

Youthprise: East African Youth Economic

Development Grant

## Progress Report

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Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development Employment and Training Programs Division

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# Introduction

The 2021 Minnesota Legislature ([Laws of Minnesota, 2021, Chapter 10, Article 1, Section 2, Subdivision 3(cc)](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/laws/2021/1/Session+Law/Chapter/10/)) appropriated state funds to Youthprise, an intermediary youth grant organization. The Legislature appropriated $700,000 for State Fiscal year (SFY) 2022 and $700,000 for SFY 2023. The Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) is permitted to use five percent of the appropriation to administer the grant, making a total of $665,000 available each year to Youthprise.

These funds are to “give grants through a competitive process to community organizations to provide economic development services designed to enhance long-term economic self- sufficiency in communities with concentrated East African populations. Such communities include but are not limited to Faribault, Rochester, St. Cloud, Moorhead, and Willmar. Youthprise must make at least 50 percent of these grants to organization serving communities outside the seven-county metropolitan areas, as defined in [Minnesota Statutes, section 473.121, subdivision 2.](https://www.revisor.mn.gov/statutes/cite/473.121) This is one-time appropriation.”

Youthprise released a [Request for Proposals](https://youthprise.org/funding/grants/rfp-east-african-youth-economic-development-grant/) (RFP) in the fourth quarter of 2021 and the first quarter of 2022 to competitively award funds from the SFY 2022 direct appropriation to Minnesota organizations serving East African populations. Final funding decisions were announced in early 2022 which awarded funds to eighteen sub-grantee organizations.

# Summary of Objectives

The purpose of the East African Youth Economic Development Grant Program is to reduce disparities and to allow the acquisition of self-sufficiency through:

* Career exploration and career planning
* Work readiness training
* Job training
* Job placement
* Mentoring
* Internships and apprenticeships
* Education and industry recognized credentialing, and
* Business development and entrepreneurship exploration

The RFP also described potential support services to address barriers youth face including:

* Transportation
* Housing
* Remedial Education
* Language, and
* Social Emotional Learning

# Eligible Applicant Organizations

Eligible applicants for the DEED funding included 501(c)(3) youth-focused community-based organizations or 501(c)(3) economic development organizations. Additionally, eligible organizations must have a history of serving East African youth or communities, be based in Minnesota, and must not have a budget greater than $2 million.

# Grant Performance Measures

Demographics of youth participants, including age, gender, and race/ethnicity, are collected in addition to performance measures. The performance measures include:

## Decreasing barriers to East African youth employment

* Number of youth obtaining internships or apprenticeships with East African run businesses and in high-growth, in-demand occupations and industries
* Number of youth obtaining employment with East African run businesses and in high-growth, in-demand occupations and industries
* Number of youth receiving support services and type of support services provided
* Number of youth receiving job training and work readiness training
* Number of youth receiving career exploration and planning services
* Number of youth receiving in-demand credentials and type of credentials obtained
* Number of youth participating in education activities, including secondary, post-secondary, Adult Basic Education, GED preparation, and/or ESL classes.

## Increasing readiness of East African youth to be hired by or create their own East African businesses

* Number of new East African youth-led businesses entering the community, including a description of the type, product, and size
* Number of new East African businesses with potential to hire youth
* Number of East African youth participating in various educational and employment-related trainings

## Increasing the economic capacity of East African youth

* Number of East African youth receiving wages from sub-grantees and the average wage
* Number of East African youth receiving family-sustaining wages

# Grant Selection Process

In keeping with its commitment to youth and community voice, Youthprise engaged in a two-stage review process regarding the proposals received by Youthprise in response to the RFP. In the first stage of the selection process, community reviewer panels composed of youth, East African community members, and other stakeholders made recommendations for funding. In the second stage of the selection process, Youthprise staff reviewed the recommendations from the community review panels and made recommendations for sub-grant awards based on financial capacity, programmatic capacity, and geographic balance. The list of selected sub-grantees was sent to the Youthprise Board of Directors for final award decisions.

