



Investing in Youth Media:

A GUIDE FOR GRANTMAKERS

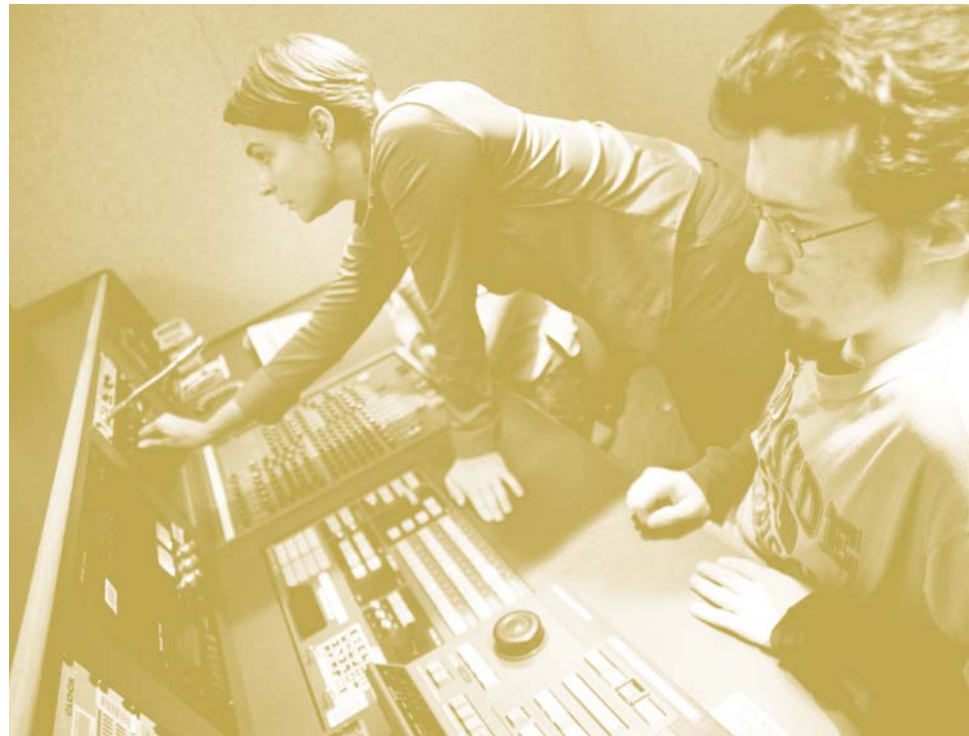


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ver many years, we've watched a growing number of youth media organizations change lives—building young people's skills, making them more civically engaged, and influencing public discussion. Through making media, young people find an opportunity to define themselves, their challenges, goals, strengths, and weaknesses. As they redefine the often-unflattering stereotypes of youth in mainstream media, their sense of satisfaction is tangible. We've seen far-reaching impact as young people add their voices to public debate, reframing issues and promoting policy reform.

We created *Investing in Youth Media* for two reasons. First, it is a tool to help funders consider the value of youth media in connection to program areas such as civic engagement, the arts, education, youth development, and journalism. Second, it is a call to action—to inspire and encourage investment in this vibrant and growing field. We'd like to thank the funders and grantees who shared their experiences and expertise for this publication. We'd also like to acknowledge the many funders and grantees not featured here, whose equally compelling stories make this a remarkable field.

This publication has been developed by Open Society Institute's Youth Media Program, which officially ended December, 2005. It is distributed by Grantmakers in Film and Electronic Media and is available online at www.gfem.org.

With hope that you will be a contributor to the next collection of youth media success stories, we invite you to read on.








Erlin Ibreck
Director, Grantmaking Strategies
(formerly Director of the
Youth Media Program)
Open Society Institute

David Haas
Chair, Grantmakers in Film
and Electronic Media



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Introduction

Welcome to *Investing in Youth Media*, a compilation of success stories, lessons, and guidance for grantmakers interested in being part of the vibrant and growing field of youth media.

Why are funders becoming interested in youth media? Youth media organizations offer a broad impact that belies their often small sizes and even smaller budgets. They bring together youth development and social justice in a way that is both energizing and authentic. They offer new models for educating young people who have lost interest in school, bring youth voices to public attention, and offer opportunities for artistic exploration and career experiences.

Programs are built on the best practices of positive youth development, teaching young people new skills and empowering them to make smart decisions, explore new horizons, and work toward their goals. Program graduates leave with skills in interviewing, researching, and storytelling. They learn how to develop an idea and stick with it until they get the project done. These skills become important for their professional and personal lives.

At the same time, **youth media organizations can engage young people in social justice** issues that are important to them. Whether it's inequity in education, foster care conditions, or the politics of immigration, young people explore the landscape, develop opinions, and share those opinions, along with their personal experiences, through film, radio, and the printed word. Although they are still too young to vote, these young people have found a way to impact the issues that affect their lives.

While most funders do not have a defined youth media program, many find that youth media is an effective component of their grantmaking strategy. The case studies that follow introduce youth media programs supported by a variety of small local funders and large international philanthropies. They illustrate the links between youth media and six other program areas: youth development, social change, youth voice, education, journalism, media arts, and field building.

The resource list at the end of this publication includes contact information for all of the youth media organizations listed here as well as intermediaries and others who can help you consider, develop, and launch a youth media philanthropy program.

Why are funders becoming interested in youth media?

