



## **Request for Proposals**

### **Host Institution for the Young Leaders Fund**

The following is an open request for proposals to host the Young Leaders Fund. The Young Leaders Fund is a new initiative that will support young and emerging leadership through 1) resourcing youth-led AIDS organizations or groups with small grant awards; 2) creating links with networks, mentors and funders; and 3) offering access to capacity-building opportunities. The Fund will be governed by young leaders in the AIDS response and managed by a young professional with a background in AIDS work.

For several years, young activists and advocates in the AIDS response have noted the need for a fund that specifically supports young leaders. Participants at the aids2031 2008 Young Leaders Summit identified fundraising obstacles as the main barrier to building resilient and lasting youth-led organizations that can scale up their successful programming and sustain young leaders. In response, aids2031 and partners have developed the Fund concept with input from young leaders, donor foundations, government partners, and private companies. The concept was embraced and improved by participants at the aids2031 2009 Young Leaders Summit and has attracted seed funding.

At this stage in development aids2031 is taking the lead in selecting a host organization for the Fund. aids2031 will manage the proposal process and will assemble a committee of young leaders and aids2031 collaborators to select the host.

#### **About aids2031**

aids2031 is a two-year project commissioned by UNAIDS and hosted by Clark University, a US higher education institution. As a research initiative, aids2031 seeks to make recommendations on how to build a long-term, sustainable response to AIDS. For more information, please visit [www.aids2031.org](http://www.aids2031.org).

#### **Why does the AIDS response need a Young Leaders Fund?**

Young and emerging leadership is central to a strong AIDS response now and in the future. Young leaders have contributed to the AIDS response over the past ten years in a variety of ways, including the creation of youth-led organizations and original networks. These initiatives cultivate new leadership and advocate for young peoples' needs through peer mentorship, skills-building of staff/members, and advocacy in local and international AIDS policy processes.

**Resourcing these youth-led initiatives is important to maintaining the momentum of the AIDS response.** Supporting youth-led and focused initiatives contributes to an enabling environment that allows new leaders to emerge and succeed. Unfortunately initiatives and organizations inspired by young leaders and advocates are often driven by short-term, project specific funding opportunities, and too frequently fail due to lack of core support. Young leaders often have limited contacts within the funding world, and many lack the institutional resources and capacity to fundraise in systematic and strategic ways.

## **Young Leaders Fund Concept**

The Young Leaders Fund will invest in young leaders and their organizations and networks, while at the same time raising the visibility of their work and current issues in AIDS. Funding priorities and mechanisms will be determined by an Advisory Board of young leaders from youth networks, including alliances of young people living with HIV, as facilitated by the host. A draft concept note is on page 4.

### **The Fund will:**

- **Award grants to youth-led organizations or groups** that best match with the priorities determined by the Fund advisory board in fall 2009. The fund will focus on initiatives serving those most at need and will offer core and project support.
- **Link award recipients with a network of mentors, funders and others** to support leadership capacity- and network-building, increase monitoring and evaluation activities, and work to ensure the sustainability of funded initiatives.
- **Connect award recipients with existing opportunities** to expand their leadership and fundraising skills-building like classes, forums and workshops.

### **Call for Proposals**

aids2031 and partners seek an established non-profit organization with international reach to host the Young Leaders Fund. The host institution will convene a board of young leaders and facilitate the board's process in setting Fund priorities, governing mechanisms and the peer-reviewed grant selection process. The host will manage the grant-giving process, employ the necessary staff, and coordinate the fundraising efforts. The selected host institution would receive already earmarked seed funds for the Young Leaders Fund from foundations and individuals.

Specific responsibilities will include:

- Ensuring the Fund serves diverse youth populations in the AIDS response, striving to reach those most in need
- Developing processes that allow the community of young leaders in AIDS response to drive the direction of the Fund, and ensure diverse representation on Fund decision-making bodies including young people living with HIV; people from a range of racial, cultural, religious, and linguistic backgrounds, geographic locations, genders, sexualities; and people below the age of 24.
- Coordinating the Fund's governing mechanism to decide recipients
- Creating and administrating the grants program
- Establishing a mentorship component and identifying capacity building opportunities for Fund recipients
- Publicizing the Fund
- Monitoring and evaluating the grants program and funded projects
- Conducting fundraising and accounting for all monetary donations

PLEASE NOTE: the aids2031 project is not a grant making entity and this RFP does not commit a funding award to the selected host institution. aids2031 project staff will fundraise for start-up capital and additional funds throughout 2009. All grant awards for the Young Leaders Fund will go to the host institution. aids2031 will also contribute staff time to establishing the Fund's Advisory Board and to fund development and promotion throughout 2009.