# Selected Grantees

The SFY 2022 Direct Appropriation funds were awarded to eighteen (18) Minnesota organizations serving East African youth populations. Eight grantees are located in Greater Minnesota and eleven are located in the metropolitan area.

| **Organization Name** | **Area Served** | | **Purpose/Mission** | **Total Amount** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **African Community Services** (activities in Greater Minnesota) | Minneapolis (serving Pease, MN) | | Help refugees from East and West Africa as well as other cultures, plus their families, secure basic needs and resources for self‐sufficiency and acclimate to a new way of life. | $20,000 |
| **Afro Economic Development Solutions** | St. Paul | | Build wealth within African immigrant communities through economic development activities. AEDS works throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan area to create wealth, lift immigrant communities out of poverty, and contribute to and benefit from the region’s vibrant economy. | $25,000 |
| **Afro American Development Association** | Moorhead | | Alleviate poverty by supporting vulnerable New Americans and other diverse communities by building family and community capacity through training, sustainable development, economic empowerment, conflict resolution and peace building. | $85,000 |
| **BRAVE Foundation** | St. Paul | | Dedicated in the upliftment and encouragement of young women within the Somali diaspora community. | $20,000 |
| **Community Integration Center** | Willmar | | Work with the locals, immigrants and government agencies to reach out, in the best possible way, to make a full integration of immigrants. | $20,000 |
| **Ethnic Self-Help Alliance for Refugee Assistance (ESHARA)** | St. Paul | | Entrepreneurial training, mentoring, career exploration, job placement, leadership, and support. | $24,250 |
| **Islamic Civic Society of America** | Minneapolis | | Create positive change for Minnesota by building the capacity of East African immigrant families and faith centers to understand and influence key public issues affecting current and future success. | $25,000 |
| **Ka Joog** | Minneapolis | | Help Somali youth understand their options and make good choices through mentoring, tutoring, and job readiness training. | $85,000 |
| **Milestone Community Development** | St. Paul | | Workforce training and support of East African youth. | $5,000 |
| **Minnesota Council of Churches** | Minneapolis | | Mentoring and building the confidence of East African youth to develop workforce and career networks into adulthood. | $20,000 |
| **New Vision Foundation** | St. Paul | | Create pathways to success by motivating disadvantaged youth in Minnesota and the developing world through digital literacy; engaging responsible companies in IT philanthropy and inspiring progress toward global sustainable development. | $60,000 |
| **Northfield Healthy Community Initiative** | Northfield | | Cultivate a collaborative community that supports, values, and empowers youth. | $40,000 |
| **Somalia American Social Service Association** | Rochester | | Rebuild the Somali youth of Olmsted County through education, physical activities, and programs that promote success. | $25,000 |
| **Somali Community Resettlement Services** | Faribault | | Promote and advance the social well-being and welfare of immigrants and refugees by providing community and resettlement services; with the goal of building a vibrant community, whose members can successfully settle and effectively integrate into the wider American community. | $60,000 |
| **South Sudanese Foundation** | Moorhead | | Build relationships and share services and resources within the community and other communities in the area. | $75,000 |
| **Street Soccer Twin Cities** | Minneapolis | | Create a better, healthier, and more united community; providing year-round free access to organized physical activities with youth development focused programming designed to empower youth voice. | $25,000 |
| **Urban Strategies, Inc.** | Minneapolis | | Developing social enterprise in youth through entrepreneurship, work readiness training, mentoring, tutoring and support services to address barriers. | $25,000 |
| **YWCA Mankato** | Mankato | | Provide youth with workforce, college and career readiness, local business speakers, and support for ACT preparation. Also offer *Handball to University* hands-on experiences to High School students to get a feeling of what it would be like to experience the college. | $25,000 |
| **Total awarded in SFY 22** | |  | | **$664,250** |

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# Monitoring

Youthprise staff monitor grant programming and financial operations of sub-grantee organizations which must adhere to Youthprise policies, procedures, and reporting requirements. Every three months, quarterly data and narrative reports are submitted by sub-grantees to Youthprise staff. Youthprise submits the reports quarterly to DEED’s Office of Youth Development. DEED staff annually monitors Youthprise for compliance with state and federal laws and regulations and regarding fiscal and program operations and performance.

# COVID Impact on Programming

During the past two years of the COVID-19 pandemic, DEED-funded organizations faced challenges transitioning to virtual programming and had to pause in-person programming in the first year or two of the pandemic. Organization staff communicated COVID updates to their BIPOC communities and provided PPE materials for participants who met in person or for outside activities. In 2022, continued challenges include lack of internet and computer access for virtual programming and a continued reduction of participation and disengagement of youth in the community. Through additional recruitment efforts, organizations were eventually able to get back on track with participant engagement and provision of in-person employment and training services to East African youth.

