

## **Request for Proposals: Resource Website for Youth Development Collaborative**

Issued by: Sioux Falls Thrive on behalf of the Youth Development Collaborative

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Submissions due by 5 p.m. Oct. 19, 2023

### **Introduction**

The Youth Development Collaborative (YDC) is seeking design and development for a website that serves as both:

1. A repository of youth programming descriptions and schedules in Sioux Falls, and
2. An information hub that is accessible for adult service providers such as school counselors and parents, while also supporting the needs of young people searching for community connections.

Proposed website launch date is March 1, 2024.

This pilot project is funded through contributions to a non-profit organization. Budget will be negotiable depending on the proposal.

### **Background**

Sioux Falls Thrive's mission is to ensure all children in the Sioux Falls area have access to the same opportunities to succeed by working to provide stability in three key areas: food security, out-of-school time, and affordable housing. Thrive was created as a community cradle-to-career workforce development initiative in 2017.

As a volunteer-based organization, Thrive harnesses the power of Collective Impact by bringing existing community resources together to work collaboratively. The goal is to kickstart action-based solutions to the issues that inhibit student success. Thrive facilitates the work of collaborative teams and encourages community leaders and existing service providers to think innovatively to solve the most complex issues facing our youth.

As an engagement collaborative of Sioux Falls Thrive, the Youth Development Collaborative brings together agencies and individuals serving and advocating for youth to network, stay informed of current community services and programs, and connect positive opportunities for youth to find solutions to identified community issues facing youth in Sioux Falls.

## **Goals of the Youth Development Collaborative**

Create pathways to connect middle school and high school-aged youth to education, career opportunities, resources, and programs that are primarily designed to enhance their:

- Power Skills (a.k.a. Soft Skills)
  - Ability to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people.
  - Ability to communicate with others in a variety of ways including verbal, nonverbal, written, and visual.
  - Ability to contribute to their group and share responsibilities.
- Technical Skills
  - Ability or knowledge needed to do practical tasks in the areas of science, the arts, technology, engineering, math, and others.

## **Target Groups impacted by the Youth Development Collaborative's work**

The Youth Development Collaborative focuses on the following middle school and high school youth:

- Youth who are disconnected or without a sense of belonging to parents, employment, school, or friends
- Youth who are low-income, but not exclusively
- Youth from the immigrant population, not exclusively

## **Project Description**

The current focus of the YDC is to create a virtual solution that middle and high school students can utilize to learn more about opportunities for involvement within the community. Statistics show that many youth in Sioux Falls are disconnected from and uninvolved in activities outside of the school day. YDC is seeking proposals for a website that can be used to benefit those who wish to become involved.

In brainstorming, YDC has determined that a one-stop shop for involvement would be beneficial to our community. Our inspiration comes from Sprockets St. Paul which is a similar concept (<https://www.sprocketssaintpaul.org/>). However, we need some specific components to be applicable to our community. The target audience is primarily adults/parents/school counselors, however, students may choose to access the site as well.

- The content of the site will be self-submitted by organizations that provide programming/involvement opportunities.

- End users will have the ability to filter different programs/activities based on a variety of criteria including zip code/neighborhood, price of attendance, age of participant, interest area/topic of programming, etc.
  - Example: West side of Sioux Falls, free program, 10-13 year old, computer programming.
- Capacity to extract and analyze data related to search trends by activity, location, and age group.

It is our hope that individuals across the community will use this site to decrease the number of disconnected youth in Sioux Falls by connecting them with programming.

### **Potential Challenges or Barriers to Success**

While the initial target audience is those adults who work/live with young people, YDC members have spent several months researching youth perceptions and needs. For this website to be successful with both adults and youth, it is critical to understand that young people:

- Crave personal interactions,
- Need to feel their voices have been heard,
- Respond more positively when they feel their choices are respected.

To attempt to address those concerns, the website will not be a stand-alone effort. It must:

- Appeal to youth audience (and be “cool” to youth)
- Be part of a comprehensive campaign (not part of this RFP) that includes preferred venues and media revealed through YDC research,
- Rely on youth leadership and interaction to guide its evolution

### **Selection Criteria**

Youth Development Collaborative members will evaluate proposals based on the following criteria:

- **Experience:** Proven success in delivering similar projects particularly as they relate to products and platforms that appeal to multiple audiences.
- **Qualifications:** Demonstrated expertise in relevant technology, software, and methodology to meet the project scope.
- **Audience Understanding:** Established knowledge of youth interactions with media platforms and the use of audience expertise in guiding design processes.
- **References:** Supportive testimonials from 2-3 past clients who have used services for similar projects.
- **Availability:** Defined capacity to take on the project, the availability of resources, and the ability to meet the expected delivery timeline.