



Positive Youth Development Seed Grant 2025

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS !

**Mary and Frances Youth Center
Division of Community Engagement
Office of the Provost**

Partner with us!

<https://mfyc.vcu.edu/>

Scan QR code for application or [click here](#)



BACKGROUND

The Mary and Frances Youth Center, part of Virginia Commonwealth University's Division of Community Engagement is located on VCU's Monroe Park Campus. The MFYC, opening in 2007, has served thousands of youth and youth educators in the Metro Richmond Area. The Richmond Youth Development Network or Richmond YDN, housed within the MFYC focuses on providing high quality training for youth educators. Our mission is to provide programming and training to enhance the lives of youth in the Richmond metro area. Engaging with the community and community partners is at the core of our approach to our work. The youth center serves as an uncommon place-based resource for community partners and community residents to:

- Serve as a hub for youth development events
- Partner with community-based organizations to develop training opportunities building the capacity of youth educators
- Promote sports-based learning and growth
- Connect, motivate and support youth in leadership development, and STEM-based learning opportunities
- Foster more connection for youth to explore VCU opportunities as an academic choice
- Learn from community partners about youth programming and training that will meet their needs.

It is our vision at the MFYC to become a regional leader in university-community collaborations for positive youth development.

One of the main goals of VCU's strategic plan Quest 2028, is to hear from communities about their programming needs. This seed funding provides the opportunity for community partners to propose programming with the youth center that will be beneficial to support positive youth development.

The aim of the seed funding is to strengthen the bond between the community partners, the youth, and the Youth Center, creating lasting impacts and enriching experiences for all involved.

AWARDS

We are making seed funding of \$2,000 available to promote youth development and/or training opportunities for youth educators.

FOCUS AREAS

- Empower youth to broaden their expectations in life
- Inspire youth to identify and engage their talents
- Support youth in strengthening their life skills through sports
- Engage youth and family in living healthy lifestyles
- Foster best practices in youth development
- Support diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Provide professional development for youth educators

TYPES OF PROGRAMS

We are excited to offer seed funding grants, up to \$2,000, for community partners interested in collaborating with the Mary and Frances Youth Center at VCU. Here are some ideas for proposals we are eager to fund, each integrating the Youth Center in meaningful ways:

- **Youth Workshops or Classes:** Propose a series of workshops or classes for youth that take place at the Youth Center. These could range from arts and crafts to coding or science experiments. We'd love for these workshops to be interactive, engaging, and possibly culminate in a showcase event at the Youth Center.
- **Community Service Projects:** Suggest a community service project that involves both the youth and community partners, with planning sessions or reflection meetings held at the Youth Center.
- **Sports-Based Program:** We're particularly interested in sports-based activities that promote teamwork, health, and wellness among youth. Whether it's organizing a mini-sports league, hosting a sports clinic, or setting up a one-day sports festival, we'd like these activities to be linked with the Youth Center, perhaps using its facilities for practices or gatherings.
- **Mentorship Program:** Launch a mentorship program where youth can be paired with mentors from the community and VCU. The Youth Center could serve as a meeting place for mentor-mentee pairs, providing a safe and supportive environment for meetings, workshops, or group activities focused on personal development, career exploration, or academic guidance.
- **Technology and STEM Initiatives:** With the world moving towards more tech-driven solutions, we're eager to support programs that introduce or expand youth's knowledge and skills in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) areas.

TYPES OF PROGRAMS

- Youth Educator Training and Professional Development: The Richmond Youth Development Network strives to be a regional hub for professional development that supports positive youth development. We are excited to hear from our partners what professional development opportunities would best support their staff and how the Richmond YDN can provide those opportunities.
- Advanced Certificate in Youth Development: Support employees and staff towards achieving advanced training. VCU along with the Richmond YDN will launch the second cohort in the fall.
- Family Engagement Programs: Develop a series of events or programs that provide opportunities for families to learn, play, and engage with one another.
- OTHER: We are eager to fund any ideas you may have about how youth development can be promoted in partnership with the MFYC.

TYPES OF PROGRAMS

Funding is limited to proposals that exemplify partnerships and program development with the MFYC .