It brings together youth development and social justice in a way that is both engaging and authentic.

About Youth Media

The first large cohort of youth media organizations came onto the scene over twenty years ago.

The field was started by a few innovative journalists and media artists who started organizations to teach their craft to young people. The fledgling groups won acclaim for breaking new ground to bring youthful voices to the public's attention and engage young people at risk of falling between the cracks of overwhelmed social service and education systems. They gave young people an opportunity to tell their own stories in their own voices. Examples abound of creative approaches in a variety of media. Appalshop trains Appalachian young people to use media to document the stories of their community. DCTV teaches New York City youth to make professional-quality documentaries. Youth Communications works with New York City high school students to create a citywide school paper. Pacific News Service produces a wide range of content for mainstream newspaper subscribers, weeklies, alternative publications, college newspapers, and the ethnic press.

In the 1990s, the digital revolution brought the ability to inexpensively make and distribute media.

Computers simplified print production. Sophisticated editing software became available for personal computers. This led to an explosion of youth media organizations from Alabama to Oregon. With the growth of the Internet, that expansion has continued. Today's youth media organizations are often multimedia centers. Traditional video and audio and print publications have been enhanced with websites, blogs, and streaming audio or video online.

Many youth media groups traditionally have emphasized the process of making media, and how it affects the young people involved. Others have emphasized the product, and how it affects the audiences, whether print, broadcast, or online.

As the field matures, **a growing number of youth media organizations—and funders—are defining their impact in terms of both process and product.**

Their work is multifaceted.

Youth media is political. Young media makers see their work as more than art or “infotainment.” Often, they see it as a vehicle for social justice. They use media to confront specific issues, such as inappropriate juvenile detention facilities in Connecticut or foster care in San Francisco. They tackle global challenges such as immigration from their own unique perspectives. They use media strategically to add their voices to the public debate. Increasingly, youth media organizations are developing public speaking and community organizing programs to get their messages out.



Today's youth media organizations are multimedia centers.

Youth media is personal. Young people have become storytellers who chronicle their lives to inform each other and all of us. Stories often reflect such emotionally charged experiences as the death of a parent, an unplanned pregnancy, a run-in with the law, or a valiant struggle against anorexia or obesity. Youth media groups are increasingly forming partnerships with mainstream media to bring their stories to wide audiences.

Today, the nascent field of youth media is at a crossroads. With support, it can mature from a loose constellation of organizations to a clearly defined field. Several components are already in place.

Youth media organizations are building connections so that they can learn from one another. In New York City, San Francisco, and other communities, youth media staffers meet regularly to exchange ideas and share updates. Other groups connect with each other through phone and email conversations.

Intermediaries are playing an important role in the field, fostering dialogue among potential funders and grantees, offering opportunities for learning and documenting progress. Intermediaries include NAMAC—National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture—which supports independent media; Listen Up!, a youth media network for young filmmakers and their allies; and Mediarights.org, a media portal dedicated to maximizing the impact of social-issue documentaries and shorts.

Foundations, including Open Society Institute, the Surdna Foundation, and the Stuart Foundation, **have started research projects** that will help organizations assess their work. Youth Media Reporter, an online newsletter, keeps players abreast of developments in the field and shares the news with an ever-widening audience.

The field is growing, with new and diverse youth media groups starting around the country. However, these new organizations face significant challenges starting up. Funding in the field is precarious. Many organizations rely on part-time staff.

The good news is that the funders interviewed for this project understand these challenges. Many give unrestricted grants to allow their grantees greater flexibility.

Many funders view themselves as partners in the work of their grantees. These partnerships are a key to the long-term success of the field.

Youth media can mature from a loose constellation of organizations to a clearly defined field.



about youth media

Road Map for the Future

Foundations will play a crucial role in nurturing the field of youth media. There are many opportunities for impact, from supporting new organizations as they get off the ground to strengthening field-wide communications. Funders can expand the role of youth media and increase its effectiveness through the thirteen steps below:



1 **Promote** organizational growth by making multiyear grants for core operating costs

An organization that survives on project grants rarely has time to build its infrastructure or expand its vision. Longer term grants that offer unrestricted funding can stabilize fragile organizations and expand stronger ones. Ultimately, they enhance the entire field.

2 **Respond** quickly to new opportunities

Media is a fast-paced field. Just like professional news organizations, youth media makers need to be able to seize opportunities in order to capture the next big story. Set up an opportunity fund that can quickly make grants so that youth reporters can follow a story in Europe, attend a political convention, or cover breaking news as it happens.

3 **Support** the development and dissemination of promising practices

Innovations happen in large cities, small towns, and around the world. Seek out youth media organizations with creative approaches and impressive results. Bring their work to the attention of colleagues. Fund them to share their strategies and stories through publications, workshops, conferences, and the Internet.

4 **Fund** evaluation and research projects

Youth media organizations are increasingly asked to show impact of their work through evaluation. However, to date, few formal, systematic research and evaluation studies have been conducted. Funders can have a significant impact by funding field-wide research.

Conducting that research is challenging, in part because youth media organizations have many different ways of looking at their individual impact. Recent research conducted for Open Society Institute and the Surdna Foundation has begun the process of creating field-wide evaluation tools.

