

# Congratulations on your VYPER Mini-Grant!

What's next?

The purpose of the VYPER mini-grant is to provide resources to explore your project idea in collaboration with youth and young adults in your community, and to potentially develop your Youth-Adult-Partnership (YAP) Grant application.

**If your organization developed its mini-grant application without collaborating with youth and young-adults** (which is absolutely fine – though you may want to double-check these points even if you did), during the mini-grant period **you have three added tasks:**

- **Connect with youth** who have some understanding or experience of the isolation that youth can encounter in your community (VYPER staff can help with this process – so don't hesitate to contact them).
- **Support those youth to understand the mandate of your organization and/or the mandate of the project** your organization proposes to support (i.e. food security for elders, support for caregivers who are struggling with a youth's substance use, sexual exploitation of youth, etc.)
- Acknowledge that the youth you have connected with, like us all, have limited time and resources and that they may prefer to prioritize a personally more-pressing issue/mandate with their time. Also explore whether they may see the mandate you have identified as a tree that would be more appropriate to address at one of its roots. In other words, **do your best to make sure the youth/young adults you are collaborating with have an opportunity to safely opt-out of and to bring forward alternate approaches to addressing your mandate.**



Once that has been covered (which isn't to say it might not need to be revisited), explore the development of the YAP Grant application, which has three main parts – that we'll go into a little more detail about here:

- **Vision and Mission:** The first thing to know about a vision and mission is that they are **ALWAYS in draft form** – to be revisited periodically (even often) to see if they still represent the best articulation of what you are dreaming and doing.
  - A **Vision** should attempt to articulate **the kind of world/community that would render your project unnecessary** – if this was the world/community we were living in, our work would be done – and we could move on to something else (visions present ideals, so it's unlikely they will ever be fully realized).
  - A **Mission** should attempt to articulate **what you think you are currently positioned to do or try in order to help the world/community fall more in line with your vision.**
    - You should be able to **connect all of your project's activities directly with the mission.**
    - Everything the mission states should also be reflected in some way in your activities (nothing in the mission is optional – **if you're not doing it, it shouldn't be in the mission**).
    - There is debate about whether missions should or shouldn't be looked at as achievable, but over time and as your activities unfold, **you should be able to point to observable developments in the community that indicate you are making progress on your mission.**
  - Don't forget to look at the **vision and mission that VYPER youth developed to guide VYPER's activities**, including this grant process – both as an example of a vision and mission, and to make sure your project's mission, vision and activities connect with VYPER's vision and mission.
- **Possible Activities:** Many grant applications ask you to define exactly what you are going to do with the money you receive. **VYPER only wants to know that you have given some thought to the "possible" activities** you might do to support your mission. Here are a few reasons why:

- **We want to explode the notion that anyone (and particularly adults) has some kind of magical knowledge of what will or will not work** – before it has even been tried. This doesn't mean that we don't value examples of things that have had positive effects at other times, in other locations, or under different circumstances... these things should *inform* the activities we chose to enact. **As an example:** If we start a “peer support group,” but no one comes to give or receive support – **we've done what we said we were going to do, but can we say we've made any progress on our mission?** Probably not. Maybe looking at location or transportation or signage or food or other incentives – or a completely different idea that doesn't rely on these things will be the next step.
- Because VYPER-funded projects require collaboration between youth and adults – in a way, **just the process of brainstorming ideas for activities, respectfully debating their merits and coming to a decision, and then trying them out and evaluating them together may go a long way toward meeting VYPER's mission** of “Creating pathways for youth and young adults to move from isolation to a sense of belonging in their communities.” In other words, **the journey may be as important as the destination!**



- **Outcome Markers:** Like with “possible activities,” here VYPER again just wants to know that you have given some thought to **a range of observable developments that might indicate progress has been made on your mission** as you carry out your activities. These are just meant to be **examples you imagine you might be able to observe**. As you actually carry out your project **you may identify other things related to your mission happening** that you could have “expected,” that you “like,” and that you “love.”
  - Outcome markers are broken out into a **range** of three different categories:
    - **Expect to see:** These are developments that you think it is perfectly reasonable to expect will happen once you start carrying out your activities. **Bare minimum outcomes.**
    - **Like to see:** These are developments that indicate that your idea/activity is **starting to catch on** – that people are starting to have positive responses to it – maybe they are even **starting to invest in it and to take actions on their own to better support your activity**, project and/or mission.
    - **Love to see:** These are developments that indicate that your idea/activity is **becoming part of the fabric of life in your community...** that the community is starting to take ownership of the project or to develop more projects out of your project that they hope will move your mission forward even further. **Your mission is becoming their mission.**
  - Outcome markers should be **observable** – things you can actually see happening:
    - If your project was a movie... **how would you show your audience that it is having the desired effect?**
    - As an example, if you wanted to show how happy people are with the project, here's how you might create three levels of observable outcome markers:
      - **Expect to see:** At least half of the project participants fill out satisfaction surveys.
      - **Like to see:** Satisfaction surveys indicate positive results, and some people add suggestions to make the project even better in the “comments” section of the survey.
      - **Love to see:** Participants participate in or develop activities (e.g. press releases, presenting to other groups/schools/churches/businesses) to share how happy they are with the project with the rest of the community and to get others involved.

