

# JJSG YOUTH ENGAGEMENT 2.0

## Request for Proposals

THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

### SUMMARY

The Juvenile Justice Strategy Group (JJSG) at the Annie E. Casey Foundation is seeking an organization to lead a human-centered design process to develop its next iteration of youth engagement work. JJSG's investments in youth engagement formally started in 2015 with the founding of its national Youth Advisory Council. Since then, 34 young people with juvenile justice system experience have served on the Council across three cohorts. They have contributed to the work of JJSG and its grantees. Heeding the advice of the Council members and upon internal reflection, JJSG is reimagining its approach to direct youth partnership. This decision is being made in the larger context of more investment in community-based organizations and efforts to advance racial justice.

### ELIGIBILITY

The Juvenile Justice Strategy Group is seeking a grantee (nonprofit organization) with demonstrated organizational capacity and relevant expertise and knowledge to carry out this project. The selected grantee should be able to lead a participatory evaluation, with particular attention to qualitative data collection and analysis, with a diverse group of stakeholders. The grantee will be expected to use the evaluation findings to facilitate a design process to develop JJSG's youth engagement strategy. The grantee should have experience developing solutions that are inclusive of those who are most often excluded from decision making and access to power.

### DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

The Casey Foundation is a national philanthropy that creates a brighter future for the nation's children by developing solutions to strengthen families, build paths to economic opportunity and transform struggling communities into safer and healthier places to live, work and grow.

JJSG works with state and local juvenile justice stakeholders and agencies (probation departments, community-based organizations, district attorneys, judges, etc.) to improve outcomes for youth who become involved in the juvenile justice system. Over the years, this has involved eliminating the inappropriate use of secure confinement, ending the youth prison model and transforming juvenile probation. JJSG's strategic priorities also include promoting racial and ethnic equity and inclusion in the face of the profound racial and ethnic disparities that persist in the juvenile justice system. JJSG established a Youth Advisory Council in 2015 to ensure that the voices of young people with legal system

experience were included and elevated in juvenile justice reform efforts. JJSG is at a juncture where it is reimagining its approach to engaging and partnering with youth and giving young people opportunities to lead both internally at the Foundation and externally with its partners and grantees.

The design partner will work with a core team of JJSG staff, grantee(s), consultant(s) and young people to lead a participatory information-gathering process that will elevate a) lessons learned from JJSG's past youth engagement efforts; b) barriers to authentic youth-adult partnership within JJSG and opportunities to overcome them; and c) ideas and aspirations for future youth engagement efforts. The design partner will use the findings from the evaluation to design JJSG's internal youth engagement strategy and contribute to the development of externally facing strategies. The anticipated scope of work includes, but is not limited to, the following virtual activities between March and September 2021. The scope will be finalized with the selected design partner.

- Work with the JJSG Youth Engagement 2.0 core team to learn the context and history of youth engagement within the team and the intended results and learning goals for the next iteration.
- Co-facilitate a Youth Engagement 2.0 Kickoff Meeting with key stakeholders.
- Work with the core team to outline learning goals and evaluation questions for the information-gathering process.
- Lead the information-gathering process (from a mix of sources, such as document reviews, surveys, interviews and/or focus groups) using a human-centered design approach with approximately 30 key stakeholders to answer evaluation questions between March and May 2021.
- Summarize key findings from the information-gathering process and share recommendations with the core team (May/June 2021).
- Submit a first draft of the project deliverables by August 2021, including a) documenting the history and lessons learned from JJSG's past youth engagement work; b) sharing key findings and themes; and c) recommending design option(s) for the next iteration of youth engagement work.
- Incorporate feedback to the first draft and submit a final version of the project deliverables by September 2021.

## AWARD

- Grant range for design phase is \$50,000–\$75,000 for a seven-month grant period.
- One grant will be awarded.

## TIMELINE FOR COMPLETING THE WORK

The Foundation expects to receive the first draft of the final deliverables within six months of the grant's start date to allow time for feedback prior to the end of the seven-month grant period.

## PROPOSAL SPECIFICATIONS

- Proposals should not exceed two pages in length.
- Contents of proposal:
  - Describe what makes your organization the best fit for completing the scope of work.
  - Describe your organizational capacity and relevant work demonstrating capacity to carry out this project, including experience with the following:
    - participatory evaluations;
    - strategy design;
    - organizational commitment and work related to racial and ethnic equity; and
    - experience with engaging the voices and perspectives of people who are often excluded from decision making and lack access to power.
  - Summarize one or two examples of similar projects you have developed in the past and the project's outcomes.
  - Provide the qualifications of the team responsible for the project, demonstrating subject-matter and methodological expertise related to the project.
- Key dates
  - Due date for proposal: Thursday, March 25, 2021

To submit proposals for the JJSG Youth Engagement 2.0 design partner, please submit via email to Zainab Farhat at [zfarhat@aecf.org](mailto:zfarhat@aecf.org).

## SELECTION CRITERIA

SECTION	POINTS
Effective collaboration with key partners, particularly youth and young adults and individuals from impacted communities	30
Programmatically strong nonprofit organization with experience leading and facilitating participatory design processes	25
Capacity to collect, manage and analyze data and apply findings to design solutions	25
Strong, specific and achievable plan for implementing scope of work	20
<b>Total points:</b>	<b>100</b>