

#RISINGYOUTH

community service grants



#JEUNESENACTION

subvention de service communautaire

#RISINGYOUTH
COMMUNITY SERVICE GRANTS

Take Action Guide



Funded by the
Government of Canada
Financé par le
gouvernement du Canada





Introduction

Welcome to the #RisingYouth Community Service Grants *Take Action Guide* developed by TakingITGlobal to support interested youth in creating service projects that build life skills and give back to their communities. Using the lifecycle of a changemaking project, this resource is designed to offer guidance on how to think about, plan and act on your vision to serve your community.

How to Use This Guide

There are many ways you can use this guide. It has been designed as a tool to be utilized in parts or in full. It's up to you!

- **Are you a PASSIONATE changemaker but just not sure which passion to focus on in order to create a successful service project?** You are not alone! Sometimes we feel called to act on so many fronts. The key to developing a successful project is focusing your passion, talents and resources. We recommend you start with the **DISCOVER** section so that you can explore your interests, the needs of your community and the resources accessible to you.
- **Do you know what issue you want to address but haven't landed on a solution yet?** Dive into the **DREAM** section to mind map all the possible options before making a decision.
- **Have you got an issue in mind but you're not sure how to translate that into a project concept?** You're halfway there! Head to the **DESIGN** section to outline your initiative and get information on how to apply for funding.
- **Feeling CONFIDENT in your project scope and planning but not sure how to get it off the ground?** Skip ahead to the **DELIVER** section where you will find supporting processes and documents to help you launch.
- **Maybe you have already launched your project or event and are looking to take stock of what worked and what could be done differently in the future?** Cool! We love that you are already planning your future initiatives. Check out the **DECLARE** section for some tips and tools.



Discover

Let's begin by reflecting on what matters to you and taking stock of the resources that can be accessed to realize your service project. DISCOVER the needs and opportunities in your community and the unique gifts that can EMPOWER you to make a difference.

SO, WHAT'S THE ISSUE?

A community is any group of people living in the same place or having a particular characteristic in common. One way to think of an issue facing your community is to think about the last time you felt some sort of discomfort or sense of injustice. What made you feel this way? It can also be as simple as thinking of the world you wished you lived in. What would need to happen to get there?

Community issues can exist in your school, your neighbourhood, or even your city. They can also include issues facing a particular group of people. To understand what issues your community might be experiencing, let's do a quick activity:

What can you think of that might be a sign of an issue in your community? It can range from bullying, homelessness or concerns about garbage in a park.	How does this issue make you feel? (e.g. angry, sad, frustrated)	What do you think your community needs to help with this issue?



Tackling the tough issues might also include helping to support or improve one the following areas:

- Arts & Culture
- Education
- Environment
- Food & Health
- Housing & Safety
- Social Justice
- Sports & Recreation

EXAMPLES

Bring about greater inclusivity with **KINDNESS COOKIES** - a project that brings together youth in my school to bake cookies.

Use your passion and interest in community building by launching **LOVE OUR LIVES 'GIRLS' BACK-TO-SCHOOL PROGRAM** - a one-day program for young girls aged 9-14 that focuses on preparation for the upcoming school year.

Channel your calling to create supports for mental health with a meaningful program like **VENT OVER TEA** - a free active listening service that pairs people who need to vent with an empathetic listener to chat in a local coffee shop.

ACTIVITY

Thinking about your community, if you could change **ONE THING** what would it be? Ask yourself **WHY** are these issues important. To you? To your community?

Give yourself **1 MINUTE** to write down as many issues as you can.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____



Now, it's nearly impossible to solve so many problems at once, so let's **PICK** one issue you are particularly passionate about: _____

NOW WHAT?

Use these **GUIDING QUESTIONS** to assess how **ACTIONABLE** your issue is...

- How passionate are you about this issue (scale of 1-10)?
- Can the issue be broken down and addressed at the local level?
- What kind of time commitment and resources (tools, people, funds, networks/access) would you need to take action on this issue?

BUT WHY?

When we think about issues we might want to tackle in our communities we first need to understand the cause of the problem. Understanding the root cause of these issues will help you develop a project that address the underlying factors that contribute to the problem you're seeing. We can get to the root cause of an issue by simply asking ourselves, "But why?"

The "But why?" exercises helps us find out what caused the issue. Each time an answer is given, a follow-up "But why?" is asked.

For example, you've noticed that there is a big problem with youth unemployment in your community, you should ask yourself "but why?" Once you come up with an answer to that question, ask another "but why?" question until you reach the root cause of the problem.