## Proposal and Fund Start-up Timeframe

Milestone	Date of Completion
Submission deadline for host proposals	Friday, September 11, 2009
Announcement of Fund host	Thursday, October 1, 2009
Young Leaders Fund planning meeting	Late October 2009
Donor Round Tables	Late October through November 2009
First Award Announcements	International AIDS Conference, 2010 (projected date)

Proposals received by the deadline will be reviewed by a committee consisting of young leader representatives and aids2031 Steering Committee members. aids2031 will announce the host on October 1, 2009. The selected host institution will begin fund development in October 2009, including writing proposals to secure committed seed funds.

## Proposals

Thank you for taking the time to write and submit a proposal. You are welcome to contact Caitlin Chandler, aids2031 Advocacy & Outreach Office with any questions about the proposal or process at +1.212.332.6030 or [caitlin@aids2031.org](mailto:caitlin@aids2031.org).

Submit the following by September 11, 2009 to <a href="mailto:caitlin@aids2031.org">caitlin@aids2031.org</a>
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1. **Cover sheet** with your organization's:
  - Contact information
  - Primary contact person for the proposal
2. **Organizational Information**
  - Mission – *Provide your organization's mission.*
  - Governance and Structure – *Provide information on your organization's structure, including roles of staff, board members, advisors, and volunteers. Describe any processes that contribute to your governance, such as consultations with members, Advisory Boards, etc.*
  - Overall Financial Info – *Provide your annual operating budget, list of funders, and also a brief description of anticipated funding sources for 2009-2013. Provide evidence of your organizations non-profit status*
3. **Programmatic Questions (please respond with brief answers)**
  - A. *How does the Young Leaders Fund fit with the goals and vision of your organization?*
  - B. *Describe how your organization serves the needs of young people, including staff within your organization.*
  - C. *Briefly describe what your organization envisions as a funding methodology for the Young Leaders Fund.*
  - D. *How would your organization envision support for award grantees?*
4. **Administrative Questions (please respond with brief answers)**
  - E. *Has your organization implemented a small grants program or other similar funding mechanism before? If so please give details. If not, please describe how your organization is suited to implementing such a program.*
  - F. *Describe how your organization's networks and outreach efforts will reach organizations and young people in different areas of the world.*
  - G. *Who in your organization would be able to provide staff time and advice to implement the Young Leaders Fund? Please provide a brief bio of the main point person(s) and a rationale for how they might contribute to the Fund.*

## Young Leaders Fund

Young leaders are vital contributors to the AIDS response. Young leaders and youth-focused organizations provide necessary strategic insights, drive and vision to sustain and enrich the response, now and in the future. Resourcing these youth-led and focused initiatives is important to maintaining the momentum of the AIDS response.

Despite their centrality to the AIDS response, young leaders face challenges in resourcing their activities because **there is a gap in access to funding resources for youth organizations**. Unfortunately, initiatives and organizations inspired by young leaders and advocates are often driven by short-term, project specific funding opportunities, and too frequently fail due to lack of core support. In addition to the lack of available funds, young leaders often have limited contacts within the funding world, and many lack the institutional resources and capacity to fundraise in systematic and strategic ways. Participants at the 1<sup>st</sup> aids2031 Young Leaders Summit identified fundraising obstacles as the main barrier to building resilient and lasting youth-led and focused organizations.

**The Young Leaders Fund will address this gap in available funding.** The fund will invest in young leaders and their efforts, through providing seed grants for small organizations of HIV-affected youth to support inventive approaches to community mobilization, support and advocacy. Technical assistance would be provided to support the groups as they carry out their projects and build their organizations. It is anticipated that this funding would serve to strengthen young organizations, identify and build new leadership, and work to leverage additional support for these groups.

Funding would be provided through a peer-reviewed grants mechanism led by young leaders in the AIDS response in their respective regions. Potential grantees would apply for funding through an application in the dominant languages of their regions.

The fund would be created and maintained through input from young leaders and advocates in collaboration with mentors with grant-making and AIDS response experience.

**Problem:**

A funding gap for youth-led and focused leadership in the AIDS response

**Solution:**

The Young Leaders Fund