Expression of Interest Questions

Step 1: The Expression of Interest (EOI)

The purpose of the EOI is to equip Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) staff with the information needed to assess your project and group. The EOI is the first step of a Youth Opportunities Fund (YOF) grant application.

Most of the questions are answered by selecting answers from a drop-down list. There are a few narrative questions where you can share details about your group and the work that you have led to date. You will also need to complete and submit a Project Plan and Budget Worksheet as part of the EOI.

OTF staff will review your eligibility, your readiness to scale your work, the potential impact of your project, and how well you understand the needs, interests, and experiences of the young people you want to work with.

Step 2: The Grant Application (if shortlisted)

If your EOI is successful, your group will be shortlisted and invited to complete and submit the Youth Innovations grant application with an Organizational Mentor (OM).

At the grant application stage, you will only be able to change or update your responses for questions marked with the following symbol: ⟫

Getting Ready to Apply

- Learn more about the Youth Innovations Scale grant and how to apply.
- YOF offers comprehensive webinars about Youth Innovations Test and Scale grants, as well as one-on-one coaching calls.
- Connect with the YOF team at yof@otf.ca to discuss your project and get the support you need.

Youth Innovations Scale Grant

Youth Opportunities Fund — YOF FPJ — Fonds Perspectives Jeunesse

Ontario Trillium Foundation — Fondation Trillium de l'Ontario

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TAB 1: TYPE OF GRANT

If your group is shortlisted, you will not be able to change or update your responses in this section of the grant application.

1. **The Youth Innovations Stream has two different types of grants. Each grant type has a different purpose and eligibility criteria. Which grant type are you interested in?**
   (Check only one)

   ☐ Youth Innovations Test grant
   ☐ Youth Innovations Scale grant

   > **TIP:**
   >
   > A **Youth Innovations Test grant** is an opportunity for groups to test a new idea, strategize around an issue in their community, or research an issue that matters to the group.
   >
   > A **Youth Innovations Scale grant** is for more established groups that have already fully tested an idea that has worked over a two-year period and are now ready to scale that idea. If you are not sure which grant type is right for your group, email us at yof@otf.ca.

Project Type

2. **How will you scale this project? Our main goal in scaling this project is to:**
   (Check only one)

   ☐ Enhance the quality of youth experiences to **deepen the impact** of a current project
   ☐ Expand a current project to **impact more** youth

3. **Has your group delivered core project activities for at least two years?**
   (Check only one.)

   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

   [If no is checked]:

   Scale grants are for groups that have already delivered core project activities over a two-year period. This means the group has experience delivering work together and all core activities have already been implemented for at least two years. This ensures that there is a solid foundation in place to scale the project. Your group may be eligible for a Test grant if this is a new idea or if you are in the early stages of delivering work in your community. Please email us at yof@otf.ca for more information.

Youth Innovations Scale Grant

TAB 2: GROUP PROFILE

If your group is shortlisted, you will not be able to change or update your responses in this section of the grant application.

Group Name and Contact Information

4. **Enter your group's details:**

   - Group Name
   - Address
   - Phone
   - Email

5. **Enter the contact information for your primary contact:**

   - Project contact name
   - Project contact phone number
   - Project contact email

   > **TIP**: This person should be a member of the core group and included in the core group table.

6. **Enter the contact information for your secondary contact:**

   - Project contact name
   - Project contact phone number
   - Project contact email

   > **TIP:** This person should be a member of the core group and included in the core group table.

7. **Is the primary contact for the group and writer of this Expression of Interest between the ages of 12-29 years?**
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

   [If no is checked]:
   - As an adult (30+ years), describe your role in the application process and proposed project.
   - Describe the role of young people in the application process and proposed project. If an adult is currently playing a more active role, describe how leadership for the project will transition over time.

Youth Innovations Scale Grant

Online Presence

8. **If your group is active on social media, provide the handles you operate under. For example, @ONTrillium is OTF's Twitter handle.**

> **TIP:** As part of the assessment process, OTF reviews the online presence of all applicants to ensure they are not engaged in ineligible activities. This includes:
>
> - The majority of group activities are for the purpose of bringing about change in law or government policy, including public policy dialogue and development.
> - Political activities supporting or opposing any political party, elected representative, or candidate for public office.
>
> For more information about eligible and ineligible activities, review OTF's Eligibility Policy.

