan policies for marginalized youth |

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|--|--|--|
| <p>Youth Social Innovation Capital Fund</p> | <p>A YO funded project, The Social Finance Chain is a youth-led micro-loaning program that provides capacity supports including mentorship, training and financing to young social entrepreneurs, primarily in Toronto.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Canada-wide, promoting alternative financing for young social entrepreneurs |
| <p>Beautiful City Billboard Fee</p> | <p>A YO funded and Board funded coalition, Beautiful City is an alliance of youth-led organizations, organizations and individuals working towards a charge paid by billboard advertisers through an annual license fee. Revenues from this fee would be dedicated to art in the public sphere in Toronto, with a priority on marginalized communities and youth arts. This project supports outreach activities and the convening of a Town Hall meeting and Art Jam, an event that includes City Councilors making art with young artists; local youth performances; and updates on the BCBF process and the status of the campaign.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Municipal » could be adopted in other municipalities as a revenue source for community and youth arts |

1.4 COMMUNITY CARE: HEALTH AND WELLNESS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, FRONTLINE WORKERS AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS

Description:

- » Frontline community youth workers are often stuck between supporting the youth they are mandated and passionate to serve and managing the bureaucracies of the organizations they work in
- » Frontline community youth workers have few supports to help them address issues that emerge in the communities they are working in
- » Burnout, stress, trauma and vicarious trauma are prevalent in community-based work and take serious tolls on the health and wellness of frontline community youth workers

Foundation supported strategies:

- » increase supports and investments in the health and wellbeing of frontline workers and community organizers, so they are better able to support the communities and young people they work with
- » increase awareness and dialogue around the prevalence of stress, burnout, trauma and vicarious trauma in frontline community youth work
- » Capture learning and experiences of frontline workers to help inform policy evaluation and advocacy

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|--|--|--|
| Frontline Partners with Youth Network | A YSI funded partners, FPYN is a cross-sectoral, city-wide network of people working directly with youth. It provides space for frontline workers to access peer networks and share experiences while also focussing on sector policies that could improve the health and wellness of frontline workers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » city-wide » social service organizational policies » funder policies |
| ArtReach Toronto | ArtReach offers workshops for young people, that are included in their GOAL series of workshops (that provide certificates). Topics include community care and self-care. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » city-wide » funder policies: promoting collaboration among funders |
| Community Care research | The Laidlaw Foundation has been supporting Ana's masters research into health and wellness strategies for frontline workers and community organizers. The focus is specifically on recommendations for funders on how they can better invest in and support health and wellness in frontline community work. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » city-wide » funding sector |

1.5 CAPACITY STRENGTHENING: TOOLS, TRAINING AND HOW-TO SUPPORTS FOR YOUTH ORGANIZERS

Description:

- » Grassroots groups and youth organizers are often learning-by-doing and have access to few supports to help them plan and execute their projects
- » There are few accessible training programs (low-cost, relatable content) for community organizers to access that can help them with the how-to's of running an organization, developing evaluation strategies, fundraising.

Foundation Supported Strategies:

- » High engagement approach to granting, where staff act as mentors and supports to applicants and grantees
- » Convening and supporting training opportunities for youth organizers and adult allies to access tools and techniques to support their work
- » Supporting workshops and other training initiatives like the Grassroots Youth School, YSI Collaborative and FPYN.
- » Supporting grantees to access different expertise including legal, strategic planning, evaluation, succession planning and board training

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|---|--|--|
| Engaged Staff | The Foundation takes a high engagement approach to its granting and staff work one on one with groups to develop their proposals and troubleshoot as issues arise during their projects. | » grantee and applicants |
| Art of Participatory Leadership training | The Laidlaw Foundation co-convened a 3 day training session on facilitation using art of hosting and participatory leadership techniques. | » youth organizers and allies |
| YSI Collaborative | The Laidlaw Foundation was a co-initiator of the YSI collaborative (with the Ontario Trillium Foundation). The YSI Collaborative aims to accelerate and amplify the conditions for youth engagement & youth organizing in the province. | » youth-led and youth serving sectors |
| Frontline Partners with Youth Network | A YSI funded partners, FPYN is a cross-sectoral, city-wide network of people working directly with youth. It provides space for frontline workers to access peer networks and share experiences while also focussing on sector policies that could improve the health and wellness of frontline workers. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » city-wide » social service organizational policies » funder policies |