5 **Strengthen** distribution networks and build new ones

No matter how high the quality and how compelling the content, youth media groups struggle to distribute their products. Foundations can support efforts to build partnerships between youth media outlets and mainstream television, radio, print, and online outlets. They can underwrite and help publicize youth media festivals. They can encourage partnerships with unlikely allies such as local Rotary or Kiwanis clubs, and with mainstream media businesses.

6 **Support** youth media intermediaries

Intermediaries are an essential component of a thriving field. They convene groups, spearhead field-wide research and capacity-building, and serve as a conduit between funders, academics, policymakers, and youth media organizations. Intermediaries such as NAMAC and Mediarights.org work closely with youth media groups across the country. Foundations can offer general support to strengthen these and other youth media intermediaries.

7 **Build professional networks for both funders and grantees**

Making youth media is an interactive learning process, so it's no surprise that youth media staffers thrive on opportunities to interact with and learn from their peers. In interviews, youth media staff members consistently cited this as a priority. Likewise, youth media funders could benefit from their own network of peers to better coordinate strategies, share lessons learned and success stories, and collaborate. Foundations can play a role not only in funding these networks, but also in organizing them.

8 **Invest in start-ups that reach new communities or test new approaches**

Fledgling youth media organizations face enormous challenges getting their organizations off the ground. Start up costs are higher for youth media than for traditional youth development recreation programs. Quality equipment and staff training are essential for success. By investing in new organizations, funders can help youth media move beyond major metropolitan areas to small towns where youth voices can have a big impact.

9 **Strengthen leading organizations so that they can promote their accomplishments nationally and internationally**

Several youth media organizations have more than a decade of experience. They have established track records, strong relationships with funders, and experience in sharing their expertise with others. Support these organizations so that they can establish their programs as models, develop curricula based on their experiences, and mentor newer groups to learn from their experience.

10 **Promote opportunities for continued learning**

The concept of media is continually evolving. In the span of a generation we've gone from reel-to-reel tapes to podcasts. Effective organizations continually integrate new technologies in ways that support their missions.

At the same time, our understanding of how to best work with youth has changed over time. Youth media groups need to be learning organizations that carefully consider new ideas and technologies. Funders can invest in the development of curricula, workshops, and other educational programs.

11 **Engage new funders**

Reach out to colleagues to discuss the potential of youth media for their work. As peers, funders can have frank and open conversations about their work with youth media grantees. They can also partner with each other to establish new initiatives. Organize briefings and workshops for peers. Invite them to screenings and festivals. Involve young people in planning these events and in presenting at them.

12 **Talk with young media makers**

Program participants are wonderful—and often overlooked—resources. Seek out their input to learn how the programs impact their lives. Ask how they would like to see opportunities in youth media change or expand. Engage them in grantmaking strategy so that youth media initiatives fully meet their needs.

Young people can also inform foundation strategy by sharing their perspectives on issues that affect their lives. Listen to their views on healthcare, education, the environment, and other areas of interest to your foundation.

13 **Partner with advocacy groups to impact policy**

Young people use media to comment on political and social factors that affect their world. Their messages are compelling. Their goal is to create lasting social change. By connecting youth media grantees with advocacy and organizing groups, funders can bring social change skills to youth media organizations. The result is increased impact.

Youth Innovation Fund and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation:

YOUTH MEDIA FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

Grantee:
Youth Innovation
Fund
(Eight locations
nationally)

Funder:
The W. K. Kellogg
Foundation,
Battle Creek, MI

Grant size:
\$5 million
over 5 years

The Youth Innovation Fund, a project of the Academy for Educational Development, supports diverse groups of young people in eight communities who are working to create lasting change in their communities. Selected in 2003, each of the Youth Innovation Fund sites has formed a Youth Board, which funds and supports local youth-led civic action projects addressing root causes of pressing community issues. The Youth Innovation Fund hopes that Youth Boards will spur participation by and recognition of young people as leaders in the civic and political life of their cities.

The Youth Innovation Fund sites are using an array of strategies that include youth media, along with youth organizing, grantmaking, and partnerships. Through this initiative, the Kellogg Foundation is exploring the links between youth development and youth leadership. Bob Long, vice president for programs at the Kellogg Foundation, explains the foundation's goals.





“All of the work that we do around youth engagement is about youth being a resource in their own development and in the development of their communities. Youth development is a two-way street. In successful youth development programs, youth have real authority. They feel valued because they are valued.”

This sense of authority has spurred young people to find creative ways to use media. Youth Fund members in Nashville, Tennessee, have started www.teenedge.com, a website for youth by youth. They are using the website to collect information about Nashville public schools that will inform their campaign to improve public education.

In Portland, Oregon, the local Youth Innovation Fund is developing print and TV programming to highlight key issues in their school systems. Media products will be distributed through the Youth Innovation Fund's community partners, who have access to important decision-makers in Portland.

Young people in other communities are using a media literacy approach to involve mainstream media in addition to their youth media projects. Members of Uth/Act in Hampton, Virginia, conducted an audit of the local newspaper. They found that, while there were equal numbers of positive and negative stories about youth, the negative stories received more prominent placement and took up more

column inches. The majority of the positive stories focused on sports, not on youth community involvement. Uth/Act members decided to produce their own magazine to better convey the activities of young people in Hampton.

