



Request for Proposals: Philanthropic Landscape Scan

Overview

ACT for Alexandria, in partnership with the Frank and Betty Wright Foundation, seeks to understand the landscape of philanthropic support for youth programs in the City of Alexandria. Ultimately, we will engage foundations and donors to create an affinity group committed to the success of every child in Alexandria. The landscape scan will help us understand who is investing in youth programs and services and at what scale, the potential opportunities for alignment and co-funding, and the gaps in funding that may inhibit the accessibility, quality and development of youth programming.

This research initiative is part of a Youth Support Network that has been created in partnership with ACT, the Frank and Betty Wright Foundation, the City of Alexandria, Alexandria Public Schools, and nonprofit youth program providers. The purpose of the Youth Support Network is to create a high-quality system of supports for young people in the City of Alexandria and nurture a more equitable future for all children and youth.

The landscape scan is one of two projects that will explore how the philanthropic community might support youth programming in Alexandria. The second project is the planning for and facilitation of a funder affinity group. One objective of the landscape scan is to inform the planning and design of the affinity group.

We are embarking on this work with the following assumptions:

- We are working towards systems change
- We will bring a racial equity and social justice lens
- We will center family and youth voice in our research and discussions
- We will generate data and information that will be valuable to other funders and nonprofits in our community and thus we will share what we learn broadly
- We will focus on shared learning as we engage peer funders, providers and other partners
- Local, regional and national funders will find value in the effort, including but not limited to learning about opportunities in Alexandria and learning from another funder-collaborative model for increased strategic and equitable impact
- While we will strive to find points of alignment and opportunity for collaboration, laying the groundwork for a potential funder collaborative in the future

Project Scope

The landscape scan will address the following questions:

- What is the current funding landscape for children and youth programs and services in Alexandria?
 - Who is investing in our community? At what levels?
 - What types of programs/services are being funded?
 - Where are there gaps in funding?
 - How might funding priorities evolve?

- How do funders perceive the current program landscape in Alexandria?
 - What are the strengths?
 - Where are there gaps, duplicative efforts or inefficiencies?
 - How are the priorities of children, youth and families being addressed?
- What regional or national funders may be interested in supporting work in Alexandria?
 - What existing funders may be open to expanding their investment in Alexandria?
 - What new funders may be interested?
- What would funders hope to learn from one another? About the opportunities in Alexandria?
- What youth funding collaboratives exist in the region? Nationally? What can we learn from them?
 - Have they participated in a funder collaborative or affinity group?
 - Is collaborative funding of interest? Why or why not?

These questions could be addressed through the following activities:

- Data analysis from Candid (Guidestar and the Foundation Center)
- Literature reviews and other internet research for national models and best practices
- Key informant interviews with local funders and nonprofit leaders
- Funder survey

Deliverables:

- A report that summarizes findings to the questions posed above
- A briefing/convening to share findings and facilitate discussion

Roles:

The project will be overseen by ACT’s President & CEO, Heather Peeler. Ms. Peeler will play an active role in relationship building, attending meetings and conducting personal outreach as needed. ACT’s Chief Development Officer, Tricia Ritchie, and Chief Program Officer, Brandi Yee, will support the work as needed. We will also ensure alignment and coordination with the Youth Support Network Manager.

ACT’s President & CEO and the project consultants will meet regularly with the Frank and Betty Wright Foundation to update the Foundation on progress, secure input on issues/decisions, etc. Representatives from the Frank and Betty Wright Foundation may be asked to engage peers and attend meetings as needed.

Requirements:

The consultant will have expertise in primary and secondary research practices and a strong working knowledge of philanthropy, preferably the philanthropic community in the Greater Washington region. The consultant will also share ACT’s [commitment to racial equity](#) and have the expertise and experience to bring a racial equity analysis to this project.

Project budget:

\$27,600

Project Timeline

Phase 1: December 1, 2021 – March 28, 2022

Proposals are due to Heather Peeler at heather.peeler@actforalexandria.org by 5pm Friday, October 22, 2021. Proposals can include a combined response to the funder affinity group RFP in addition to this RFP for a landscape scan. Additional information can be found on our [website](#).

For additional information about ACT for Alexandria and the Youth Support Network, please visit www.actforalexandria.org