Group Structure

9. **Select the organization type that best describes your organization/group.**
   (Check only one)
   ☐ Grassroots group that is **not registered** as a charity or as an incorporated not-for-profit.
   ☐ A charitable organization or foundation registered with the Canada Revenue Agency
   ☐ An organization incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation without share capital in a Canadian jurisdiction (this includes a Chartered Community Council, operating under the Métis Nation of Ontario, or Inuit communities that are registered as not-for-profit corporations without share capital in Canada)
   ☐ A First Nation

> **TIP:**
> - Incorporated not-for-profits may be eligible to apply to the Youth Innovations Stream. We will need more information to make that assessment.
> - Registered charities are not eligible in the Youth Innovations Stream.
> - First Nations are eligible to apply to the Youth Innovations Stream when more than 50% of their core group are community members who are not part of the band office or band council.
>
> If you are unsure about how to answer this question, please email the YOF Team at yof@otf.ca.

[If unincorporated grassroots group is checked]:

- What year did your group form?

> **TIP:** Groups applying for a Scale grant are more established and have at least two years of experience working together to deliver their project. Groups who are newly formed should consider applying for a Test grant.

Youth Innovations Scale Grant

[If incorporated is checked]:

- Provide your Incorporation number.
- Provide your year of Incorporation.
- As an incorporated not-for-profit, have you independently managed more than $50,000 in either of the last two years with no administrative support from an Organizational Mentor, platform, trustee and/or charitable organization? (Check only one)

☐ YES   ☐ NO

> **TIP:**
> Check YES if you have received funds directly from the funder to your organization's business account, managed these funds throughout the life of a project, and reported back to funders on the use of these funds.
>
> Check NO if you received funding for a project but these funds were administered by another organization.

[If incorporated and managed own funds selected]:

- How much funding did you manage independently in the last fiscal year (2022)?
- How much funding did you manage independently in the fiscal year before last (2021)?

> **TIP:** To be eligible for the Youth Innovations Stream, your incorporated not-for-profit cannot have managed more than $50,000 independently in each of the last two years.
> - **Example 1:** Last year, you managed $25,000 independently and the year before that you managed $5,000 independently. You may continue with your EOI.
> - **Example 2:** Last year, you managed $50,000 independently and the year before that you also managed $50,000 independently. You may continue with your EOI.
> - **Example 3:** Last year, you managed $70,000 independently and the year before that you managed $25,000 independently. You are not eligible to apply to the Youth Innovations Stream.
>
> We can help if you are not sure how to answer these questions. Email us at yof@otf.ca.

Group Experience

10. **Tell us about how and why your group was formed and your connections to community.** (300 words max.)

> **TIP:** Given that you have experience delivering programming to youth in your community, share 1 or 2 examples of previous activities your group has delivered.
>
> What motivates your group to continue to offer programming in your community?

11. **Has your group or individuals in your group received funding in the last five years? Include funds received from current or past YOF grants.** (Check only one)

☐ YES   ☐ NO

[If yes is checked]:

- List the year, the source and the amount.

> **TIP:** For example:
> - 2013 | Funder X | $5,000
> - 2014 | Donation from community member | $1,000

TAB 3: PROJECT LEADERS

»»» 12. Your core group members are or have experience with:

> **TIP:** Check only those Identities and lived experiences that apply to your core group members. If you are a registered not-for-profit, this also includes your board members.
>
> When selecting Indigenous (First Nations, Métis or Inuit), members can be from urban, rural and on reserve communities.

☐ Indigenous
  o First Nations
  o Métis
  o Inuit
☐ Black
☐ Racialized
☐ Newcomer
☐ Francophone
☐ Two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning, intersex, asexual (2SLGBTQIA+)
☐ Living with disabilities and/or special needs
☐ Living with mental health needs and/or addictions
☐ The justice system (have been in conflict with the law or are vulnerable to being in conflict with the law)
☐ Child welfare (in care, leaving care, or transitioned out)
☐ Not having enough money to meet basic needs (low-income)
☐ The education system (dropped out of school or vulnerable to dropping out)
☐ Living in rural or remote communities
☐ Not engaged with education, employment and training programs (NEET)
☐ None of the above

Youth Innovations Scale Grant

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TIP: Grassroots work is about community-led and community inspired work. Shared identities and shared lived experience are critical to our understanding of the term 'grassroots'.