Kenneth Holdsman, director of the Youth Innovation Fund, explains how youth media fits into the Youth Innovation Fund's comprehensive approach. “So many youth engagement strategies are kept in silos. Organizations tend to focus on one strategy or another, whether it's youth organizing, youth development, or youth media. If young people understand all of the different strategies and tactics, they can be far more effective in their communities.”

At this writing, Youth Innovation Fund grants are only in their second year, so the results have not been documented yet. Kellogg's Bob Long expects great outcomes. “The prize we have our eye on is not only social change in individual communities. We are paying attention to the method. What happens when you give real authority to young people? How do they effectively build partnerships with other parts of the community? The initial progress is really good,” says Long.



Lessons Learned



Understand power dynamics and partnerships.

The Youth Innovation Fund sites are using youth media to have an impact on local issues. To succeed, youth media groups need to figure out whom to work with in order to get the biggest impact. They need to identify the groups and individuals with power in their communities, and then build collaborative relationships with them. Youth Innovation Fund sites in Nashville and Portland found allies who could help them disseminate their work.

Youth media is an entry point for community development.

“Youth media organizations need to be able to describe how their work makes a difference in the lives of people in their communities,” says Long. “If it is just about developing young people, it probably won’t get a funder’s attention.” Long sees youth media as an essential youth development tool that gives young people a way to take action and make change.

Build strong relationships between youth and adults in the community.

Youth media can become more effective by strengthening relationships with adults in the community. For example, a youth media effort to push for a policy change that doesn’t build relationships with key adult organizers could be seen as the enemy by those adults. The group might bring attention to their issue but they won’t have the relationships in place to achieve their larger goals. “They may win the battle but they lose the war,” says Long.

KORY McDONALD



I got into Uth/Act in my sophomore year in high school. The head of Uth/Act had come to our high school. She said that the questions that I was asking meant that I would be a good candidate for the group. I’ve grown even more into that. **Now I’m the chair of Voice Workers (Uth/Act’s youth media initiative).**

I’ve grown a lot more confident. I’ve gained a lot more friendships. I have developed a real voice in my community, something that people can recognize and respond to. I’ve contributed an enormous amount of time to what has become a passion of mine.

There are a lot of young people like me, who are growing and developing, who will hopefully become great contributors to their community.

Youth Rights Media and the Perrin Family Foundation:

YOUTH MEDIA FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

Grantee:
Youth Rights
Media,
New Haven, CT

Funder:
Perrin Family
Foundation,
Fairfield, CT

Grant size:
\$20,000
over two years

In 2001, Laura McCargar, an energetic and enterprising Yale student, produced a video called “Cops, Kids, Rights, and Respect” to educate young people involved in the juvenile justice system about their rights. McCargar saw that video production could engage even apathetic, troublesome young people, those she describes as “the kids in the back of the classroom.” The experience led her to found Youth Rights Media, and produce “Know Me” a video that challenged police audiences to reexamine their perception and treatment of youth.

Youth Rights Media creates transformative leadership opportunities for traditionally disengaged youth. Youth Rights Media’s video production and community organizing activities equip young people with tools, skills, and strategies for affecting change within themselves, their community, and Connecticut’s troubled juvenile justice system.

The group’s approach is summed up in their philosophy about the power of media: “Recognizing the extent to which media shapes and informs public perception, we





believe that youth-driven media productions not only serve as powerful teaching tools, but also afford young people a critical opportunity to exercise artistic expression and develop an independent voice in the broader public dialogue.”

David Perrin, a trustee of the Perrin Family Foundation, met McCargar in 2003. Perrin had recently become a staff member at his family’s Connecticut foundation. One of his goals was to create a social change funding stream in the foundation, which had a long and strong tradition of supporting general youth programs. Perrin began by learning about youth organizing in Connecticut. He conducted field visits with groups that worked with teens and with funders who supported social change. Through this process, he met Laura McCargar and learned about Youth Rights Media’s plan for a video about conditions inside the Connecticut Juvenile Detention Facility. Perrin was impressed, and the Perrin Family Foundation made a grant to Youth Rights Media

At that time, Connecticut’s only secure residential facility for boys 15 and under was modeled on an adult maximum security prison, although 70% of young people were placed there for nonviolent offenses. The environment was harmful to the health, safety, education, and development of youth.

The Youth Rights Media video team was given unprecedented access inside the facility. Their video would expose intolerable living situations and unsafe conditions. The young filmmakers planned screenings for both community groups and policymakers to rally support for closing the facility.

Youth Rights Media youth organizers set up their screenings across the state and called for the closing of the training school. They—and their video—were widely covered in local and national press. Just over a year later, Governor Jody Rell agreed to close the facility.

“They were a definite player in Gov. Rell’s decision to shut down the center. They experienced this victory that was beyond their dreams. They made their voice heard in a very significant way,” says Perrin.

Perrin achieved important results within his foundation as well. By funding Youth Rights Media, he began to change the culture of the foundation. The Perrin family saw concrete benefits of funding youth engagement by supporting work on specific social issues. Now the foundation is considering convening funders to discuss youth organizing and youth activism in Connecticut.



Lessons Learned



Consider impact on the audience as well as on program participants.

While movie-making is exhilarating, for the Perrin Foundation it is a means to a larger social justice goal. The foundation traditionally funded youth organizations that had a lower cost per participant. It had to establish new criteria to evaluate the impact of Youth Rights Media's work. "We've always tried to reach the largest number of students for the least amount of money. The challenge was to realize the power of media in engaging youth, not just the young people who are making the video, but the ones who watch it as well," said David Perrin.