# Sub-Grantee Highlights

Some successful SFY 2022 highlights include:

* Youth participants engaged in a variety of vocational and educational activities such as: tutoring, developing resume and interview skills, financial literacy and business entrepreneurship courses, and computer coding and software fundamentals.
* Overall, 92 youth have been placed into jobs with 31 being hired by East African-run businesses. A third of these youth received family-sustaining wages. Overall, wages averaged $17 per hour.
* Over one hundred (103) youth have been placed in internships or apprenticeships with 72 youth apprenticeships or internships taking place at East African-run businesses.
* Industry-recognized credentials were awarded to 54 East African youth, including certification in *Fundamentals of Software* by Python Programming, Forklift and Nursing Assistance certification, as well as Childcare licensing. Over one hundred youth received educational credentials in 2022.

# Evaluation

In addition to collecting and reporting participant performance outcomes, Youthprise evaluates the grantmaking process to determine to what extent it reaches the appropriate organizations in the geographic areas of the state with significant East African populations. Youthprise was successful in reaching a total of 519 East African youth (over 80% of the total youth served) in the Twin Cities and in the cities and surrounding areas of Faribault, Mankato, Moorhead, Northfield, Pease, Rochester and Willmar. Moreover, eight of the eighteen organizations were located in Greater Minnesota and received 53% of SFY 2022 DEED funding available.

In evaluating the progress made by strengthening sub-grantees’ capacity to provide quality youth programming and services, Youthprise reported that funds were primarily used to pay direct services to operate the program, pay youth stipends or wages, and provide wrap around support services to youth.

# Grant Outcomes

The SFY 2022 Youthprise Direct Appropriation grant served a total of 325 Minnesota youth in the first quarter of 2022 and 637 in the second quarter of 2022. Participant demographic and outcome data for youth who were individually case-managed in the first half of 2002 is available below (Note: data is shown by quarter due to the possibility that numbers from one quarter to the next may be partial double-counts of individuals served).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS** | **2022 First Quarter Total** | **2022 Second Quarter Total** |
| Male | 232 | 328 |
| Female | 116 | 306 |
| Non-Binary or Transgender | 0 | 2 |
| Age 14-17 | 109 | 361 |
| Age 18-21 | 175 | 202 |
| Age 22-26 | 63 | 71 |
| Age 27 and older | 0 | 0 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 5 | 4 |
| American Indian/ Alaskan Native | 0 | 3 |
| Asian/ Pacific Islander | 48 | 40 |
| Black/African American | 285 | 519 |
| White | 0 | 1 |
| Multi-racial | 4 | 16 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PROGRAM SERVICES RECEIVED AND OUTCOMES** | **2022 First Quarter Total** | **2022 Second Quarter Total** |
| Received Job Training | 88 | 117 |
| Received Work Readiness Training | 96 | 176 |
| Received Career Exploration Career Planning | 90 | 213 |
| Obtained an Internship and Apprenticeship | 31 | 103 |
| East African Run Business Internships and Apprenticeships | 9 | 72 |
| Placed in Employment | 43 | 92 |
| East African Run Business Job Placement | 8 | 31 |
| Obtained Sustaining Employment | 37 | 96 |
| Earned Family-Sustaining Wages | 43 | 29 |
| Earned Industry-Recognized Credentials | 5 | 54 |
| Earned Education Credentials | 12 | 105 |
| Received Entrepreneurship Training or Activities | 8 | 83 |
| Received Mentoring Services | 127 | 350 |
| Received Transportation Support | 70 | 238 |
| Received Housing Support | 4 | 59 |
| Received Education Support | 126 | 286 |
| Received Language Support | 54 | 230 |
| Received Other Support Services | 51 | 150 |

# Expenditures

The term of the SFY 2022 Direct Appropriation grant is October 23, 2021 through June 30, 2023. Youthprise has expended 76.7 % of its SFY 2022 Direct Appropriation grant funds through October 31, 2022.

| **Budget Category** | **Total SFY 2022 Grant Amount** | **Amount Expended through October 31, 2022** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Administrative Costs (up to 10% allowed) | $66,500.00 | $66,500.00 |
| Contracted Services | $598,500.00 | $443,359.87 |
| **Total Budget** | **$665,000.00** | **$509,859.87** |

Youthprise expects to fully expend current SFY 2022 and SFY 2023 grant funds, as it has fully expended its SFY 2020 and SFY 2021 Direct Appropriation grants administered by DEED. Sub-grantee performance and Youthprise contracts are expected to be reviewed and evaluated by Youthprise staff prior to issuing SFY 2023 Direct Appropriation funds to sub-grantee organizations.