GIFTS

You are **GIFTED**. **EVERY PERSON** has individual gifts to help them create change in their communities. These gifts come in all forms and have great value and power: talents, skills, knowledge, connections and interests.

Here are a few guiding questions to get you started as you think about your own gifts.



- **Think of a time you are happiest. What activity/action are you engaged in? What about doing this “thing” makes you happy?** Some people love to **DOODLE** and create works of art. Others are happiest **HANGING OUT** with friends and socializing. Others still are fueled by spending time outdoors in the fresh air surrounded by nature.
- **What would someone who knows you well say YOU are exceptionally good at? How might this be summarized as a talent or skill?** Sometimes the people who know us TRULY are the ones who can see us BEST. They can see our gifts more clearly than we can. Who is that person for you? What would they say is something you are really good at? It could be something you do or a way you are with others.
- **What do you have access to that could be considered a gift?** This could be an elder in your community who has lots of valuable knowledge or teachings. It could be knowledge of how your city government works and who you could talk to about a service project idea. It could also be a family member or teacher who can help you access technology or tools that could be useful.

USE this **GIFTS CHECKLIST** to identify what you already have within yourself to support a service project in your community.

PERSONAL SKILLS/ATTRIBUTES

I...

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Express my ideas clearly | <input type="checkbox"/> Am committed to creating change |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to understand others | <input type="checkbox"/> Welcome challenges |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledge diverse voices and individual feelings | <input type="checkbox"/> Manage conflict and crisis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Honour different ways of learning and communicating | <input type="checkbox"/> Overcome barriers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Make wise decisions | <input type="checkbox"/> Like to solve problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organize my time and tasks efficiently | <input type="checkbox"/> Am creative and spontaneous |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Juggle priorities well | <input type="checkbox"/> Like to generate original ideas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Like to take initiative | <input type="checkbox"/> Am flexible and adaptable |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Set goals and follow-through | <input type="checkbox"/> Persevere |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Balance logic and emotions |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Am able to overcome challenges |



- Learn from experience
- Am insightful and aware
- Ask for help and guidance
- Inspire and bring out the best in others
- Utilize diverse talents
- Am assertive and persuasive
- Am a visionary
- Like to create connections and alliances
- Am competitive
- Am passionate
- Like to laugh and have a great sense of humour
- Am playful and light-hearted
- Have a positive attitude and outlook
- Have an “abundance” mentality
- Have a wide range of interests
- Manage risks
- Am relaxed
- Building quality relationships
- Am warm and friendly
- Am welcoming and inclusive
- Am kind and generous
- Am appreciative
- Am supportive
- Am understanding and empathetic
- Am self-reliant and dependable
- Am reflective and insightful
- Have a sense of self and personal purpose
- Acknowledge areas for self-improvement
- Am resourceful
- Guided by personal values and principles

You are **AMAZING!** Don't stop! What are some other gifts you have? What gifts do you want to develop?

Use this as a celebratory and aspirational space. Drop 'em into the spots below.

<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>



Dream

This next section shifts gears toward helping you **ENVISION** and **CRYSTALLIZE** a project concept. Dream it, baby! Here is where you can **BRAINSTORM** solutions to the needs and issues you identified in the **DISCOVER** section.

BLUE SKY SOLUTIONS BRAINSTORM

Now that you've identified the problem and you've considered what's already being done about it, let's explore what we can do to tackle the issue.

First, let's restate the problem: (community group) needs a way to (need)

Although the first solution we think of may be helpful, we may discover an even better solution if we take the time to explore other possibilities. Using the activity below, take **5 MINUTES** to brainstorm potential solutions, both possible and impossible.

Design Thinking Sheet 1

IDEATE: Generate your ideas. Sketch at least 5 *radical* ways to tackle your selected issue. Tip: Feel free to use your creativity and draw in the boxes below. Need help? Think, what if you had infinite amounts of money? No money? A celebrity endorsement?



PAUSE. It's time to get feedback. Take some time to ask a friend, family member or someone in your community what they think about your ideas. What do they **LIKE** about your solution? What do they think could be **IMPROVED**?

It's important that we get feedback on our ideas to make sure that we're choosing the solution that will have the greatest impact!

Once you've received some feedback, use the box below to begin refining your idea.
Share your solutions & capture feedback.

ITERATE based on feedback. Reflect and generate a new solution.

Design Thinking Sheet 2

Sketch your big idea and note details (if necessary.)



Design

The design process will help you to **SOLIDIFY** and **RESOURCE** your service project. It's all about maximizing your efforts by asking you to think through and identify everything you might need to build the foundation for a successful initiative.

PROJECT CANVAS

Based on the solutions you BRAINSTORMED what would a service project look like?