Changing culture requires a leap of faith.

"There was a lot of trust on the part of our board of directors, particularly on the part of my parents, that we were funding a model of youth engagement rather than one particular issue," says Perrin.

Be willing to learn from young people.

As Perrin researched youth social justice organizations around Connecticut, he met with young people, not just adult staff members. "Being a young person myself, I tried to build on a common vocabulary to get those conversations started," says Perrin. He was able to hear about their hopes, dreams, frustrations, and challenges. He sought their input in his work.

Work in partnership with grantees.

The Perrin Foundation approached McCargar as a partner. The two organizations were able to learn from and with each other. "McCargar's openness enables philanthropists to develop a stake beyond their financial investment," says Perrin.

Become advocates for the work.

Funders have access to different communities than their grantees, such as foundation affinity groups. David Perrin shares his experiences working with Youth Rights Media at national conferences and meetings with peers.

ERIKA BROWN



When Erika Brown was in her junior year of high school she was recruited by Youth Rights Media to teach her peers about their legal rights and about interactions with police. One of her early projects was producing the film "Know Me," which is still used to train New Haven police officers.

Erika knows that the project changed her life. "I got so much out of it; knowing what accountability is and what responsibility is, being able to stand up for what I know is right, learning how to work through things and not let things hold me back, focusing on career goals."

Today, when Erika is on break from college, she comes back to help teach at Youth Rights Media. "Youth Rights Media makes a difference on so many levels. The films mentor and preach to thousands. The training institutes train various inner city youth to be productive and channel what is going on in their lives into something positive," she says.

Pacific News Service and the Surdna and Stuart Foundations: YOUTH MEDIA FOR YOUTH VOICE

Grantee:
Pacific News
Service,
San Francisco, CA

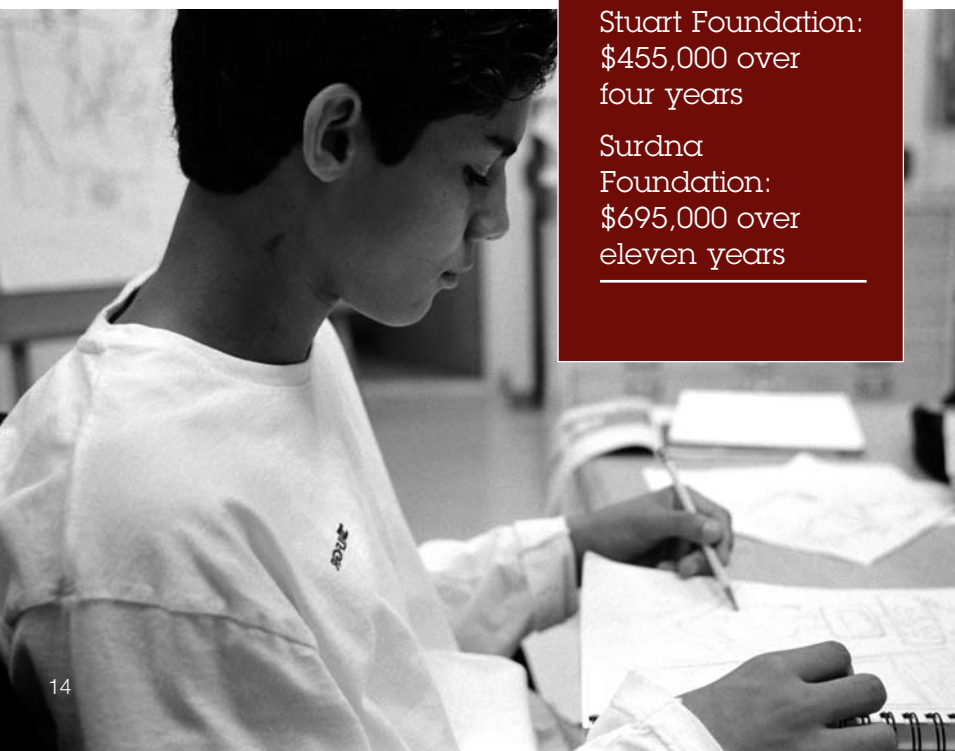
Funders:
Stuart Foundation,
San Francisco, CA
Surdna
Foundation,
New York, NY

Grant size:
Stuart Foundation:
\$455,000 over
four years

Surdna
Foundation:
\$695,000 over
eleven years

Pacific News Service (PNS) founded *Youth Outlook* magazine in 1991. Since then, PNS has worked to bolster youth voices and bring the opinions and perspectives of young people into the public eye. Today, PNS creates forums for the most marginal and invisible sectors of youth culture—from juvenile hall detainees to homeless, immigrant and minority teenagers. In addition to *Youth Outlook*, Pacific News Service publishes *Afghan Journal*, started by an 18-year-old Afghan immigrant; *The Beat Within*, written by young people in the juvenile justice system; *Roaddawgz*, written by homeless youth; and *De-Bug*, launched by young community organizers.

Youth Outlook produces timely and influential stories built on youth experience. In one case, a young staff person chronicled his experience as a soldier in Iraq. His story ran in *Youth Outlook* and the *San Francisco Chronicle*. In another case, young reporters flew to Paris to cover rioting by disenfranchised young immigrants in France. Their reports added new insight to U.S. discussions of the riots.