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|--|--|---|
| ArtReach Toronto | ArtReach offers workshops for young people, that are included in their GOAL series of workshops (that provide certificates). Topics include community care and self-care. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » city-wide » funder policies, promoting collaboration among funders |
| Grants to support capacity building | YO has supported a number of youth-led groups to access capacity building supports including board training, legal expertise, strategic planning and evaluation. Examples include: Youth LEAPS, Beyond the Lyrics, SOYAT, Young Diplomats. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » primarily Toronto-based youth groups |

ISSUE AREA ANALYSIS

SECTION II: OVERVIEW OF FOUNDATION INVOLVED ISSUE AREAS RELATED TO SYSTEMIC MARGINALIZATION & SOCIAL EXCLUSION

The Foundation and its partners work to bring attention to and raise awareness to issues that affect young people within current systems and structures. Issues focus on those that may create additional barriers, are not working for young people, marginalize certain groups further, etc. Areas of focus have included: the education system, the justice system, settlement and integration systems, and employment/vocational opportunities. Particular attention is given to strategies that address systemic forms of exclusion and marginalization including racism, heterosexism, transphobia, poverty and how these impact on young people's abilities to thrive.

2.1 EDUCATION/EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Description:

- » Formal education system is not meeting the needs of some young people, especially marginalized and racialized youth. Dropout rates and disengagement levels are alarmingly high among some racialized and newcomer communities and many youth in/from care.
- » Streaming, school board policies like the safe schools act and school cultures (systemic racism, lack of culturally responsive curriculum) are creating barriers to young people succeeding
- » Formal education system does not always provide sufficient experiential learning opportunities/ opportunities for young people who learn differently; and is often not culturally relevant

Foundation supported strategies:

- » Supporting educational attainment and reengagement with formal education systems
- » Increasing capacity of students and parents to better advocate for education needs
- » developing culturally relevant, experiential education models to reengage young people in skills development and as critical thinkers

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|--|--|---|
| Educational Attainment Roundtable | Laidlaw and the Council of Educators of Toronto began co-convening the Educational Attainment Roundtable in 2013. This body brings together young people running education programs, allies within the TDSB and OISE to explore research priorities for increasing supports for community-based education strategies. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » TDSB/Boards » community groups in Toronto |
| Grassroots School | A collaborative made up of a number of YSI grantees: ArtReach, Manifesto, Sketch, Grassroots Youth Collaborative, Tides – The Base, For Youth Initiative. The Grassroots School is a partnership of grassroots organizations collaborated to provide a coordinated point of access to learning, training and networking opportunities for youth. GS will build the capacity of young people working in the youth organizing and arts sectors by connecting them to the tools, skills and networks they need to succeed in today's workforce. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » city-wide |
| Amadeusz | A YO multi-year partner, Amadeusz provides education and life skills programs for remanded youth residing in Toronto's detention centres. This includes support to obtain their GED or Ontario Secondary School Diploma and to explore and prepare for post-secondary schooling. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » increase programs within detention centres/ change policies related to remanded individuals |