SERVICE PROJECT IDEAS

- Organize a Shoreline Cleanup, purchasing bags, gloves, snacks for participants, and printing tracking sheets needed to record outcomes.
- Find a local homeless shelter to collaborate with on preparing a meal for an upcoming lunch or dinner.
- Host a “free” inter-mural sports tournament for your community.
- Develop and hold a community theatre performance complete with a set and costumes.
- Coordinate an inter-faith tour to educate and create religious tolerance within your community.
- Canvas schools, neighbours and businesses for food, clothing, sports equipment or book donations for a “drive” to help those community members in need.
- Organize a neighbourhood event to equip citizens with information and techniques on personal safety and first aid.
- Plan and lead a guided nature walk and scavenger hunt complete with prizes.
- Lead a “hope walk” and rally to end the silence around mental health and suicide among vulnerable youth.
- Host a “writers night” featuring local authors/poets and writing workshops for aspiring writers from all walks of life.
- Plant a Community Garden with the purchase of soil, seeds and tools to provide food and raise awareness about the benefits of fruits and vegetables.



- Design and deliver a “fun day” for your community with games, music, and team building activities.
- Design a mural project with paints and materials to showcase an important story or idea for the community.
- Volunteer at a soup kitchen with the purchase of new pots, pans and kitchen utensils to assist in preparing food.
- Organize a social justice movie night in your local park to raise awareness about a key issue.
- Coordinate a weekly read-along night and purchase key books needed to increase literacy.
- Start a newcomer initiative to welcome new families to the community and purchase contents to create “welcome baskets”.
- Create sustainably designed clothing or accessories and showcase them in a community fashion show.
- Offer free sports, dance or art lessons to youth/children who don't have access to these types of community programs.
- Produce and distribute copies of a grassroots community “cookbook” featuring recipes gathered from neighbours, food-related businesses and people of various cultures and generations.
- Coordinate a multi-generational day-long retreat with yoga, guided meditation and mindfulness activities.
- Organize a Community Talent Show and capture it on video. Youth in the community are able to use the video camera, stored at the community centre, to capture and share community activities on a regular basis.
- Refurbish a room in a community centre to act as a recording studio or theatre space.
- Create a photo voice project documenting community issues or culture, and host an exhibit at a local gallery.
- Outfit a tool library and fix-up spaces in the community with the purchase of materials and equipment.
- Produce a youth-oriented community publication (digital and print) inviting young people to participate through articles, distribution and promotion.
- Host a hack-a-thon with purchased tablets to build solutions for local community issues. These devices can then be made available for borrowing through a community centre
- Build a peace garden with the purchase of plants, benches and materials to provide a healing space for those struggling with mental health challenges.
- Host a sit-down community feast to celebrate partnership and youth leadership



PROJECT DESCRIPTION	TIMELINE	LOCATION	NEEDS/RESOURCES
	BENEFICIARIES		

Now build your **PROJECT CANVAS** through the following:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

What is the project? Think through some of the details. Identify the service category that makes the most sense (arts & culture, education, environment, food & health, housing & safety, social justice, sports & recreation).

TIMELINE

When will it take place? Think through any seasonal or scheduling realities that might apply to the project. Talk about how long you think it would take to plan and execute the project. Discuss the duration of the project. Is it a one-time event or an ongoing series or program?

LOCATION

Where will your project take place? Brainstorm the venue of the project (e.g. indoor, outdoor, requirements, and proximity).

BENEFICIARIES

Who will your project benefit? Discuss some of the specific groups or communities your project could help. Specifically talk about how your project would support one of the following communities: at-risk youth & children,



seniors, refugees & newcomers, persons with disabilities, Indigenous peoples, LGBTQ2+, racial or visible minorities, vulnerable individuals (e.g. mental health, addiction, abuse), multi-barrier populations).

NEEDS/RESOURCES

What will you need to make it happen? What are some of the resources or materials you might need? How much will those things cost? Use the budget template to guide your brainstorm.

Apply for Rising Youth Community Service Grants

RisingYouth is a program led by the Government of Canada to help youth build Canada and develop life skills by giving back to their communities. Created for youth, by youth, TakingITGlobal is helping the Government implement this program by administering resources for youth projects between \$250 and \$1500.

The funding program is available to Canadian citizens, permanent residents or people who have been granted refugee status in Canada. In the context of the program, "Youth" refers to individuals who are 15-30 years old during the year of their participation in the program. Refer to the application checklist for full criteria

You can apply online at www.risingyouth.ca by selecting one of the available grants for \$250, \$750 or \$1500. If you are applying for the \$1500 grant, you'll be required to have a community reference or mentor, like a teacher or a member of a local organization to support your project.