“We are most interested in working with kids from marginalized situations so that they can get a sense of themselves and figure out that their voice is worth something. They learn that they can affect people with their own stories,” says *Youth Outlook* editor Kevin Weston.

By any standard, *Youth Outlook* has been very successful. It is delivered to 80% of high schools in the San Francisco Bay area. Its website has won a Webby Award, an international award honoring excellence in web design, creativity, usability, and functionality. It has partnership agreements with the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the *Oakland Tribune*, and the local WB affiliate. Through its reach, *Youth Outlook* has been able to influence mainstream journalism. “We’ve shown the local press that we can scoop them,” says Weston.

The Beat Within, PNS’s writing program and publication for incarcerated youth, also has been effective both by working with young people in juvenile detention and by reaching important audiences. *The Beat Within* is written by juvenile detention residents in California. When a series of news stories about scandals in the California juvenile detention system broke, these young writers found themselves in a position of influence. Policymakers, practitioners, community leaders, and service providers all wanted their perspectives on the current problems and opportunities for reform. Through their writing, the young people had already developed positions on the issues. By sharing these opinions, they were able to shape policies that affect their lives. While Governor Schwarzenegger has begun to make reforms, *The Beat Within* writers are continuing to push for more change.

PNS has won support for its work from a range of foundations including some that support traditional

youth development programs and others that support social justice initiatives. The Stuart Foundation, a major funder of *Youth Outlook*, is oriented towards youth development. The foundation invests in children and youth through three program areas: public schools, child welfare, and youth and communities. Looking through a youth development lens, the foundation considers youth media to be an effective way to build assets, create connections with adults, build self-esteem and reduce risky behaviors.

According to Rhonnel Sotelo, senior program officer of the Youth & Communities Program, PNS gives the foundation an opportunity to consider impact on the audience as well as on the program participants. Youth voice is an essential part of this equation. He adds, “PNS helps young people think beyond what is probable to what is possible.”

The Surdna Foundation is also a longtime supporter. The foundation is interested in the civic engagement of young people and in the links between civic engagement and youth development. Looking through a social justice lens, Surdna saw youth voice as a key to engaging young people in social justice. Program officer Jee Kim says “Young people need the capacity to make their voices heard by the broader public and by each other. While still too young to vote, young people can advocate for themselves using youth media as their megaphone.”

Youth Outlook was the first Surdna grantee in the youth media field. Today the foundation is an important player in the field. “We were looking for an authentic community voice to harness the passions of young people,” says program director Robert Sherman. Through its support, Surdna is giving young people the opportunity to use their voices to shape public debate while they build their own identities, self-esteem, and skills.



Lessons Learned



Funders need patience and flexibility.

Pacific News Service and other youth media groups prepare young people to speak about complex issues and sophisticated policies. When any group, whether youth or adult, takes on this type of challenge, there are unexpected twists and turns. There are often setbacks before there are any great accomplishments. For the young people, the setbacks can be part of the process of becoming seasoned and effective social justice activists. What may be perceived as a failure in one aspect is often a success in other aspects.

There are limited strategies for quantifying and assessing impact.

Grantees have a hard time when philanthropies put them in a position of attributing change to funders' grants. Funders could support the development of evaluation tools by building consensus around best practices.

Partner with your grantee through your grantmaking process.

Foundations can support the growth and development of their grantees by providing multiyear core operating support rather than only funding specific programs.

Respond quickly to new opportunities in the field.

Media happens on a daily basis, and media organizations need to be able to respond promptly. The Stuart Foundation's grants program provides a limited amount of its resources to be processed quickly to capitalize on situations where its grantees can respond to current events in a timely fashion. Youth Outlook requested and received one of these grants to support sending young people to cover breaking news stories about youth-led riots in Paris in November, 2005.

SWAN GRAY



Swan Gray has written stories about everything from new music groups to boyfriends that become stalkers to the violent murder of a friend. The 22-year-old began working at YO! when she was fifteen. “Being at YO! has created a career for me,” says Swan. “At the same time I’m helping others get their names out and getting issues out that need to be discussed. I feel like I really make a difference.”

Swan credits *Youth Outlook* with enormous, positive changes in her life. “They teach you to decide what you want and then go out and get it. If you want the story you have to go get it,” she says. Her sense of direction and ambition is all the more valuable to her when she considers the alternative. “Without YO!, I would be struggling in that I wouldn’t be able to get a job. If I did get a job, it would not be a job that would uplift me. I would be in a place where I feel stuck. And I would be struggling like most of the young people out here are doing.”



Educational Video Center and the Ford Foundation:

YOUTH MEDIA FOR EDUCATION REFORM

Grantee:
Educational
Video Center,
New York, NY

Funder:
Ford Foundation,
New York, NY

Grant size:
\$40,000

Educational Video Center (EVC) was founded by Steve Goodman, a leader in developing and promoting youth media as a vehicle for education reform. EVC works with New York City public schools to teach high school students to make video documentaries about issues that affect their lives.

EVC marked the fiftieth anniversary of *Brown vs. the Board of Education* by inviting its young documentary makers to explore the legacy of the historic Supreme Court decision. EVC students investigated the issue and decided to focus on school reform, which they considered to be a critical civil rights issue for their generation. They identified two youth-led organizations that were working to start alternative schools in New York City. The two organizations, Make the Road by Walking in Brooklyn and Sistas and Brothas United in the Bronx, became the focus of this documentary.