This stream is a place for YOF youth to organize around issues they face and provide solutions through scaling a current project.

It is required that core group members share identities and experiences with the young people they hope to engage.

[If Black is checked]:

≫ • Is your group Black-led? (Check only one)

☐ YES
☐ NO

[If Indigenous is checked]:

≫ • Is your group Indigenous-led? (Check only one)

☐ YES   ☐ NO

TIP: Learn more about YOF's definitions of Indigenous Grassroots Groups, Organizations and Collaboratives.

⋙ Core Group Table

13. Complete the Core Group Table.

Complete every column for every member of your core group. A core group member is someone who is playing or will play an active role in decision making and planning for your group, including delivery of project activities, project administration, etc.

Describe the different roles and responsibilities people play, and the knowledge, lived experience, and skills they bring. If your group is an incorporated not-for-profit, you must include your board members in the core group table as they have decision making responsibilities for your group.

Take note: More than 50% of your core group members must be at an arm's length relationship to each other. If you are registered as a not-for-profit, this includes your board members. This means that board members and executives are not married or related to each other and do not work as business partners or are in another relationship where interests may be compromised.

Core Group Member	Email	Age Category Select the age category that best aligns with this person.	What role does this person play in the grassroots group? If your group is new, what role do you expect this person to play in the group?	Give us a sense of the lived experiences, volunteer experiences, knowledge and/or skills this person brings that are relevant to this project.
First and last name	xx@xx.com	**Select one**: • 29 and under • 30 to 35 • 36 and older	**Example:** Social media, outreach, and networking. This person will lead the effort to find an organizational mentor for us to work with.	**Example:** Participated in community workshops on branding. Already really great at networking. I have lived in the community my whole life and am a mentor of other young Black women starting high school. This was something I didn't have growing up and wished I did. I think all of these experiences will help me with this project.

TAB 4: PROJECT IDEA

≫ Describing the Issue and Idea

14. **Describe the project your group currently delivers. Describe all core activities.**
    (350 words max.)

    If your group is shortlisted, you will not be able to change or update your response to this question.

    > **TIP:** To be eligible for a Scale grant, this project and all core activities must have been tested for at least two years. Describe all the core activities your group delivered.
    > - How did you deliver these activities?
    > - How often did you deliver these activities?
    > - How many youth did you engage in each activity?

15. **Tell us how your group plans to scale the project from its current form.** (350 words max.)

    > **TIP:**
    > - If you chose **"Enhance the quality of youth experiences to deepen the impact of a current project"**, describe what you will do to enhance the current project and core activities in order to deepen the impact for your beneficiaries.
    > - If you chose **"Expand a current project to impact more youth"**, tell us how many youths you currently engage per year and how many you plan to engage annually through scaling. Tell us how your program will be adapted to engage more youth than you currently do.
    >
    > Be specific and clear in describing the changes you will make to your current program model in order to either enhance or expand the project from its current form.

16. **What needs or issues is your group trying to address through this project?**
    (350 words max.)

    > **TIP:** In answering this question, consider:
    > - What are the systemic barriers and issues your group is trying to address?
    > - Are there things in your community you are interested in enhancing or protecting?
    > - Are there gaps your group is looking to fill?

Youth Innovations Scale Grant

Project Location

》》》 **17. Where will project activities take place?** (Check only one)

- ☐ In the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)
- ☐ Outside the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)
- ☐ In both the GTA and outside of the GTA

> **TIP:** GTA includes Toronto, Halton, Durham, Peel and York only. It does not include Hamilton. Select the region where the **majority** of your activities will take place.
>
> If your project will be delivered primarily on-line/virtually, check those regions that are most critical for the success of your project.
>
> For example, if your project will scale a virtual platform for social connections between First Nations families living in remote communities, check outside of the Greater Toronto Area.