\$250	\$750	\$1,500
For simple ideas - like community events or gatherings - that can be implemented by one or two people.	For bigger ideas that can be implemented with a small group of peers, such as building a community garden , or distributing care packages .	For projects that involve a larger group of people to drive impact . Projects at this level of funding need a budget and a mentor or community reference to apply.

4 Steps:





Taking Stock

Now that you have spelled out some of the details of your project and know what you need, it's time to take stock of what you've got. Below is a checklist helping you identify human, physical and financial resources that can turn your dream into a reality.

HUMAN

Human resources are the personnel of a business or organization, especially when regarded as a significant strength. *#squadgoals* Who will be organizing your project with you? Who will be purchasing materials? Who is responsible for the budget? Who will help promote?

- Mentor
- Core team members
- Guest speakers
- _____
- _____
- _____

PHYSICAL

Physical resources of an organization can include things like equipment, space or facilities.

- Materials (markers, chart paper, notebooks, etc.)
- Equipment (laptops, projectors, speakers, etc.)
- Space (meeting room, café, office, etc.)
- _____
- _____
- _____

FINANCIAL

Financial resources are the funds available to your project for spending in the form of cash, donations or grants.

- Rising Youth Grant
- In-kind donations
- Other Funding
- _____



Deliver

Let's shift our focus to **ACTION**. The deliver section guides you to track the steps, timelines and outcomes needed to deliver your project. This is also where we need to address things like bureaucracy. #boring **Navigating local laws and policies will likely play a big role in how effectively you are able to launch certain types of projects. We aim to offer some methods and resources that will help you avoid getting mired down in barriers to success.**

OVERCOMING BARRIERS

It is important to be able to recognize and identify some of the underlying barriers that might exist within the personal, community or national context.

PERSONAL BARRIERS

- Lack of confidence
- Too few team members
- Unsupportive family and friends
- Fear of failure
- Limited skill set in a particular project-related area
- Lack of time
- Lack of clarity around project goals or steps
- Feelings of overwhelm
- Limited access to transportation
- People lacking cultural understanding and asking inappropriate questions
- _____
- _____

OTHER BARRIERS

- Lack of public spaces or public resources
- Limited access to resources and services due to poverty in community
- Safety concerns
- Resistance from community members or groups
- Reduced access to technology or tools
- Racism / Discrimination
- _____
- _____



SUPPORTS

What supports might you be able to identify in order to move your idea and project forward?

- Youth workers, teachers or community leaders willing to mentor
- Organizations with a commitment to creating safe(r) spaces and willing to share
- Knowledge and learning resources (or workshops) related to self-empowerment
- Increasing education and awareness of issues and diverse communities
- _____
- _____

ON TRACK

Using this simple tracking template, identify the key activities, timelines, resources and team members responsible for taking action on these project elements.

SIMPLE PROJECT TASK TRACKER

ACTIVITIES	PRIORITY	START DATE	DUE DATE	TEAM MEMBER	% COMPLETE	DONE	NOTES
Secure an event venue	High	2018-01-02	2018-01-09	Juan	50%	○	
Confirm 3 guest speakers	High	2018-01-02	2018-01-31	Jack	100%	●	
Design promotional materials	Medium	2018-02-01	2018-02-20	Sila	30%	○	
Purchase refreshments	Low	2018-04-27	2018-05-11	Fatima	0%	○	
						○	



Declare

It's finally time to acknowledge, SHARE and celebrate the efforts you have made in your communities through service-based initiatives. This section offers some resources and steps to reflect, review and share on your projects.

AFTER ACTION REVIEW

Congratulations! You did it! All of your hard work and efforts have made a difference. Now it's time to take stock of what worked, what didn't and what you could do differently next time.

Use the questions below as a guideline for discussion with all team members and/or project stakeholders to assess the process and outcomes of your youth-led service project. This information can help to inform future initiatives.

What happened?

Talk about the project basics: what, when, where, how many, etc...

What worked well?

Explain what you feel worked well. This can include tools used, project elements that seemed to be especially effective and even your own individual tactics and talents in meeting the project goals.

What didn't work?

Share your thoughts on issues or challenges that came up and made it more difficult to launch your project.

What are the key takeaways or lessons learned?

Talk about any conclusions you have come to based on what worked and what didn't.

What can we do differently next time?

Think through and discuss action steps that you think would change or improve process and outcomes for a future initiative.

SOCIAL MEDIA SHARE

Post a photo or video on **SOCIAL MEDIA** using **#RisingYouth** and **#Leaderstoday**, to tell the world about the project you launched to make something good happen in your community.