
YOUTH LEGAL SERVICES SPECIAL GRANT CALL RESEARCH

Summary of Findings

After analyzing the insights from the [2022-23 Alberta Legal Needs Assessment: What We Learned So Far report](#) and discussion with the Foundation Board of Directors, Foundation staff conducted additional research to explore the feasibility of a specialized grant call for youth legal services.

In this research phase, Foundation staff engaged with various stakeholders, including current grantees, youth-serving organizations, and other funders dedicated to addressing youth needs in Alberta. The purpose of this research was to learn more about the funding landscape for programs and projects targeted at youth and young people in Alberta, and gather feedback on several key areas including:

- Applicant preferences and challenges related to funding applications and processes for youth-focused initiatives.
- Communication channels organizations use for discovering new grant opportunities.
- Expectations and suggestions for a special grant call targeting legal services for youth.
- Barriers and difficulties encountered when seeking funding for youth programs.
- Identification of the legal needs faced by the youth they serve.

The stakeholder feedback provided valuable insights, summarized below:

Grant Development & Design Preferences:

- Clarity on grant objectives and desired outcomes is essential.
- Flexibility in outcome measurement methods, allowing for qualitative data and storytelling.
- Concise application forms with room for detailed responses.
- Inclusion of bullet points or short-form answers within application and reporting forms.
- Transparent eligibility criteria and funding availability.
- Emphasis on partnerships, especially for programs serving Indigenous youth or racialized youth.
- Preference for longer-term funding to facilitate sustainable partnerships and program continuity.
- Appreciation for flexibility and support in budget allocation.
- Recognition of the importance of youth engagement and demonstrated proof of impact.
- Clear communication on budget limits and permissible funding requests.

Relational Funding Insights:

- Value of building trusting relationships with funders, facilitating open dialogue and feedback.
- Preference for personalized interactions over written communication.
- Emphasis on community relationship-building to address systemic issues effectively.

Challenges Encountered:

- Concerns regarding funding restrictions on administrative costs and data collection.
- Need for adaptable program structures to accommodate diverse youth needs.
- Complexity of outcome measurement requirements and logic model expectations.
- Lack of funding for essential supports and resources.
- Challenges in meeting outcome expectations within grant timeframes.
- Limited availability of long-term funding options.
- Difficulty in data collection due to survey response issues.

Advertising Channels:

- Value of platforms like newsletters from sector umbrella organizations for grant opportunity discovery.
- Reliance on word-of-mouth, online searches, and agency websites for grant information.
- Accessibility of databases like Grant Connect through public libraries.

Defining Youth:

- There was a variation in defining youth across different contexts and organizations, the most common responses were as follows:
 - Children and youth to age 21
 - Young people ages 18-29
 - Youth ages 12-18 or 14-26
 - Youth or young people over the age of 30 not included in any definition

Preventative Measures and Additional Comments:

- Need for preventative resources and education to address root issues rather than intervention.
- Importance of providing platforms for youth voices and educating parents on legal processes.
- Recognition of community involvement in legal issues and the necessity of support for families.
- Empowerment of individuals to address their own problems.
- There is currently limited support for immigrant populations.
- High demand for information on consent, disabilities, and digital privacy among youth and parents.

In addition to the findings above, Foundation staff used additional references and resources which are listed below:

[Grantmaking with a Racial Justice Lens: A Practical Guide](#)

[Government of Canada- Canada's first State of youth report: for youth, with youth, by youth](#)

[Government of Canada- Youth Justice Fund](#)

[Government of Alberta Community Partnerships Youth Grants](#)

[International Journal of Nursing Studies – Methodological and ethical issues in conducting qualitative research with children and young people: A literature review](#)

[Law Society of Alberta – Approved Legal Service Providers](#)

[Meaningfully Engaging Youth in Evaluation \(Webinar\)](#)

[Community-University Partnership \(CUP\) at the University of Alberta School of Public Health – Decolonizing Evaluation: A Network Conversation](#)

[The Law Foundation of British Columbia – Weaving Justice Grants Call](#)

[Trust-Based Philanthropy Project](#)

[United Nations Report- Adolescent and Youth Demographics: A Brief Overview](#)

The feedback in this report was considered and integrated at every level where possible within the design and administration of the Youth Legal Initiatives grant call. The Foundation will continue to review and consider the feedback that was not actionable within the youth call as we move forward in our evaluation of the youth call as well as our overall granting work.