WFMN Innovators Program — Because we believe in you!

Request for Proposals & Grant Application for Young Women’s Initiative of Minnesota

** APPLICATION DEADLINE **
January 7, 2020 – 5 p.m.

Register here to access the web portal & start your application
Join the webinar here on December 10, 2019 at 4 pm

Supporting your Leadership!
The Women’s Foundation of Minnesota (WFMN) believes in the leadership and ideas of young women in our state. Through the Young Women’s Initiative of Minnesota, the WFMN Innovators program will provide microgrants of $2,500 directly to young women (ages 16-24) to fuel their ideas and support their development as leaders with leadership convenings.

**Monetary Investment—$2,500:** Investment in the leadership, ideas, and initiatives of young women to bring their Blueprint for Action ideas to life or continue their work in the areas of economic opportunity, safety, and leadership. This grant is paid directly to young women to support innovative problem-solving grounded in the Blueprint for Action, the series of recommendations based on research and listening with more than 500 young women and community leaders across Minnesota.

**Leadership Convenings & Coaching:** WFMN will engage young women in online and in-person convenings for leadership development, advocacy, and building community. The convenings will give young women an opportunity to support, develop, and scale their leadership and ideas. This leadership development includes direct professional coaching to support Innovators in their grant-funded projects and to deepen their leadership for the long term.

What is the Young Women’s Initiative of Minnesota?
The Young Women’s Initiative of Minnesota (YWI MN) is a statewide initiative to create a Minnesota where every young woman thrives. YWI MN was launched in 2016 as a public-private partnership between the Women’s Foundation of Minnesota (WFMN) and the Governor’s Office of the State of Minnesota. YWI MN is driven by a powerful cross-sector partnership of government, businesses, nonprofits, philanthropies, and young women to build and ensure equity in outcomes for all young women in the state. Our definition of a young woman is anyone who identifies as a woman, between the ages of 16-24. This program is inclusive of cisgender, transgender, gender non-conforming, and gender non-binary people.
What is the **Blueprint for Action**?

YWI MN was designed by the Women’s Foundation with young women at the center and as key drivers of the work. To ground YWI MN in the lived experiences of young women and the community-specific challenges and solutions they identified, the Women’s Foundation held listening sessions and commissioned a community action research process focused on young women from eight communities that experience the greatest disparities in outcomes in our state: African American, African Immigrant, American Indian, Asian American and Pacific Islander, Latina, LGBTQ+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer), young women with disabilities, and young women in Greater Minnesota.

Learnings from the action research engagement yielded fresh and innovative approaches to issues of inequity, which became the **Blueprint for Action**. The **Blueprint for Action** drives targeted and cross-sector solutions tailored specifically to young women who face the biggest barriers, according to data. See below for the four key goals that are moving the **Blueprint for Action** recommendations forward. The full Blueprint can be found here.

**Young Women’s Initiative of Minnesota**

**4 Key Goals – Moving the **Blueprint for Action** Recommendations Forward**

**1. Build pathways to economic opportunity.**

- Enhance Career Pathways, Opportunities, and Pay in STEM
- Build Gender and Community-Oriented Financial Literacy and Life Skills
- Expand Housing Options (explore PRI possibilities)
- Create Accurate and Representative Curriculum
- Build a Better Post-Secondary Pipeline
- Increase Diversity of K-12 Staff (+ Training)
- Respect and Teach Multiple Languages
- Increase Access to Childcare

**2. Improve safety & well-being.**

- Prevent Violence through Healthy Relationships
- Increase Awareness of Violence Against Young Women
- Increase Services for Survivors of Violence
- Increase access to Women’s Health Care
- Increase Mental Health Support

**3. Promote a state of leadership with and for young women.**

- Reframe Harmful Narratives
- Develop Young Women Leaders
- Build on Assets
- Disaggregate Key Data
- Ensure Community Spaces and Conversations
- Change Gender Norms and Generational Roles
- Facilitate Holistic Mentorship

**4. Strengthen & build the movement & ecosystem so every young woman has what she needs to thrive.**

- Partnership with Governor
- National Philanthropic Collaborative – 8 women’s foundations
- Policy to advance **Blueprint for Action**
- Corporate sector increases pathways for young women and youth

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2020 WFMN Innovator Program Year Focus
This cohort of WFMN Innovators are to align their projects and ideas with the following specific Blueprint for Action recommendations that work to build pathways to economic opportunity, improve safety and well-being, and promote a state of leadership with and for young women.

A. **Recommendation 5: Enhance Career Pathways**—Ensure young women have opportunities and pathways to high-skill, high-wage careers and jobs; increase participation in STEM fields and technical careers; and increase opportunities and pay for young women in female-dominated employment sectors.

B. **Recommendation 17: Prevent Violence through Healthy Relationships**—Educate young women and men about healthy relationships, harmful narratives and norms, and promoting positive self-identities to reduce violence.