》》》 **18. In which OTF catchment area will your project have the greatest impact?** To find your catchment, use OTF's catchment search tool. (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Northwestern
- ☐ Algoma, Cochrane, Manitoulin, Sudbury
- ☐ Muskoka, Nipissing, Parry Sound, Timiskaming
- ☐ Champlain (Ottawa region)
- ☐ Quinte, Kingston, Rideau
- ☐ Grand River
- ☐ Waterloo, Wellington, Dufferin
- ☐ Hamilton
- ☐ Niagara
- ☐ Grey, Bruce, Huron, Perth
- ☐ Essex, Kent, Lambton
- ☐ Thames Valley
- ☐ Halton-Peel
- ☐ Simcoe-York
- ☐ Durham, Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge
- ☐ Toronto

19. Please select the census divisions to indicate more specific regions where your project activities will take place. To find your census division, use OTF's catchment search tool (Check at least one)

- ☐ Algoma
- ☐ Sudbury
- ☐ Cochrane
- ☐ Manitoulin
- ☐ Greater Sudbury
- ☐ Muskoka
- ☐ Nipissing
- ☐ Parry Sound
- ☐ Timiskaming
- ☐ Kenora
- ☐ Rainy River
- ☐ Thunder Bay
- ☐ Essex County
- ☐ Chatham-Kent
- ☐ County of Lambton

- ☐ County of Brant
- ☐ Haldimand-Norfolk
- ☐ County of Bruce
- ☐ County of Grey
- ☐ County of Huron
- ☐ County of Perth
- ☐ Regional Municipality of Niagara
- ☐ Hamilton
- ☐ County of Elgin
- ☐ County of Middlesex
- ☐ County of Oxford
- ☐ Ottawa
- ☐ United Counties of Prescott & Russell

- ☐ County of Renfrew
- ☐ United Counties of Stormont, Dundas, and Glengarry
- ☐ Regional Municipality of Durham
- ☐ Kawartha Lakes
- ☐ County of Northumberland
- ☐ Peterborough
- ☐ County of Haliburton
- ☐ County of Frontenac
- ☐ County of Hastings
- ☐ County of Lanark
- ☐ United Counties of Leeds & Grenville

- ☐ County of Lennox & Addington
- ☐ Prince Edward County
- ☐ Regional Municipality of Halton
- ☐ Regional Municipality of Peel
- ☐ County of Simcoe
- ☐ Regional Municipality of York
- ☐ County of Dufferin
- ☐ Regional Municipality of Waterloo
- ☐ County of Wellington
- ☐ Toronto

TIP: Pick the community where your group will be working and will have greatest impact.

20. Select the community size that is the primary focus of your project. (Select one)

- ☐ Rural or Small Communities (20,000 or less)
- ☐ Mid-size Communities (20,001 - 100,000)
- ☐ Urban Centres and Metropolitan Suburbs (100,000+)

TIP: If you will have an impact in many communities, select the one where the majority of work will happen.

Upload Supporting Documents

21. Upload pictures or documents (optional).

TIP: You may upload as many as five (5) pictures or documents, or provide a link to pictures, that will provide greater explanation of your project. Please include a short description for each picture.

TAB 5: PROJECT IMPACT

Describing the Issue and Idea

⟫⟫ **22. Select the YOF Priority Outcome that most aligns with the change you want to make through this project.** (Check only one)

☐ Empowering girls and young women to lead, including women's economic empowerment initiatives

☐ Supporting Indigenous, Black, and/or newcomer youth to enter the labour market and transition to sustainable career pathways

☐ Supporting youth in and/or leaving care and/or involved in the justice system to navigate and access resources for wellbeing

☐ Addressing racism and its impacts on youth in urban, rural and/or Northern communities

☐ Creating safe spaces for Indigenous and/or Black youth to build strong community and cultural connections

⟫⟫ **23. Identify the population(s) that are the primary beneficiaries of your project using the list below. Your primary beneficiaries are your "YOF Youth".** (Check at least one)

> **TIP:** Check only those identities and lived experiences of the youth (your beneficiaries) that you are specifically looking to engage and where your program has been specifically designed to benefit.
>
> When selecting Indigenous (First Nations, Métis or Inuit), members can be from urban, rural and on reserve communities.