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|----------------------------------|--|--|
| YAAACE | A YO funded group, YAAACE is a youth-led organization based in Jane and Finch, Toronto, with a mandate to create a culture of high academic achievement and social and civic responsibility among its members. Through a comprehensive wrap around support model that includes after-school programs, weekend academies, summer programming, ongoing mentorship and recreational activities, this project enables mentors to support students who are traditionally marginalized and are currently showing signs of social and academic attrition. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » city » schools/boards » neighbourhood focussed |
| Lost Lyrics | A YO multi-year partner, Lost Lyrics is a mobile and innovative learning community that empowers young people to create a bridge between the streets and the classroom. It uses Hip Hop culture to explore self-identity and the complexities surrounding young people in stigmatized communities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » city, neighbourhood-based programs » TDSB/school boards |
| Eritrean Youth Collective | A YO funded project of the Eritrean Youth Collective, Project ELEL – Eritreans Learning and Empowering Leaders is an intergenerational project that engages Eritrean youth and parents in educational attainment programs and workshops. It supports the development of culturally based resources, training for parents to be informed advocates for their children's education, and the development of an Eritrean Educators Network. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » TDSB/Boards » parents |
| Youth LEAPS | A Board funded initiative, Youth LEAPS is a youth-led community based group that focuses on the educational attainment needs of Afro-diasporic or otherwise racialized, criminalized, marginalized and underserved youth living in east end priority neighbourhoods in Toronto. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » TDSB/Boards » neighbourhood-based |

2.2 EMPLOYMENT AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING

Description:

- » lack of accessible vocational training opportunities outside of post-secondary education, especially for marginalized young people
- » lack of support networks and opportunities to build resume/portfolios with related work experiences

Foundation supported strategies:

- » provide young people with high quality training opportunities that can help them develop their skills and secure employment related experiences

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| Remix Project | A YO multi-year partner, The Remix Project supports young people from disadvantaged, marginalized and underserved communities in Toronto to develop careers in urban culture industries and/or further their formal education. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » city-wide » education sectors; employment sectors |
| Education through Media | A YO funded group, Education Through Media is a youth-led organization based in Toronto that uses art and technology to create opportunities for young people through education and employment assistance in digital media Information Communication Technology. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » city-wide |
| My City/My Story | A YO funded group, My City/My Story is a post-graduate community photography project that gives aspiring young photographers access to the equipment, resources and mentorship needed to explore themselves at people, establish themselves as professionals, connect with like minded artists and mentors, and contribute the untold stories to the public narrative. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » city-wide |

2.3 HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTIONS

Description:

- » existing services for young people that experiences homelessness, addictions and are otherwise living in marginalized conditions are not meeting the needs of many youth
- » existing health services are not holistic and culturally relevant for many young people
- » mental health continues to hold stigma and lack of awareness in the general population; creating a sense of shame and stigma for youth who suffer from mental health issues

Foundation supported strategies:

- » create bridging programs/mentorship programs that support young people to access existing services in more empowered ways
- » develop alternative youth-focused models to conventional treatment/services that are relevant and accessible

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|------------------|--|--|
| Fresh Collective | A YO multi-year partner, The FRESH collective is group of young people that have all experienced homelessness and chaotic drug use. FRESH is committed to making it easier for street involved youth interested in stabilizing their lives to receive the supports they need to do so. Along with promoting and supporting the use of existing treatment options, FRESH connects recovering youth with appropriate social, educational and vocational opportunities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » housing sector » mental health and addictions services » city-wide |
| CUE Collective | A YO multi-year grantee, CUE is a radical, youth-led arts initiative dedicated to mentoring, supporting and providing arts project creation opportunities for marginalized young artists in Toronto. The Foundation works with CUE to reach and invest in young people who would be unlikely to connect with the Foundation directly. CUE works with youth who are homeless/insecurely housed, and living marginally. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » city-wide » youth and arts sectors » funding sector: making funding more accessible to marginalized and homeless youth |
| Empower | A YO funded group, Empower is a collective of diverse youth working to address the lack of youth, queer, and sex positive spaces for youth to come together to talk about HIV and sexual health in Toronto. Empower youth facilitate arts-based, community specific workshops on HIV and Sexual health in their local communities; build their capacity to affect change through training sessions and shares the curriculum of these workshops with other youth and service providers as a way of model-sharing and advocacy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Health promotion strategies |
| New Mentality | A YSI funded group, NM is a provincial network administered by Children's Mental Health Ontario. NM is a community of practice in youth engagement that ignites change in the mental health system. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » provincial |