C. **Recommendation 9: Develop Young Women Leaders**—Develop the capacity of young women for political and civic leadership. *Note: Special consideration will be given to applications advancing recommendation 9 for projects and leadership development addressing climate change.*

D. **Recommendation 3: Reframe Harmful Narratives**—Promote messages that ensure young women can experience the world without limitations.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>YWI Goals</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>Examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Build pathways to</td>
<td><strong>Recommendation 5:</strong> Ensure young women have opportunities and pathways to</td>
<td>• Projects and campaigns to increase understanding of the key barriers</td>
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<td>economic opportunity.</td>
<td>high-skill, high-wage careers and jobs; increase participation in STEM field</td>
<td>and opportunities that impact young women’s economic security</td>
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<td>and technical careers; and increase opportunities and pay for young women</td>
<td>• Projects with strategies to eliminate those barriers and increase</td>
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<td>in female-dominated employment sectors.</td>
<td>opportunities</td>
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<td>• Projects that increase young women enrolling in post-secondary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improve safety and</td>
<td><strong>Recommendation 17:</strong> Educate young women and men about healthy relationships,</td>
<td>education</td>
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<td>well-being.</td>
<td>harmful narratives and norms, and promoting positive self-identities to reduce</td>
<td>• Projects that increase young people’s understanding of, intention to</td>
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<td>violence.</td>
<td>be in, and engagement in healthy relationships built on mutual respect</td>
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<td>• Projects that increase the number of young women thriving by setting</td>
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<td>healthy boundaries in relationships with peers, partners, and others</td>
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<td>• Innovation to end gender-based violence, including sex trafficking,</td>
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<td>domestic violence, rape, sexual assault, and sexual harassment.</td>
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Eligibility

The Women’s Foundation of Minnesota is accepting applications from eligible applicants in the state of Minnesota. Eligible candidates will:

- Identify as a young woman between the ages of 16-24. Our definition of young woman is anyone who identifies as a woman and is inclusive of cisgender, transgender, gender non-conforming, and gender non-binary people.
- Residence and impact in the state of Minnesota for entire grant period.
- Priority given to young women identifying with one or more of the following communities: Black/African American, African Immigrant, American Indian, Hispanic/Latina, Asian/Pacific Islander, LGBTQ+, Disabilities, Greater/Rural Minnesota.
- Citizenship is not required.

How Can WFMN Innovators Funds Be Used?

WFMN Innovators will receive $2,500 as a one-time grant. The funds are paid directly to participants to support their leadership for innovative problem-solving based on recommendations 5, 17, 9, and 3 in the Blueprint for Action. The funds must be used within 12 months. Examples of projects outlined above could be executed in the following ways:

- Start or continue a social change initiative
- Design and pursue a personal learning plan
- Attend a conference and share learnings with community for impact
- Organize an event for impact
- Supply resources to organize people for advocacy
- Research
- Travel as part of greater learning and share learnings in Minnesota for impact

WFMN encourages young women to think creatively: *How can this microgrant uniquely help move your leadership and ideas forward? How can it help you be more effective in the impact you want to make?*

**Selection Criteria, Process, and Grant Cycle**
Selection of WFMN Innovators will be based on applicants’ ability to identify their voice, share their lived experiences, and demonstrate commitment to community-building and leadership through a video submission.

The Women’s Foundation of Minnesota will engage a review panel of young women and YWI MN partners. The panel will review the grant proposals and recommend awards for the applications that best represent the mission, goals, and values of the Young Women’s Initiative of Minnesota.

**Video Submissions**
Applicants are asked to submit an original 2-3 minute video as their application for the WFMN Innovators program. Please upload the video to YouTube and include the link with your online application. **Videos are due with proposals on Tuesday, January 7, 2020, by 5 p.m.**

The contents of the video should answer the following questions:

- **Tell us about you!**
  - What life experiences made you the leader that you are today?
- **Tell us about your community**
  - With which community or communities do you identify? How do you demonstrate leadership to create change in your community?
- **Tell us about your vision**
  - What are the challenges faced by your communities? What is the change you seek and the vision you have for you and your community?
- **Tell us how you will move the Blueprint for Action forward!**
  - To which *Blueprint for Action* recommendation(s) does your idea apply? How will you use the $2,500 to move forward the *Blueprint for Action* recommendations that align with your vision for change?

Please upload the video to YouTube and include the link to your video with your application, due on Tuesday, January 7, 2020, by 5 p.m.

**Details & Resources for Video Submissions**
- Applicants may use any recording device including cell phones, computers, cameras, camcorders, and webcams.
• Applicants will not be judged on the technical quality of their video; however, visual and audio quality must be easy to understand and address the questions above.
• There should be no competing background noise in video (music is welcomed).

If accessibility or privacy is a concern to creating a video and participating in the WFMN Innovators program, please contact Brook LaFloe (Brook@wfmn.org) as soon as possible and we will work with you to find a solution. Don’t let this deter you from applying!

