



THRIVING LEADERS OF COLOR FUND

A Funding Opportunity for
YDEKC Member Organizations



Youth Development Executives of King County

Thriving Leaders of Color Fund Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What questions will be asked in the Request for Proposals, and how can I review the application before I begin the application process?

A: A link to the pdf of the [Fund Overview and Application Questions](#) can be found here to review all questions before you apply.

Q: Where do I apply for the Thriving Leaders of Color Fund?

A: [Apply](#) online using this Google Form.

Q: An organization must be a YDEKC member to apply for this Fund. How does my organization become a YDEKC member?

A: First, check out on [Member Organization List](#) to see if your organization is already a member. If not, review our [Membership](#) page to learn more about the criteria for YDEKC Membership, and to complete the application for becoming a member if your organization meets the criteria.

Q: What are examples of projects that could be supported by the Thriving Leaders of Color Fund?

A: Here are some examples. Applicants should not limit themselves to similar projects – we are sharing these only to offer some samples of activities that align with one or more purposes of the Fund.

- Organization A seeks funding to provide **culturally responsive coaching for its core leadership team**, made up of 3 leaders of color who are relatively new to their roles.
- Organization B seeks funding to send Executive Director, who is a person of color and has been in their role five years, on a **week-long executive leadership retreat, as well as funds for staff and Board leadership retreats** for the E.D. to bring their learning back to the organization.

- Organization C seeks funding to **provide a \$750 Professional Development stipend to all 10 of its program managers**, 3/4 of whom are people of color, to be applied to Professional Development of their choice.
- Organization D seeks funding to **support a people of color-led affinity group at all levels of leadership** in a white dominant organization. The group will provide healing and rejuvenation activities determined by its members and led by POC independent contractors including teaching artists and mental health practitioners.

Q: Why is this Fund focused on supporting leaders who are people of color?

A: In alignment with our 2020-2023 Strategic Directions, our Equity & Engagement Program Committee is focused on supporting member well-being and racial equity within youth-serving organizations in the field. In our recent Social & Emotional Learning School-Community Partnerships Cohort, a group of direct service staff developed recommendations for non-profit executive leaders, including creating pathways to executive leadership, especially for staff of color; shifting power within organizations; building relationships with staff and viewing them holistically; and carving out time for adult wellness and connection. This year our Program Committee and Advisory Board members affirmed that there is a need for this kind of support to advance and retain leaders of color in the field, and this is a compelling way to invest in our community.

A recent [Race to Lead](#) report points to a myriad of reasons why it’s important to change the way we talk about and invest in BIPOC leaders. The report found that people of color aspire to nonprofit leadership more than white colleagues, and 82% of survey respondents agree that the low percentage of nonprofit leaders of color in top organizational roles is a problem for the sector. While only seven percent of nonprofit chief executives and 18 percent of nonprofit employees are people of color, the nonprofit sector is overly represented by White leadership even though nonprofit organizations led by people of color, as Race to Lead states, are more likely to understand and strive to address systemic injustices through building power and making demands for policy and structural change. However, people of color were more likely than whites to see barriers to people of color advancing either because of smaller professional networks and/or the need for more training. Compounding these challenges, leaders of color have smaller organizational budgets than their White peers and have a difficult time accessing and raising funds from foundations, government and individual donors.

The Thriving Leaders of Color Fund aims to invest in the “inner well-being and growth of leaders”. In the Fall 2020 [Transformational Capacity Building](#) report authored by leaders affiliated with capacity builder RVC, this recommended strategy acknowledges that when “people leading change are not tending to their overall well-being—their physical, emotional, and financial health—the organizations, movements, and communities they lead will suffer.” Conventional approaches are often based on tools, workshops, and resources not designed by people of color and as a result, these approaches have limited success or have been “harmful and disempowering to communities of color.” The Thriving Leaders of Color Fund is designed to be flexible funding for organizations to provide supports to people of color at one or more levels of leadership that work for their current landscapes.

Q: How will funding decisions be made?

A: The Fund Review Committee will be made up of approximately 12 non-profit organization staff, at least 75% of whom are people of color, which will include people of color on staff at YDEKC and volunteers from YDEKC’s Equity & Engagement Program Committee.