EVC's plan attracted the interest of Cyrus Driver, deputy director for education programs at the Ford Foundation. "We were looking for projects that would be illuminating and could bring Brown vs. the Board of Education into the public discourse. This was the only student-driven project that we supported," says Driver. Ford made a grant of \$40,000. It was the first grant the project received, and Goodman was able to use the news of this grant to interest other funders.

EVC students met with youth organizers from Make the Road by Walking and Sistas and Brothas United and attended their meetings in order to understand the issues. The resulting video, *Actions of Today, Blueprints for Tomorrow*, examined the challenges of youth organizing around school reform. It explored the struggles and successes of the two groups as they built support for alternative schools.

The video became an important tool for the youth organizers in Make the Road by Walking and Sistas and Brothas United, who hold screenings to recruit members and to educate and engage their communities.

Cyrus Driver saw additional benefits in the video. "While reading and math—the focus of education in many urban schools these days—remain essential, students need a more well-rounded education that will enable them to effectively participate and lead their communities. EVC's projects help students develop skills and

find the voice needed to participate," says Driver. *Actions of Today, Blueprints for Tomorrow* demonstrates to both adults and students that they can use their education to impact their communities and to educate and empower others.

Goodman has tracked the many ways that video production can offer alternatives to conventional structures and approaches to schooling.

- Unlike assignments in traditional classrooms, the process of creating a video documentary is collaborative and hands-on, and invites participation by students with diverse learning styles and levels of literacy. It is a model for new ways of teaching and learning.
- Through video production, the community becomes a laboratory for learning. Students get out of their classrooms and learn from a wide range of people and places.
- Making a video is real work for real audiences. Students create something meaningful for use in their community, whether the topic is school reform, military recruitment, or undocumented immigrants.
- The products that students make become a text for other students to view and learn from. This validates their knowledge, perspective, and voice.



Lessons Learned



Showing impact is difficult.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to document the social change impact of a video. The EVC video has been shown across the city and circulated nationally. It has been used by the featured organizations to recruit new members and build support. But there are not quantitative measures to show impact. “Although we don’t know the specific impacts the film has on fostering measurable social change, we do know that the film has proved to be effective in documenting the power of youth organizing for school reform,” says Driver.

Youth media organizations are small, local, and personal.

EVC offers an intimate, personal experience for every student. While funders recognize the value of the experience, Driver wonders how EVC’s work can have a broader impact on education systems. EVC impact is growing. The organization has recently expanded its professional development institutes to reach teachers in New York City, the San Francisco Bay area, and Seattle.

Small grants can catalyze major funding if the timing is right.

Ford was the first funder to make a grant for *Actions of Today, Blueprints for Tomorrow*. Ford’s grant funded only part of the work, but their early commitment to the project made it

possible for EVC to interest other funders, including JPMorgan Chase, the Tides Foundation, and the Janet Stone Jones Foundation. “When they saw Ford as one of our funders, it validated what we were doing,” says Goodman.

Youth media offers strategies for educating young people who don’t learn well in traditional settings.

“Funders are not always aware of the process behind the product. It needs to be unpacked,” says Goodman. “For this tape, kids needed to learn about history, then they needed to learn how to conduct interviews and ask questions and revise their questions. And they needed to learn to work in a group, tell a story, make an argument. Then they are creating

something that will be used in the community, so they need to learn to talk about it and lead discussions and become public speakers. A lot of that is invisible from just looking at the documentary.”

Youth media projects can reconnect students to schools and help them see the value of schooling.

“EVC’s project-based interdisciplinary curriculum excites kids about schooling and in some instances motivates them to finish their high school education,” says Driver. “Through youth media, students who may not perceive themselves as artistic can pick up a camera and begin to tell a story through their own eyes and words.”

CHRISTINE MENDOZA



When Christine Mendoza joined EVC’s Documentary Workshop at age 16, she didn’t believe she would live to see her 21st birthday.

She was skipping school, hanging out with the wrong crowd and getting in trouble. Today, at 24, Christine is working full-time at EVC after graduating college with honors. And she is preparing to start a masters program in ethnic conflict resolution at Queens College in Belfast, Ireland.

“At EVC I was given the opportunity to change myself, which is not common,” Christine says. “I had an opportunity to express myself, learn new skills, meet new people, and have a relationship with an adult that wasn’t a negative experience. People trusted me. It gave me the self-esteem to elevate myself.”

Open Society Institute:**BUILDING THE YOUTH MEDIA FIELD**

Grantees:
Multiple

Funder:
Open Society
Institute,
New York, NY

Grant size:
\$11.5 million
over seven years

Open Society Institute began funding the field of youth media in 1998. Over seven years, the foundation invested a total of \$11.5 million to youth media organizations, intermediaries, and research. As OSI became more knowledgeable about youth media, the foundation decided to focus its resources on building the field and making it sustainable.

“From the beginning we knew we were going to exit the field in a set number of years,” says Erlin Ibreck, OSI’s director of Youth Initiatives. “We were able to plan for it from the beginning. That’s a rare opportunity in the foundation world.”

When OSI began working in youth media, the foundation found a group of organizations, frequently started by independent journalists that were building projects involving youth. The groups were diverse and disconnected. There were no metrics to guide program evaluation. Some groups had begun to think about best practices and links to youth development, but others were still nurturing programs through their infancies. Distribution was a challenge left unaddressed by many.





