



CIRCLE

The Center for Information & Research
on Civic Learning & Engagement

Community Youth-Led Research

CIRCLE announces a new grant competition for community research conducted by young people.

Eligibility:

Teams of youth researchers working in affiliation with a community organization or institution are invited to apply. Research teams must include at least 5 young people, under the age of 18. Teams may also include adult mentors working in an *advisory* capacity. In order to receive a grant, research teams must partner with an organization that has an operating fiscal agent. CIRCLE grant awards will range from \$5,000-\$10,000. Teams can request up to, but no more than \$10,000 from CIRCLE. If your proposal budget is greater than \$10,000, we encourage you to seek additional funding from other foundations, organizations, or agencies.

The Research Project:

Research teams can investigate a community issue of their choice. Topics should be chosen *by youth researchers* and should be responsive to something they think is important and has implications for the community at large.

Research teams can investigate their topic using whatever methods they think will be most effective. Teams can use more than one method if they think a combined approach would be best.

Before writing a proposal, research teams should think about how they might use their findings to bring about change. Teams are encouraged to think creatively about ways they can share their findings with others in the community. All teams must have a plan for disseminating their findings, and an audience (or audiences) that they want to target.

Throughout the research process, any adult mentors should be very careful to yield the bulk of decision-making and directing to youth researchers. For more information on the research process, research methods that can be chosen, and strategies for maintaining youth-leadership see CIRCLE's web site: www.civicyouth.org/practitioners

Research teams will be notified as to whether or not their project has received funding by April 29, 2005. Projects may begin at any point, but must be completed by July 2006. It is up to the research teams to determine their own project's timeline and structure. Project activities may be conducted in the summer or throughout the year.

Application process:

In order to qualify for CIRCLE funding, all youth-led research projects must be conceptualized and planned collaboratively by both youth researchers and adult mentors. It is not CIRCLE's expectation that proposals are written exclusively or primarily by young people. However, projects in which youth are not meaningfully involved in the conceptualization and implementation of the proposal and the project will not be considered.

Research teams are encouraged to work together to answer the questions below. Answers should not exceed 5 pages.

1. What community issue does your team want to investigate?
2. When did you notice this issue and why is it important to you?
3. Who are the members of your research team, and which of them are writing this application? Describe the members and include descriptions of any adult mentors on the team.
4. With which organization(s) is your team partnering on your project? Why did you choose to partner with this organization?
5. How are you going to investigate your issue? Or, what **research methods** are you going to use? (For examples and explanations of research methods see www.civicyouth.org/practitioners).
6. Give details about #5 including how many people you plan on talking to, surveying etc, what you would like to ask, where you will distribute surveys or where you plan on talking to people. For more information on things you should consider when choosing a method see www.civicyouth.org/practitioners.
7. How long will your research project last and how often will the research team meet?
8. What is your team's plan for communicating your results? Who is your target audience, and why do you think it is important that they hear about your findings?
9. Include a project budget and explain how you will spend the money you are requesting.

In addition to the project application outlined above, please submit a letter of support written independently by one or more youth who will be participating members of the research team (no more than one page long) that answers the following:

1. How did you pick your research topic?
2. Why is the topic important to you? How is this topic important to others in the community?
3. Tell us about any past projects you have worked on with members of the research team, adult mentors, or the organization you are working with. How did everyone work together?
4. Would you try to get your friends to participate in this project? If so, how would you explain the research project to them?
5. How would you explain the way you have been involved in this project so far?

Submissions:

*Project proposals are due by **Thursday, March 31, 2005**.* Please **email** your responses. If you do not have email access, you can mail your submission.

By email (preferred over mail):

You can answer the questions in the body of the email or attach your responses in a Word document. Please title your email: *Youth-Led Research Proposal* and send to: Carrie Donovan at CarrieD@umd.edu

By mail:

Mail your responses to:
CIRCLE -Youth-Led Research
School of Public Policy
University of Maryland
1120 Van Munching Hall
College Park, MD 20742

Policies:

Overhead or indirect costs are limited to no more than 10% of the salaries and benefits portion of the total budget. When publishing results, appropriate acknowledgement of CIRCLE's support should be given. Data arising from CIRCLE-sponsored research will be made public via the CIRCLE Website (www.civicyouth.org) within a month of receipt of the finished research project unless other agreements are reached in specific cases. In addition, CIRCLE reserves the right to publish summaries of technical research in a format accessible to general audiences.