

Marion County Commission on Youth, Inc.

Closing the Gap
2023 Request for Proposals

OVERVIEW

The Marion County Commission on Youth (MCCOY) was established in 1993 as an independent nonprofit organization to be the facilitating, convening, and coordinating body for youth services in Central Indiana. As an intermediary organization, MCCOY works closely with youth, families, community organizations and leaders, youth-serving systems, and government agencies to champion positive youth development through community and systems change. MCCOY envisions a community where every young person has equitable opportunities to learn, grow, and thrive.

MCCOY, with support from the United Way of Central Indiana (UWCI), is awarding project grants to school-community partnerships as part of our Closing the Gap Initiative. MCCOY will also be launching Communities of Practice and a focused capacity grant initiative in 2024.

Closing the Gap is an initiative of MCCOY that aims to build stronger pathways to partnership for schools and community services. Based on substantial assessments and data collection from both schools and community organizations, we believe youth and families will have better outcomes when schools and communities work together to address the complex challenges impacting youth.

Closing the Gap identifies **four priority strategies** informed by input throughout Marion County and existing research and secondary data to improving youth and family outcomes:

- Adopting whole child approaches
- Engaging families through strengths-based practices
- Supporting the community-school model
- Investing in public education

This grant opportunity is developed to increase the capacity of schools and community organizations to work together to work together to implement the priority strategies listed above. Additionally, we will be providing grants to support the building of new partnerships.

Project Grant: Project Grants are clearly aligned to one or more of the priority strategies and implemented in partnership by a school and community organization. Projects must be completed by December 31 and show measurable outcomes of success.

Partnership Building Grant: Partnership Building Grants will provide funding support to capacity-building efforts for schools to build stronger partnerships with community organizations. This may include supporting staff time for community outreach, training and professional development to support partnership development, or other innovative strategies proposed by the applicant.

This document outlines the application process and expectations of the grant.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Local education institutions (K-12 schools) and non-profit community-based organizations with a 501(c)3 status located in and serving Marion County are eligible for this funding. Community organizations do not need to be youth-serving organizations to apply.

Note: A primary goal of this funding opportunity is to build stronger partnerships – therefore, schools or organizations who apply are encouraged to submit existing Partnership Agreements or develop an agreement using the template provided.

INFORMATION SESSION

An information session will be provided during the 2023 Closing the Gap Symposium held on September 13. Applicants from attendees of the Symposium will receive priority status, however attendance is not a requirement for eligibility.

SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Grants will be submitted through an online form. All applications are due by 11:59 pm on Friday, October 6, 2023. Late applications will not be accepted.

To access the online form, click [here](#) or visit www.mccoyouth.org/closingthegap.

TIMELINE

Request for Proposals Posted	September 8, 2023
Grant Information Session	September 13, 2023
Submissions Due	October 6, 2023 (11:59 pm)
Award Notification	October 16, 2023
Payments	October 20, 2023
Projects Completed	December 31, 2023
Evaluation Surveys	January 8 – 15, 2024
Site Visits	January 15 – 19, 2024

AWARD INFORMATION

Funding available for these grants totals \$25,000 and we expect to award grants in the range of \$500 - \$5,000. Projects and Partnership Building activities must be completed by December 31, 2023. Grants are subject to availability of UWCI funds and to any modifications to MCCOY's grant agreement with the funder. Grants will be awarded as single payments by October 13, 2023. Awardees must sign a brief agreement acknowledging participation in an evaluation survey and follow up site visit to discuss how funds were used and share success stories.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Primary Applicant Information

Basic contact information will be collected from the Primary Applicant (school or community organization), including a contact name, email address, and phone number.

Partner Applicant Information (Optional)

All applicants must acknowledge a project partner and provide basic contact information. Applicants are also encouraged to submit an existing Partnership Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding. A template is provided in the appendix.