2.4 JUSTICE SYSTEM/ COMMUNITY–POLICE RELATIONS

Description:

- » Canada incarcerates more young people than any other western nation; and a disproportionate number of those young people are Aboriginal and from the black diaspora community
- » young people in remand/incarcerated/in conflict with the law have access to few programs and services to support their positive reintegration into community
- » Youth feel targeted by police
- » Lack of dialogue between police and youth creates animosity
- » Police reporting policies and procedures can contribute to revictimization

Foundation supported strategies:

- » provide access to positive role models, and mentors to support transitions back into community
- » promote alternative forms of conflict resolution and restorative justice
- » Build stronger relationships between local police divisions and resident youth
- » Consult with police on how they can work more effectively with young people
- » Identify processes that lead to revictimization and work with police to change their policies and practices

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|-----------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Amadeusz | A YO multi-year partner, Amadeusz provides education and life skills programs for remand youth residing in Toronto's detention centres. The goal of Look at my life Project is to provide young people on remand with support to obtain their GED or Ontario Secondary School Diploma and to explore and prepare for post-secondary schooling. Amadeusz offers mentorship and tutoring supports and evaluates, researches, and advocates for increased supports for remanded youth. | » detention centres |
| Your Road to Success | A YO funded group, Your Road to Success supports youth involved in the criminal justice system and reduces barriers to employment and/or educational opportunities faced by young offenders. | » city-wide |

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| <p>180 Change Street</p> | <p>A YO funded group, 180 Change Street is dedicated to inspiring positive change in young people who are incarcerated or in conflict with the law. 180 Change Street is bringing young people from different neighbourhoods in Toronto together in efforts to decrease violence and tensions by engaging youth in life skills workshops and physical health/exercise as well as mentorship to achieve personal goals in education, entrepreneurship and employment. 180 is further supporting youth to develop conflict resolution and mediation skill to engage in interpersonal and cross community dialogues.</p> | <p>» city-wide</p> |
| <p>Youth Alliance</p> | <p>A YO funded group, The Youth Alliance works to increase collaboration and collective action on issues related to sexual assault and gender-based violence. It has identified recommendations related to police policies.</p> | <p>» Toronto Police Services » city-wide</p> |

2.5 SETTLEMENT, INTEGRATION AND BELONGING

Description

- » First and second generation young people face challenges related to sense of belonging, settlement, and integration. Often related to the traumatic nature of migration, living in systemic poverty and facing discrimination and systemic racism in Canada
- » Some first and second generation young people face intergenerational conflict with parents/ adults. Youth often act as advocates or intervenors between parents and the younger generation in navigating the challenges with the education and justice systems
- » First and second generation young people often are not encouraged and supported to pursue unconventional careers (eg. the arts)

Foundation supported strategies:

- » Create safe space for young people to connect or reconnect with their culture of origin, explore shared experiences and frustrations, and contribute to community building
- » Increase the capacity of newcomer parents and young people to navigate different systems (eg. Education and justice); and advocate on behalf of youth

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| <p>Kapisanan</p> | <p>A YO multi-year partner, Kapisanan Philippine Centre creates space for Filipino-Canadian youth to reclaim and explore the heart of their culture, and better integrate their collective identity. Kapisanan is a youth-led, arts-based community organization offering programs and supports to Filipino-Canadians in the Greater Toronto Area. It provides a safe meeting place and platform for Filipino youth to come together and share experiences, explore their identities through participation in the arts, develop their leadership skills and explore their culture on their own terms.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Filipino youth and artists » city-wide |
| <p>Speak Sudan</p> | <p>A YO funded group, SpeakSudan creates safe space for Sudanese youth and East African youth in the diaspora to creatively express themselves and the issues that affect them in supportive, inclusive and safe spaces. It creates a network of young people across communities in Southern Ontario that brings attention to challenges and priorities of East African youth relating to settlement and integration, supports engagement in social and political issues affecting the communities, and builds a platform for these issues to be seen and heard.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » east African youth » regional (southern Ontario) |