DELIVERABLES

Successful applicants are required to submit a mid-term progress report at 6 months, attend a virtual grantee meeting and a final evaluative report at the end of the program period. Both the mid-term and final reports will be submitted via Google Forms.

Willingness for the selected program to be featured on the MFYC website.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- a.) Organizations applying for the Positive Youth Development Seed Grant 2025, must submit the completed application electronically, by 11:59 pm on Friday, April 5, 2025. Please email the MFYC Executive Director Misti Mueller at Muellermr@vcu.edu with any questions specific to this grant opportunity.
- b.) The proposal should address partnership opportunities with MFYC and discuss ideas for continued programming.
- c.) The budget and justification sections are reasonable and reflect the proposed project.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

[Use this link to submit your proposal through Google Forms by 11:59 pm on Friday, April 5th.](#)

Required Application Components

1. Project Title:
2. Project Director/Leader: Contact information (address, phone number, email) and Organizational Leader/Institutional Authority for accepting the award. Identify the contact person who will be the primary liaison with MFYC regarding the grant activities.
3. Background of Organization: Describe your organization. Highlight relevant partnerships, collaborations, or achievements.
4. Previous Collaboration: Describe any current or previous collaborations or partnerships with VCU departments, units or individual researchers and or staff.
5. Program Goals and Objectives: What are the program goals and objectives, and how do they align with the Mary and Frances Youth Center?
6. Target Audience and Community: Who is the target audience(s) for your project and why?
7. Program Design: Describe the planned program. Use this section to describe your idea for creating or expanding on a program that supports positive youth development. Your program should focus on youth programming or youth educator programming at the Mary and Frances Youth Center.
8. Future Collaboration with MFYC: Describe your vision for how the proposed program can be continued in the future specifically at the MFYC.
9. Budget and Budget Justification: Include a detailed explanation of how you will use the funds. Links to external documents (table with budget outline) are welcome and encouraged.

AWARD INFORMATION AND TERMS

MFYC Seed Grant 2025 will award up to 10 \$2,000 projects for the stated one year (2025 to 2026) grant period. All awards are dependent upon the merit of the project and the strength of the application submitted.

- The official start date of the award and the release of funds will begin after a letter of agreement between MFYC and the community partner has been signed.
- Acceptance of funds implies a firm commitment to provide a brief verbal/email check-in progress report 2 times over the one-year grant period.
- The expectation that the grantee will completely utilize the full amount of funding during the term of the award.

TIMELINE

DATE	ACTIVITY
FEBRUARY 7, 2025	APPLICATION RELEASE
FEBRUARY 28, 2025	INFORMATIONAL SESSION
APRIL 4, 2025	PROPOSALS DUE
MAY 23, 2025	AWARDEES ANNOUNCED
JUNE 2, 2025	PROJECT START DATE / GRANT INITIATION DATE
DECEMBER 5, 2025	SIX MONTH PROGRESS REPORT AND GRANTEE MEETING
MAY 31, 2026	PROJECT COMPLETION DATE
JUNE 15, 2026	FINAL WRITTEN REPORT DUE

Applications must be submitted electronically via Google Form by 11:59 pm on Friday, April 4, 2025.

Review Panel

A review committee composed of members of the division of community engagement, the MFYC Youth Advisory Council, MFYC staff, and at least one community organization member will review the applications for eligibility, completeness, and merit of the proposed plan.

The review panel will use a standardized rubric to score all proposals to ensure the following:

- All components of the application are complete.
- Proposed programs support positive youth development or youth educator training.
- Proposed programs clearly identify a partnership with the Mary and Frances Youth Center.
- Proposed budget items support the intended program and do not exceed \$2,000.

Applications will not be accepted from non-501c private foundations, individuals, political, or lobbying organizations. Applicants requesting funds for event sponsorships, publication of books, conferences, one-time events, dinners, fundraisers, capital campaigns, or endowment funds will not be considered.

questions related to the application should be directed to:

Misti Mueller, Executive Director
[Mary and Frances Youth Center](mailto:muellermr@vcu.edu)
muellermr@vcu.edu



Scan here to apply!