Resources for YouTube

• If you do not have a YouTube account, you must create one. This can be done on a computer or on a mobile app. Please see more detailed instructions below.
• There are a wide variety of programs and websites that can convert video for free—please see the links below for more information and for video formats supported by YouTube.
  - How to create a YouTube channel.
  - Written instructions for how to make and upload a video.
  - For detailed videos describing how to make and upload a video to YouTube, see here and here.
  - Guide to files supported by YouTube.
  - How to import videos from Google Photos.
  - Example of free video software, see here.
  - For more detailed instructions on how to edit a video with video editing software, see here.

Please upload the video to YouTube and include the link to your video with your application, due on Tuesday, January 7, 2020, by 5 p.m.

Application & Attachments

In addition to creating a video, applicants must complete a grant application through the Women’s Foundation of Minnesota grant portal. To complete your application, please register to access the web portal using this link. Your registration will prompt an authentication by WFMN, which should take no more than one business day to complete. Please note: Internet Explorer users often run into issues with the portal, so it is best to use Google Chrome or Firefox as your browser. If you have any questions, please contact Brook at Brook@wfmn.org.

Please upload the following attachments with your application:

• Resume
• Completed project outline questions (see pg. 7)
• Completed project budget (see pg. 7)
• Letter of recommendation (see instructions below)
• Video submission link
Letter of Recommendation

Your recommendation letter may come from a teacher, professor, community leader, elder, employer, mentor, coach, or anyone who has played an important role in your life, helped you become a leader, or has witnessed your leadership. You should select an individual who knows you well.

The author of your recommendation letter should describe how they know you. The recommendation letter should emphasize leadership and reference an example of your work and community involvement. The grantmaking committee is interested to see a recommendation letter that provides details of positive traits that speak to your ability to succeed and to deliver on project goals. This letter should be tailored to your experience and add strength to your application by addressing your skills and potential. Having a conversation with the author of your recommendation will often make for a stronger letter.

Your recommendation letter is due at the time of your application submission. Your recommender may submit the recommendation letter by email to Brook@wfmn.org or you may upload it to the grant portal system with your other attachments.

Learning & Evaluation

WFMN Innovators grant recipients are required to participate in four quarterly convenings hosted by the Women’s Foundation of Minnesota. Additionally, all selected participants are required to participate in a learning and evaluation process that will include surveys and interviews. At the end of the grant year, young women will be asked to provide a summary of their work in a creative format to share the full breadth and depth of their project and learnings.

Timeline

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<th>Task</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
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<tr>
<td>Application open</td>
<td>November 26, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Webinar – To register now, click here</td>
<td>December 10, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>Application submissions due by 5 p.m.</td>
<td>January 7, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>WFMN Innovators Grant Review Committee meets</td>
<td>February 2020</td>
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<td>Applicants notified</td>
<td>April 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>WFMN Innovators kick-off convening and grant award disbursed</td>
<td>May 8, 2020</td>
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<td>Grant Period</td>
<td>May 2020 through April 2021</td>
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Project Outline
Please answer the following questions in the grant portal system. Each answer should be at least one paragraph long. Your responses will help the committee better understand your project.

1. Which Blueprint for Action recommendation(s) does your Young Women’s Initiative-related program advance (select below):

   A. RECOMMENDATION 5: Enhance Career Pathways—Ensure young women have opportunities and pathways to high-skill, high-wage careers and jobs; increase participation in STEM fields and technical careers; and increase opportunities and pay for young women in female-dominated employment sectors.

   B. RECOMMENDATION 17: Prevent Violence through Healthy Relationships—Educate young women and men about healthy relationships, harmful narratives and norms, and promoting positive self-identities to reduce violence.

   C. RECOMMENDATION 9: Develop Young Women Leaders—Develop the capacity of young women for political and civic leadership.

   • Does your project address climate change?

   D. RECOMMENDATION 3: Reframe Harmful Narratives—Promote messages that ensure young women can experience the world without limitations.

2. What is the project?

3. Who will the project involve and what is the role of other participants?

4. What are three goals of the project?

5. When will the project take place (timeline)?

6. What are potential challenges?
Please complete the budget table provided in the grant portal system with estimated expenses you anticipate for your project. Add notes and rows as needed. All expenses should add up to $2,500.

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**Questions & Assistance**

As you prepare your application, please contact Brook with questions by email or phone:
Brook LaFloe, Reatha Clark King Fellow | YWI MN Program Manager
612-236-1836, Brook@wfmn.org

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Does my video have to be professionally produced?**
- No, your video does not have to be professionally produced. We ask that your video is audible, your responses clear, and that background noise be kept to a minimum.

**How long should my video be?**
- Your application video should be between 2-3 minutes long. Be sure to address all provided questions (p. 5).

**Will my video be shared?**
- Your application video will not be shared with anyone outside the Women’s Foundation grant review committee, board, staff, and partners if you mark “do not share my video” on your application.

**Who will see my video?**
- Your video will be viewed by the grantmaking committee and WFMN staff.

**Is citizenship required to apply?**
- U.S. citizenship is not required.

**Is English proficiency required?**
- English proficiency is not required. Application videos must use spoken English or include English subtitles.

**Is there an age requirement?**
- The application is for young women between the ages of 16 and 24.