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|-------------------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| Other examples of YO funded groups: | Eritrean Youth Collective, Somali Youth Association, Young Diplomats, Gashanti Unity, UKPC. | » ethnocultural communities |

2.6 YOUTH SPACE/DROP-IN SPACE

Description:

- » Young people frequently identify the need for dedicated youth spaces and unprogrammed drop in spaces
- » In the past few years, several youth drop in spaces have closed or been threatened with closure

Foundation supported strategies:

- » Support the development of youth-led drop in spaces
- » Support research into youth space needs

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|---------------------------------------|--|--------------|
| NGen Youth Centre | A YO funded group, NGen is working to revitalize a youth centre in Hamilton and ensure that it is governed collaboratively with young people. The Downtown Youth Centre and the programs within it create youth-led, safer space that acts as a community hub for diverse youth to share experiences; empowers young people to engage with personal and social issues and supports longer term youth organizing and social change. | » Hamilton |
| Dufferin Mall Youth Services | In 2011, The Foundation supported the convening of representatives of the Dufferin Mall Youth Services including partner organizations, youth who use the space and community workers to respond to the closing of the space. | » city-wide |
| SPACE/ Social Planning Toronto | A Board funded initiative, SPT & SPACE (Saving Public Access to Community Space Everywhere) worked with youth-led groups on advocacy and policy development on equitable access to space in schools. | » city-wide |

2.7 YOUTH CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Description:

- » Many young people feel disengaged from political processes and that existing government systems are not accessible to them
- » Youth and community priorities are not always heard and acted on by decision makers

Foundation supported strategies:

- » Provide hands on training and opportunities to engage with municipal decision making processes

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|---------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| Project YouTube | A YO funded group, Project YouTube aims to connect youth to politics through multimedia; develop youth civic engagement programs and outreach and strengthen youth involvement and awareness in political issues. | » city-wide political engagement |
| South Etobicoke Youth Assembly | A YO funded group, the South Etobicoke Youth Assembly is a youth-led organization that exists to continuously provide creative and innovative ways to encourage youth to reach their full potential. SEYA has been active in supporting youth-led engagement in city planning processes and facilitating trainings for young people on how to engage with the City of Toronto. | » local municipal processes |
| Beautiful City | A YO funded and Board funded coalition, Beautiful City is an alliance of youth-led organizations, organizations and individuals working towards a charge paid by billboard advertisers through an annual license fee. Beautiful City has supported direct youth engagement and training in how to work with the City. | » city-wide political engagement |

2.8 SAFE SPACE FOR LGBTQQI YOUTH AND GENDER-SPECIFIC PROGRAMMING

Description:

- » Regular programs are not always accessible and empowering for young women, and LGBTQQI youth.
- » Systemic homophobia/transphobia continues to marginalize spectrum youth in accessing programs and services

Foundation supported strategies:

- » create alternative programming and safe space for Spectrum youth and young women
- » Promote institutional change to be more inclusive and safe for LGBTQQI/spectrum youth