☐ Indigenous youth
  o First Nations youth
  o Métis youth
  o Inuit youth
☐ Black youth
☐ Racialized youth
☐ Newcomer youth
☐ Francophone youth
☐ Two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning, intersex, asexual (2SLGBTQIA+) youth
☐ Youth living with disabilities or special needs between the ages of 12 to 29
☐ Youth living in rural, remote and/or Northern communities
☐ Youth in conflict or at risk of being in conflict with the law
☐ Youth in care or leaving care
☐ Youth in low-income situations or from low-income families
☐ Youth who are homeless or at risk of being homeless

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☐ Youth at-risk of dropping out or have dropped out
☐ Youth living with mental health needs and/or addictions between the ages of 12 to 29
☐ Youth who are not engaged and/or at risk of not being engaged with education, employment and training programs

》》》 **24. Select the age range of youth who will participate in your project activities.**
(Check at least one)
☐ 12 to 14 years
☐ 15 to 19 years
☐ 20 to 25 years
☐ 12 to 29 years for youth living with special needs
☐ 12 to 29 years for youth living with mental health needs and/or addictions

> **TIP:** When you designed your project, which age group did you have in mind? Check only those age groups you will intentionally reach out to and engage. Please be specific in your selection.

25. Tell us more about your group's primary beneficiaries. What are their experiences? How are they affected by the issues you would like to address? (300 words max.)

26. How do you currently reach and engage your selected youth in your project?
(300 words max.)

> **TIP:** Share the impact your current project has had on your youth beneficiaries to date. Name the impacts your group has had and what feedback you received from participants.

Describing the Impact

》》》 **27. What are the most important changes you expect to see in your selected primary beneficiaries (YOF youth)?** Focus on sharing changes that can be achieved through your project activities. Identify a minimum of three changes, up to a maximum of six.
(50 words max. for each change)

> **TIP:** Each change statement should be clear and concise and should reflect what will be achieved or enhanced as your group delivers your project.
>
> Some changes can happen almost immediately, and others can take a little longer to happen. Some examples of immediate changes are changes in knowledge, skill levels or attitudes about oneself and others. Other types of changes may take longer. For example, changes in behaviour, relationships or leadership.

Use words such as: increased, enhanced, strengthened, improved, expanded, prevented, reduced etc. After you write your change statements, take a final look to make sure you can achieve all of these through your project activities.

- **Example:** More young people will be able to access community supports that meet their needs. In the beginning, they will access services with the support of their mentor but over time, they will navigate supports on their own.
- **Example:** Youth-led research into the best ways to support young people transitioning out of care will help to ensure housing and employment services are more relevant and effective, and therefore used by young people.

⫸ **28. How many youth do you expect to directly impact through the life of your grant?**

TIP: Only include the number of youth who will participate in your project activities. Only count a young person once even if you will have multiple touchpoints with them. If approved for funding, this number will be included in the Grant Contract.

- **Example**: You have funding for 3 years. Your project runs on a 10-week cycle. You plan to have 15 youth participate in each cycle. You plan to deliver 3 cycles per year. The number of youth you will directly impact is 135 (15 youth x 3 cycles per year x 3 years of funding).

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TAB 6: PROCESS

Request Term

》》 **29. What is the request term?** (Check only one)

☐ 2 years
☐ 3 years

> **TIP:** This is the total number of years you will receive funding if your application is approved.

Project Plan and Budget Worksheet

Please build your Project Plan and Budget Worksheet with the following start date in mind: Project Start Date: March 1, 2024

》》 **30. Complete the Project Plan**

> **TIP:** The Project Plan is a tool to plan all the major activities and milestones in your project. Try to anticipate all the major activities and milestones. Take your time working on this as it will help you complete the budget. If you are not sure how to fill this out, review the Sample Project Plan. You can also email us at yof@otf.ca.

》》 **31. Complete the Budget Worksheet**

Based on your completed Budget Worksheet, you are requesting xx. *(*This number auto-populates based on the information submitted in the Budget Worksheet.)