Project Description

Applicants will answer a series of questions based on the components of **SMARTIE** objectives: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Timebound, Inclusive, and Equitable. Rather than ask for stated objectives, we ask applicants to think critically about each of these components and respond to the following guiding questions. Responses must be limited to 500 characters.

Specific: Please describe your project, including key partnerships and information about who will benefit from the partnership/ project.

Measurable: How will you measure the success of this project/ partnership? What are the anticipated outcomes?

Achievable: Can this work be completed within the required timeframe? What limitations or challenges do you foresee and how could you overcome them?

Relevant: Why is this partnership/ project needed for your community? Share relevant data or input from youth/ families to support the need.

Time-bound: Describe how you will ensure that this project is completed by December 31. Provide a brief timeline explaining the activities these funds will support.

Inclusive: How is this partnership/ project inclusive of your community, specifically youth and families? How are you engaging youth/ families in the planning of this work?

Equitable: How do you define equity and what policies or practices does your organization/ school have to promote equity? How will you ensure this partnership/ project is implemented equitably?

Award Request

Clearly state the amount of funding you are requesting. Provide a brief description of how funds will be used to support the project. Include exact expenses when they are known or provide an overview of calculations for estimated amounts.

Evaluation and Site Visit Agreement

Applicants must agree to completing an evaluation survey at the end of the funding period, for MCCOY to assess the impact of the grants. Additionally, applicants must agree to a Site Visit from MCCOY staff to share how funds were used, discuss the impact of the funding on partnership development, and share success stories.

A copy of the evaluation survey is available in the appendix.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT

The information session at the Closing the Gap Symposium on September 13 will be the only opportunity to ask clarifying questions about the application process. However, should any technical issues arise (i.e., inability to access the online form), please contact MCCOY's Director of Strategy and Operations (contact information below). General questions about the application will not be answered via email.

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APPLICATION REVIEW AND SCORING RUBRIC

Applications will first go through an administrative review to check for completion. Incomplete applications (that is, applications missing a required component) will not be considered for review.

Applications will be reviewed by a team made up of MCCOY staff members, consultants from Taylor Advising, and representatives from other youth-serving intermediaries in Indiana. Each application will be scored independently five (5) times using the scoring rubric on page 6. Scores will then be averaged twice: once using raw scores and once removing the lowest scores. The Review Team will make final determinations based on these two averaged scores.

Administrative Review – Required Components of the Application

- Eligible Applicant (school or nonprofit, located in Marion County)
- Applicant Information
- Partner Information (Project Grants Only)
- Signed Partner Agreement
- Project Description
- Award Request
- Survey Site Visit Agreement

Scoring Rubric

The following rubric will be used by the Review Team to assess elements of the application. Review Team members will be asked to watch a video about various implicit biases to be aware of during the review process, to mitigate bias and make the process more equitable.