All Reviewers will be asked to disclose conflicts of interest. No Reviewers will review and score proposals from programs/organizations in which they serve as a staff member, board member, or consultant. Reviewers will participate in anti-bias training, prior to beginning their proposal reviews. The selection process will be guided by a scoring rubric based on the selection criteria. Small groups of reviewers will score proposals individually, then work together to make recommendations to the full Committee.

A subcommittee of the Fund Review Committee, made up of YDEKC staff of color and members of YDEKC’s Equity & Engagement Program Committee, will be the decision-making body for the awards. The subcommittee will make the final decisions, ensuring that there is diversity in the geographic regions served and organizational budget size of the proposed grantees. Any unresolved questions or proposals outside of the original scope will be brought to YDEKC’s Equity & Engagement Program Committee for review. YDEKC staff will facilitate the review process.

Q: How can I become a Reviewer for the Fund?

A: Our goal is to recruit about 12 reviewers, who are majority leaders of color, from YDEKC member organizations and partners, with a diversity of roles, organizations, and experience represented. If you become a Reviewer for the Fund, we will ask you to attend a Review Committee Orientation, review and score your assigned proposals according to our Fund rubric, and attend a Review Committee Retreat, where you will meet with your proposal group and make recommendations for funding to the Sub-Committee. This Sub-Committee of the Review Committee will make the final decisions about which applications receive funding – we intend this group to be made up of two YDEKC staff of color and two Program Committee members (staff of YDEKC member organizations). The estimated time commitment is 6-10 hours, from Nov. 15 to Dec. 14, 2021.

The Committee will be made up of 75% people of color, given the focus of this Fund, and represent the diversity of our field in King County, so it is possible that not all potential volunteers will be accepted as Reviewers. To apply to be a Reviewer, please complete this [form](#) by November 12, 2021.

Q: What kind of budget are you looking for?

A: An overall project budget that lets us know what the funds will be used for will suffice. The review team will be reviewing to see that the proposed budget is reasonable and aligns with the project activities. In the item description column, list the type of item and description. Below is a sample format, but you may use your own template. Funding requests may range from \$2,500 to \$20,000.

Item Type and Description	Funding Requested
Operating Costs <i>(e.g. Office supplies, Rent, Vans, Database, Curriculum, etc.)</i>	
Participant Costs <i>(e.g. Stipends, Program/Event Registration, Food, etc.)</i>	
Consultants/Sub Contracts <i>(e.g. Capacity Building Support and Direct Service Sub-Contractors)</i>	
Staff or Administrative Costs <i>(e.g. Staff That Provide Administrative Support Including IT and Accounting or Staff the provide program support)</i>	
Grand Total Funding Request	

Q: I was looking at the application and it seems that I would need to become a member of your network. Can a school district be a member?

A: For this particular fund, organizations applying for funding must meet three criteria for eligibility. Here are those three criteria, all of which must be met:

1. My organization is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3).
2. My organization provides youth development services to children and youth ages 5-24 in King County, WA.
3. My organization has been confirmed as a YDEKC Member Organization in 2021.

In addition, although YDEKC partners with school districts in various ways, our members are all youth-serving non-profit organizations. Therefore, a school district is not eligible to apply.

Q: Would our project be eligible for funding if the project will include four leaders, two of whom are leaders of color, but one of those leaders of color is not yet part of the team?

A: Sharing details about what you expect things to look like, in terms of people or programs, including the yet-to-be-named person or people of color, would be useful for the Review Committee members reading the applications. We are hoping that the examples listed above, in response to an earlier Question, showcase the diversity of projects that could be supported by this Fund.

Q: If our organization is led by a white person, would we be eligible to apply for funding to support our staff of color?

A: Yes, as long as you meet the other eligibility criteria. We intentionally created an opportunity that could benefit staff of color within youth-serving non-profit organizations in our membership, regardless of the racial identity of the executive leadership of those organizations.

Q: Would we be eligible to apply for funding if our organization is not yet incorporated?

A: All three of the eligibility criteria must be met in order for an organization to be considered for this funding opportunity, including that an organization must be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization or fiscally sponsored by a 501(c)(3).

Q: Would our organization be eligible for funding if we provide direct services to youth outside of (but not within) King County, or if we provide services to the field (but not directly to youth)?

A: No, not for this particular funding opportunity. One of the three criteria for eligibility is that each organization provides youth development services to children and youth ages 5-24 in King County, WA.