> **TIP:** The Budget Worksheet is a tool to budget for all expenses in your project. Try to anticipate all the expenses. **Note that a minimum of $2,000 per year and maximum of $4,000 per year can be spent on capacity building**.
>
> **Please avoid any quotation marks ("…") in the Budget fields (including Notes) as the system will not save your work if these are detected.**
>
> If you are not sure how to fill this out, review the Sample Budget Worksheet. You can also email us at yof@otf.ca.

TAB 7: ORGANIZATIONAL MENTOR (OM) INFORMATION

⟫ **32. Has your group identified an Organizational Mentor for this project?** (Check only one)

☐ YES   ☐ NO

[If no]:
Do you need information or support to find Organizational Mentor? (Check only one)

☐ YES   ☐ NO

[If yes]:

What is the name and contact information of the organization that has agreed to be your Organizational Mentor?

☐ Organization Name
☐ Contact Name and Position
☐ Telephone
☐ Email

TAB 8: GROUP ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

☐ We acknowledge that the majority of our core group members share identities and experiences with the youth we want to engage through this project.
☐ We acknowledge that our core group has at least three core members.
☐ We acknowledge that more than 50% of our core group members are at an arm's length relationship to each other.
☐ We acknowledge that all project activities will take place in Ontario.
☐ If our project is approved for funding, our group agrees to participate in YOF-led capacity building activities.
☐ If our project is approved for funding, our group agrees to participate in a YOF evaluation process led by an external partner.
☐ If our project is approved for funding, our group agrees to work with an Organizational Mentor.
☐ The information contained in this application and the accompanying documents is true, accurate and complete.

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Expression of Interest Assessment Criteria

OTF staff will use this standard assessment criteria to assess your Expression of Interest. This information is a tool to guide you as you write your responses.

Assessment Area 1: Group Eligibility	
Project leaders reflect the identities and experiences of those YOF youth they are working with and for.	
The group operates as either youth-led or a youth-adult partnership.	
The application is complete and contains clear and detailed responses.	
Young people (ages 12-25) and/or those with disabilities, special needs, mental health needs and addictions (ages 12-29) are clear beneficiaries of the project.	
The group has delivered two years of core activities that have had an impact on YOF youth (primary beneficiaries) and is ready to scale the project.	
The group exists independently of a larger organization (other not-for-profit), charitable organization or municipality, university, school, and/or hospital.	
The group is based in Ontario.	**YES/ NO**
The group has at least three core group members.	
More than 50% of core group members are at arm's length relationship to each other.	
The group is not a registered Charity.	
The group is a registered not-for-profit. If yes: Board members are clearly identified and reflect the identities and experiences of the YOF youth being served.	
The project complies with OTF Policies.	
The group is in compliance with advocacy restrictions of OTF's Eligibility Policy.	
The group is either an unincorporated group or an incorporated not-for-profit corporation, with independently managed revenues of $50,000 or less in either of the last two years.	

Assessment Area 2: People

Strong Youth Leadership ☐ The group fully operates as a youth-led or a youth-adult partnership. ☐ The group members have a history of working together. ☐ The group demonstrates that collectively they have the skills and experiences to deliver project activities and scale this project. ☐ The group demonstrates that they can effectively administer the grant (annual planning and reporting, budget management etc.).	**40%**

Assessment Area 3: Strategy

Setting the Context (Issue & idea) ☐ The group clearly and fully demonstrates they have delivered activities over two years to YOF youth. ☐ The group has fully and clearly described how they want to scale their current project and for what purpose (to "Enhance the quality of youth experiences to deepen the impact of a current project" or "Expand a current project to impact more youth"). ☐ The need, issue or opportunity connects to systemic barriers that YOF youth face. ☐ Original core project activities and the proposed plan to scale the project are an effective response to the need, issue or opportunity the group is addressing. ☐ Original core project activities and the proposed plan to scale respond well to the context and experiences of the young people who are engaged through this project.	**60%**
Scaling Impactful Projects (Idea & Impact) ☐ YOF youth are clear and direct beneficiaries of the project. ☐ The strategy for scaling results in either a deeper impact for youth beneficiaries or more youth reached. ☐ Past project results and any new changes or impacts can be achieved through the plan to scale and proposed project activities. ☐ Past project results and any new changes or impacts align with the selected YOF Priority Outcome.	