



**** APPLICATION DEADLINE Monday , February 8, 2021 11:59 p.m.****

[Register here to access the web portal & start your application](#)

[Join the Zoom session here](#) on January 12, 2021 at 5:30 p.m.

WFMN Innovators Program — *Because we believe in you!*

What is the WFMN Innovators Program?

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 deepen their leadership for the long term.

What is the Young Women's Initiative of Minnesota?

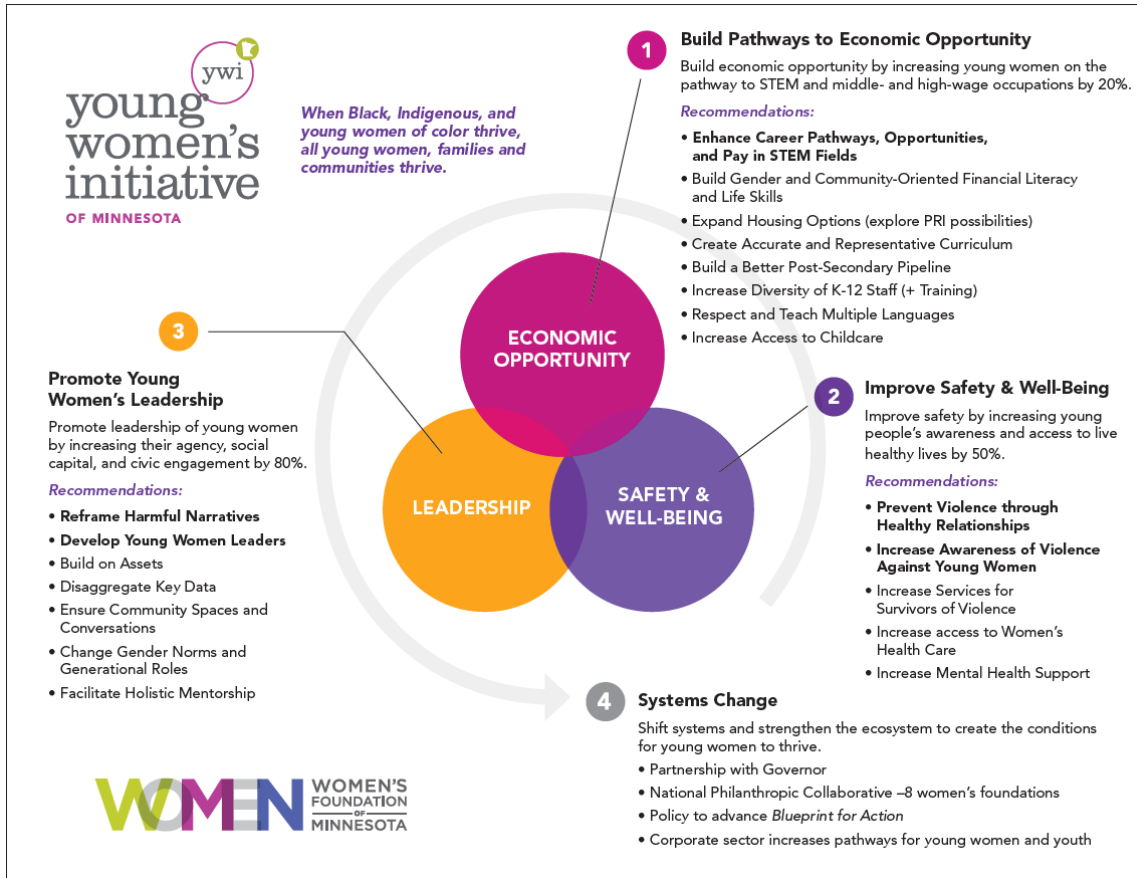
The Young Women's Initiative of Minnesota (YWI MN) is a statewide initiative to create a Minnesota where every young woman thrives. YWI MN was launched in 2016 as a public-private partnership between the Women's Foundation of Minnesota (WFMN) and the Governor's Office of the State of Minnesota. YWI MN 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. The program is inclusive of transgender, gender nonconforming, gender nonbinary, and all gender-expansive people who experience gender-based structural harm.

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. Four key goals, below, are moving the *Blueprint for Action* recommendations forward. The full [Blueprint for Action](#) can be found [here](#).

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



2021-2022 WFMN Innovators Program Year Focus

WFMN Innovators in this cohort will align their projects and ideas to the YWI goals based on the following [Blueprint for Action](#) recommendations.

