

*Inclusive Fitness for Youth Initiative*

2014 Request for Letters of Interest

General Information

Partners for Youth with Disabilities seeks interested organizations to participate in the *Inclusive Fitness for Youth Initiative*, an exciting program committed to increasing Boston youth with disabilities’ access to fitness and recreation programs. Funded by The Boston Foundation, this initiative holds the potential to create population-level change among Boston-based youth with disabilities with regard to social, physical, and emotional well-being.

If chosen, an organization will receive an inclusion assessment, development of a work plan, customized inclusion support and training, and a sub-award between $5,000-$10,000 to make physical improvements or purchase adaptive equipment to increase access for youth with disabilities.

Need for Program

Compared to youth without disabilities, youth with disabilities have a higher prevalence of obesity, higher rates of obesity-related illnesses, and higher rates of physical inactivity. The most recent report of obesity prevalence by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) indicated a 59% higher rate of obesity in people with disabilities as compared to those without disabilities. This same analysis also found an 88% higher rate of physical inactivity in the disability population. Similarly, the third installment of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES III) indicated that 30% of people with disabilities in the United States are obese, compared to 23% of people without disabilities.

A cause for this difference in obesity and physical inactivity rates between people with and without disabilities has been attributed to differences in access to fitness and recreation activities. Although current legislation obligates states and schools to provide equal access, a recent report by the United States Government Accountability Office indicates that physical activity opportunities for youth with disabilities are scarce (GAO, 2010). Furthermore, according to a study by Rimmer and Rowland in 2007, youth with disabilities participate less in school-based physical activity and after-school programs, and tend to participate more in sedentary activities.

This situation is of particular concern in the Greater Boston Area where, according to US Census 2000 data, over 40,000 youth with disabilities between ages five and 20 reside. Moreover, of the youth serving recreation programs in the Greater Boston Area, according to the New England Index only twelve programs are inclusive of youth with physical disabilities, one of which is PYD.

About Partners for Youth with Disabilities, Inc. (www.pyd.org)

Partners for Youth with Disabilities, Inc. (PYD) is committed to empowering young people with disabilities to reach their full potential for personal development by providing high quality one-to-one and group mentoring programs where adult mentors act as positive role models and provide support, understanding and guidance for youth as they strive to reach their personal, educational and career goals. Since its founding in 1985, PYD has been a pioneer in the development and delivery of a unique mentoring service and has established innovative programs serving youth with physical, sensory, and learning disabilities, ages 6-24, primarily in the Greater Boston area. All PYD programs were developed with the understanding that youth with disabilities face many obstacles in their efforts to live independent productive lives. Consequently, all PYD programs are grounded in the philosophy of empowerment. Programs are designed to provide opportunities for youth to gain control of their lives and to acquire the information, resources, and skills for lifelong growth and full participation in their communities. PYD’s programs include one-to-one and group mentoring services, in-school and out of school time programming, and indirect service through trainings and technical assistance around inclusion and mentoring. Programs include Mentor Match, the Young Entrepreneurs Project, Making Healthy Connections, Access to Theatre, the Peer Leadership Training Program, and the National Center for Mentoring Youth with Disabilities.

PYD has been recognized locally, regionally and nationally for its work and leadership in the disabilities community.

PYD’s National Center: The National Center aims to improve the capacity of youth serving organizations to more fully include youth with disabilities by training staff members on how to create a more inclusive and welcoming environment within their organization. Training topics have included the definition of disability, barriers faced by youth with disabilities and the disparities that result from such barriers, the definition of inclusion and inclusive etiquette and language. Advanced level trainings offer more specific tips for including and engaging youth with disabilities on a personal, programmatic and organizational level.

Since being formed, the National Center has successfully trained many well-known organizations on both the development of mentoring programs and improvement of inclusion practices. These organizations include Disabled Sports USA, Girl Scouts, Boys and Girls Club, Future Chefs, Massachusetts Mentoring Partnership, and many more.

Grant Ranges

* PYD will select 1-2 partner organizations
* Sub-award amounts will range from $5,000-$10,000

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for the *Inclusive Fitness for Youth Initiative*, a potential partner must:

* Be a 501(c)(3) public charity or operate under the fiscal sponsorship of a tax-exempt nonprofit
* Provide recreation and/or physical education programs/services within Boston or the Greater Boston area. For a list of eligible cities and towns, please see The Boston Foundation’s geographic service area at <http://www.tbf.org/investing-in-non-profits/competitive-grant-making/geographic-area-served>
* Serve youth between the ages of 5-24.
* Have a commitment to increasing access and meaningful participation for youth with disabilities.
* Be willing to partner with Partners for Youth with Disabilities through 2014 to meet partner organization’s inclusion goals.

Appropriate Use of Funds

Sub-award funds issued under the Inclusive Fitness for Youth may be used for the following purposes:

* Physical improvements to increase accessibility
* Adaptive equipment to increase participation for youth with disabilities

Requirements of Sub-Awardees

All sub-awardees will be required to do the following:

* Provide an organization representative who will serve as the primary contact person for PYD and its partners.
* Work with PYD staff to organize time to conduct assessment, develop work plan, and conduct trainings and workshops.
* Complete and submit a survey evaluating the quality of and suggesting ongoing improvements to the resources, training materials and technical assistance provided by PYD.

Application Instructions

Submit a Letter of Interest highlighting information about the organization’s mission, service delivery for youth with disabilities, and barriers to inclusion. Letters of Interest must be:

* Typed and clearly legible in a font no smaller than 12 point
* Double-spaced
* Not to exceed 2 pages
* Submitted electronically to Genelle C. Thomas, National Center Director at gthomas@pyd.org

Letters of Interest must be received by February 15, 2014. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Application Checklist

Please include the following items in your submission:

Cover Summary Page (use the format provided below)

Letter of Interest (not to exceed 2 pages)

LOI Narrative

Please make certain that your Letter of Interest contains all of the following information:

1. Brief summary of your organization’s history, goals and key achievements.
2. Overview of your organization’s structure and programs.
3. A description of your organization’s constituents and current service delivery to youth with disabilities.
4. A description of current barriers to inclusion.

Cover Page Format

Please submit a Cover Page with your proposal. Use the following format

Cover Page

1. Legal name of organization: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address, if different: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Website: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. Executive Director: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Fax:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. IRS 501 (c)(3) nonprofit? YES \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_
2. Contact person and title: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. State your organization’s mission:
2. Target population, constituents and geographic communities:
3. Total number of board members: \_\_\_\_\_Total number of volunteers: \_\_\_\_\_\_
4. Total number of staff: Full-time: \_\_\_\_\_ Part-time: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Total annual organizational budget: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_