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| People Project | A YO and YSI funded partner, People Project is a collective non-profit & social enterprise dedicated to the practice and engagement of people empowerment for social change. PP work closely with Toronto's LGBTQQI youth community providing participatory arts and leadership programs as well as collaborating on innovative arts and advocacy projects. The People Project also allies with and supports diverse youth-led and youth serving groups and organizations in the GTA through equity consultation, strategic planning, asset mapping, evaluation and accountability measures, resource development as well as anti-oppression workshops and trainings. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » city-wide |
| STUD Magazine | A YO funded group, STUD magazine engages young women that identify as non-gender conforming. This initiative supports the development of STUD magazine, youth mentorship, discussion panel to receive feedback from the public and service providers and other community engagement events. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » city-wide, reach of magazine is international |
| Girls Action Foundation | A YSI funded partner, provides intermediary supports to a network of young women organizers and community organizations dedicated to girls' empowerment. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » national; GTA project is city-wide |
| Halton on the QT | A YO funded group, Halton on the QT supported the development of Gay-Straight and Queer-Straight alliances in schools across Halton. It also created leadership opportunities for Halton queer and trans youth leaders, raised awareness of queer issues in Halton and raised awareness of Halton's queer and trans work across Ontario. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Halton region » Halton School Boards |

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|--------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Friends in Trouble | A YO funded group, Friends in Trouble's "Project Living Out Loud (LOL) engages racialized youth who identify as LGBTTOI and/or those youth who have a commitment to its empowerment, to increase their capacity to identify and address issues related to access; identify processes and systems that create barriers to their participation; create community dialogue and awareness around their rights and increase their sense of belonging and safety within FIT and their communities. | » Neighbourhood-based |

2.9 INDIGENOUS/ABORIGINAL/ FIRST NATION YOUTH

Description:

- » Many indigenous communities face extremely marginalized and appalling living conditions. There has been a lack of a coordinate response federally and provincially to improving the health and infrastructure in these communities
- » Many indigenous communities in Ontario's remote north face ongoing challenges related to inadequate housing, access to programs and services and youth leadership opportunities

Foundation supported strategies:

- » Build stronger connections between remote northern indigenous communities and allied organizations to promote skills and leadership exchange
- » Raise awareness of the ongoing challenges facing indigenous communities and work to increase public support for action
- » Ensure that organizations and resources intended to serve Indigenous communities are reaching these communities

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|--|--|----------------------|
| Mamow Sha-way-gi-kay-win/ the North South Partnership | A Board funded initiative, the North/South Partnership provides a platform for developing relationships between northern first nations and southern organizations in Ontario. The partnership works close with youth in southern and northern Ontario in order to spread awareness, foster youth-to-youth relationships and create youth leadership opportunities. | » Ontario/provincial |
| 3rd World Canada/ Andrea Cazabon | A Board funded initiative, the documentary film "3 rd World Canada" provides a source of awareness and education for Canadians about what is happening and how people live in the first nations communities in the remote north. | » national |



| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|--------------------------|--|--------------|
| Macaw Hawk Youth Council | A YO funded group, The Macaw Hawk Youth Council was formed as an indigenous youth advocacy organization working to build community and foster and promote healthy relationships between youth, adults and other relevant organizations throughout the GTA. | » city-wide |

2.10 YOUTH-IN CARE AND YOUTH LEAVING CARE

Description:

- » Every child and youth who enters care should have a permanent (long-lasting) home that meets their cultural and personal needs
- » Some children and youth in care are not succeeding in elementary and high schools. Developing a mandatory “school success” protocol between all Boards of Education and local children’s aid societies would contribute to better educational outcomes

Foundation supported strategies:

- » Advocate to raise the age for extended care and maintenance to ensure that children in care who need support are not cut loose from their agency and receive the supports they need (“25 is the new 21”)
- » Collecting and publishing information on how children and youth in care are doing

| EXAMPLE | DESCRIPTION | SCALE/TARGET |
|----------------------------------|--|--------------|
| Youth Leaving Care Working Group | Laidlaw is partnering with the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth to support a youth leaving care working group. This group has organized provincial hearings at Queen’s Park and advocated successfully for several policy changes. | » national |
| National Youth in Care Network | A Board funded initiative, The National Youth in Care Network exists to voice the opinions and concerns of youth in and from care and to advocate for the improvement of services for this group. | » national |
| Independent Policy Research | The Board has funded John Stapleton’s research on youth in care. | » national |

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