YWI Goals	Blueprint for Action Recommendations	Examples
<p>Build pathways to economic opportunity.</p>	<p>Recommendation 5: 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.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects and campaigns to increase understanding of the key barriers and opportunities that impact young women's economic security • Projects with strategies to eliminate those barriers and increase opportunities • Projects that increase young women enrolling in post-secondary education • Projects that increase young women accessing internships or apprenticeships • Projects related to social enterprise • Entrepreneurship projects and/or business ventures • Community-driven solutions and partnerships for distance learning
<p>Improve safety and well-being.</p>	<p>Recommendation 17: Educate young women and men about healthy relationships, harmful narratives and norms, and promote positive self-identities to reduce violence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase young people's understanding of, intention to be in, and engagement in healthy relationships built on mutual respect • Projects that increase the number of young women who thrive by setting healthy boundaries in relationships with peers, partners, and others • Innovation to end gender-based violence, including sex trafficking, domestic violence, rape, sexual assault, and sexual harassment • Projects that work to increase community safety

<p>Promote a state of leadership with and for young women.</p>	<p>RECOMMENDATION 9: Develop Young Women Leaders: Develop the capacity of young women for political and civic leadership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase young women’s understanding of leadership skills • Projects that increase young women’s social capital (networks, mentorship, etc.) • Projects that increase young women’s civic engagement (voting, public policy engagement, running for office, etc.) • Community engagement efforts that drive greater participation in addressing climate change • Development of community-owned or community- supported climate solution projects • Education efforts to teach and engage communities in climate change and climate solutions
	<p>RECOMMENDATION 3: Reframe Harmful Narratives: Promote messages that ensure young women can experience the world without limitations.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects that increase young women’s voice, sense of agency, and power.

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 and/or gender expansive youth between the ages of 16-24. Our definition of a young woman is anyone who identifies as a woman. The program is inclusive of transgender, gender nonconforming, gender nonbinary, and all gender-expansive people who experience gender-based structural harm.
- 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 creating systems change that shift policies, institutions, community behavior, reframe issues, or contribute to movement building?*

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, online application, and resume.

Task	Deadline
Application open	1/4/21
Webinar– To register now, click here	1/12/21 at 5:30 p.m.
Application submissions due by 11:59 p.m.	02/08/21 at 11:59 p.m.
WFMN Innovator Grant Review Committee meets	February 2021
Applicants notified	April 2021
WFMN Innovator kick-off convening and grant award disbursed	TBD

Time Commitment, Final Project, and 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, WFMN Innovators 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. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Women's Foundation will host these convenings virtually.

Application Components:

The application will consist of a resume, a video submission, and completion of an online form submitted through the Women's Foundation of Minnesota's grantmaking portal.

Video Submission

Applicants are asked to submit an original 2-3-minute video as part of their application for the WFMN Innovators program. Please upload your video file to this Dropbox Folder:

<https://www.dropbox.com/request/xeYtUhrj3SUMVKEUT5px>

- 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; 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).

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?*

If accessibility or privacy are concerns for creating a video and participating in the WFMN Innovators program, please contact Cynthia J. Zapata, Cynthia@wfmn.org, as soon as possible and we will work with you to find a solution. Don't let this deter you from applying!

How to upload your video to Dropbox

- Please use this link to upload your video: [2021-2022 WFMN Innovator Video Submission](#)
- When you click on the link, you will be redirected to a file folder
- Click on the blue bar that says "Add Files"

- Select your video file and then click on the blue bar that says “Upload.” Your video may take some time to upload; do not close your window.

Video Resources

- Example of free video software: see [here](#)
- For more detailed instructions on how to edit a video with video editing software, see [here](#).

Online Application

Applicants will need to register through the WFMN grantmaking portal:

<https://wfmn.spectrumportal.net/Accounts/LogOn>

Note: It will take about one business day to process verification, so please plan accordingly. You will need to register before the due date of the application.

- Use this link to access the WFMN Web Portal:
<https://wfmn.spectrumportal.net/Accounts/LogOn>
- Click on “Register”
- Fill out your information and under “Portal Access” select Innovator Applicant

FY22 WFMN Innovators Program Application

Applicant Information

- Legal First & Last Name
- Preferred Name
- Pronouns
- Mailing Address
- Address of Residence
- Cell Phone
- Email Address
- Gender
- Age
- Birthdate
- YWI Communities
- How did you hear about this opportunity?
- Video Link:

Resume (Y/N)

Do you give the Women’s Foundation of Minnesota permission to share your video for promotional purposes? (Y/N)

Project Outline & Budget

1a. Which *Blueprint for Action* recommendation(s) does your Young Women’s Initiative-related project advance?

- 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.
- RECOMMENDATION 17: Prevent Violence through Healthy Relationships—Educate young women and men about healthy relationships, harmful narratives and norms, and promote positive self-identities to reduce violence.
- RECOMMENDATION 9: Develop Young Women Leaders—Develop the capacity of young women for political and civic leadership.
 - *Does your project address climate change?*
- RECOMMENDATION 3: Reframe Harmful Narratives—Promote messages that ensure young women can experience the world without limitations.

1b. If you selected Recommendation 9, does your project address climate change? Explain in question two.

2. What is the project?

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