COMPONENT	CONSIDERATIONS	SCORE
Priority Status	Organizations/ Schools who participated in the Symposium will receive an addition 5 points.	
Addresses Priority Strategy	1 – Project goals and activities do not align with a Closing the Gap strategy. 3 – Project goals and activities align with Closing the Gap strategies and are briefly discussed. 5 – Project goals and activities clearly align with a Closing the Gap strategy and alignment is discussed.	
Specific	1 – Project elements are not discussed, and it is unclear who will benefit from the project or partnership. 3 – Project description could use more detail, key partnerships are identified, and benefits are mentioned. 5 – Project description is clear, key partnerships are discussed, and benefits of the project/ partnerships are shared.	
Measurable	1 – Outcomes are not specified, and it is not clear how success is being defined. 3 – Project outcomes are discussed but could be more detailed. Evaluation methods are discussed with limitations. 5 – Project outcomes are clearly articulated with reasonable and detailed methods for evaluation.	
Achievable	1 – Activities cannot be achieved in the timeframe required by the grant. Potential challenges are not discussed. 3 – Activities may be achieved within timeframe. Potential challenges/ solutions are discussed with some limitations. 5 – Activities can be achieved within timeframe and potential challenges/ solutions are discussed in detail.	
Relevant	1 – Need for project or partnership is not defined. Data or input from the community is not provided. 3 – Need for project or partnership is moderately defined. Some data and input from the community is provided. 5 – Need for project or partnership is clearly defined. Data and input from the community is thoroughly discussed.	
Time-Bound	1 – Limited or no timeline provided. Limited or no discussion of how the applicant will keep project on track. 3 – Basic timeline for project provided. Some discussion of how applicant will keep project on track. 5 – Detailed timeline for project provided. Reasonable actions described to keep project on track.	
Inclusive	1 – Community voice, specifically youth and families, is not incorporated into the design of the project activities. Best practices for inclusion have not been considered. 3 – General discussion of inclusion, but no specific information about how youth and families will be included. 5 – Youth and families have been engaged in the planning of this work and will be engaged in its implementation.	
Equitable	1 – Equitable practices have not been considered and it is likely this project will disproportionately benefit or harm some groups in the community. 3 – Some equitable practices are discussed, but implementation is not prioritized. 5 – Equitable practices are being centered and this project/ partnership will clearly help close the gap for the community.	
Award Request	1 – Request is not reasonable given the scope of the work described. No details to explain proposed expenses. 3 – Request aligns with scope of work, but some detail is missing from discussion of expenses. 5 – Request is clearly aligned with scope of work described and satisfactory detail is provided.	
TOTAL		

Appendix A: Partnership Agreement Template

Partnership Agreement

Between

(Partner) and *(Partner)*

This Partnership Agreement (Agreement) sets forth the terms and understandings between the *(partner)* and the *(partner)* to *(insert activity)*.

Background

(Why partnership is important)

Purpose

This Agreement will *(purpose/ goals of partnership)*

The above goals will be accomplished by undertaking the following activities:

- *(List and describe the activities that are planned for the partnership and who will do what)*

Reporting

(Record who will evaluate the effectiveness and adherence to the agreement and when evaluation will happen)

Funding

(Specify that this Agreement is not a commitment of funds)

Duration

This Agreement is at-will and may be modified by mutual consent of authorized officials from *(list of partners)*. This Agreement shall become effective by the authorized officials from the *(list of partners)* and will remain in effect until modified or terminated by any one of the partners by mutual consent. In the absence of mutual agreement by the authorized officials from *(list partners)* *this* Agreement shall end on *(end date of partnership)*.

Contact Information

<i>Partner name</i> <i>Partner representative</i> <i>Position</i> <i>Address</i> <i>Phone</i> <i>E-mail</i> <i>Date:_____</i>	<i>Partner name</i> <i>Partner representative</i> <i>Position</i> <i>Address</i> <i>Phone</i> <i>E-mail</i> <i>Date:_____</i>
<i>(Partner signature)</i> <i>(Partner name, organization, position)</i>	<i>(Partner signature)</i> <i>(Partner name, organization, position)</i>

Appendix B: Evaluation Survey

The questions below will be included in the Evaluation Survey sent to award recipients.

1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how successful was your project/ partnership?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Not at all successful									Extremely Successful

Explain your rating:

2. What was *most* successful about your project/ partnership? What do you think facilitated that success?
3. What challenged you the most in this project/ partnership? What did you do to try and overcome that challenge?
4. How would you describe the impact of this project/ partnership? How did the school community benefit? How do you know?
5. Would you have been able to complete this project/ partnership without the Closing the Gap mini grant award?
 - a. YES
 - b. NO
 - c. NOT SURE
6. What have you learned that you would like to share with other school-community partnerships?
7. Would you be willing to share your learnings with others through any of the following channels?
 - a. Webinar
 - b. In-Person Training
 - c. Symposium Session
 - d. Coaching Session
 - e. Development of a tool or resource
 - f. Other (please describe)