“There was no notion of a field,” says OSI program officer Anna Lefer. “Some individuals were sharing information and exchanging ideas, but there was no network to link groups across the board.”

The 1990’s offered youth media organizations both opportunity and challenge. On one hand, the explosion of digital media made the technology accessible to a much larger number of organizations. New youth media groups sprang up, able to purchase equipment that was once unaffordable. The growth of the Internet also allowed groups to share their work with wider audiences.

At the same time, several factors made it difficult for youth media groups to attract the financial support they needed to expand. There was an increasing focus among youth workers and policy makers on positive youth development. This focus led funders to direct grants to the organizations that could reach the largest numbers of young people. Youth media organizations were seen as resource-intensive organizations that only served a limited number of kids.

Advocacy-oriented funders at first seemed a natural fit for many youth media organizations where young people made media about the social issues that affected their lives. But these funders were skeptical. More accustomed to funding larger advocacy initiatives that targeted specific policy reform, they were tentative about funding the less-focused work created by youth.

At first OSI focused on building capacity of existing programs and seeding new programs. Over time, lbreck and Lefer saw the potential to support the growth and development of a unified field. “We saw that this was a sphere that could have impact beyond the local level. It could influence channels

of distribution, youth development, education. Its impact could be collective and system-wide,” says lbreck. OSI began connecting grantees to existing intermediaries like NAMAC. They funded the National Federation of Community Broadcasters and Generation PRX, a project of Public Radio Exchange, and other organizations that offer resources, distribution opportunities, and networking for youth media groups.

On this foundation, lbreck and Lefer began crafting a strategy to build the field. They funded intermediaries, which can offer professional networks for distribution and partnership; hosted convenings to bring youth media organizations together; established Youth Media Reporter, an online newsletter to share information and best practices; and encouraged the development of the Youth Media Learning Network, to facilitate professional development. OSI staff also invested time cultivating allies to ensure that other funders would understand and support the work.

Through the investment of OSI and others, and through the growing reputation of many youth media organizations, the field has grown substantially.

Today, there are intermediaries that are interested in youth media and play an active role in building capacity and sharing good models. Disparate organizations around the country are finding commonalities that enable them to learn and grow together. Mainstream journalists are looking to youth media organizations as experts on youth issues. Groups within the field have developed curricula to replicate their programs. *Youth Media Reporter* has become a widely-read vehicle for people to learn about the field.



Lessons Learned



The field of youth media needs champions.

Funders, young people, youth development, and youth media professionals must be willing to promote, nurture, and represent the field. These champions can build interest in and support for youth media in a variety of settings.

Youth media doesn't fit into traditional foundation silos.

Many foundations work in silos. Youth media is a cross-cutting venture that intersects with a variety of program areas, such as journalism, youth development, youth organizing, and media arts. Funders need to recognize and appreciate the connections between youth media and their existing program areas.

Practitioners need opportunities for leadership development.

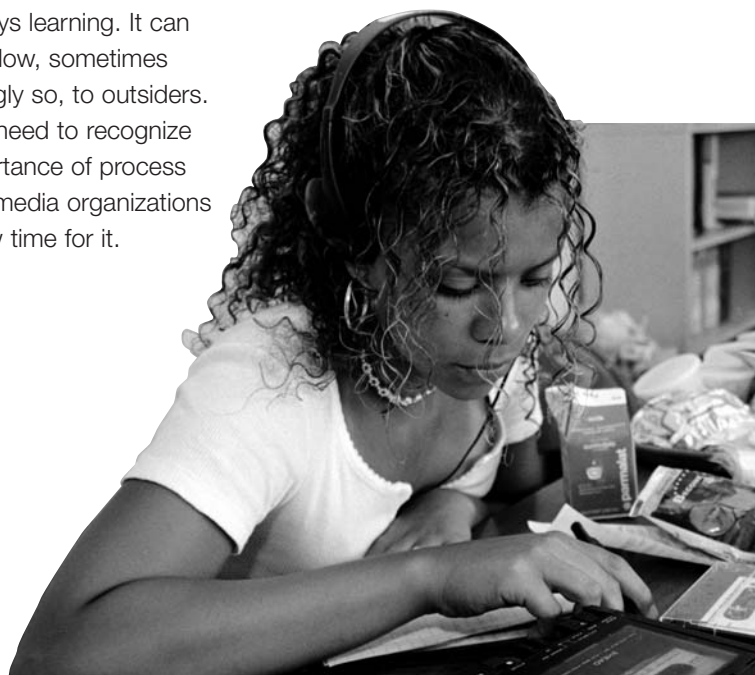
These opportunities haven't been readily available. Funders can support the field by underwriting cross-cutting initiatives such as professional institutes or exchanges.

Process plays a big role.

Many youth media organizations define their success by the careful processes that they have developed for working with young people. The process is as important as the final media product that is produced. This leads to a culture that is open to change, responsive to input, and always learning. It can also be slow, sometimes frustratingly so, to outsiders. Funders need to recognize the importance of process in youth media organizations and allow time for it.

New forms of media are creating new distribution opportunities.

From iPods to digital video to cell phones, opportunities for distribution keep changing and growing. Youth media organizations will need funding to adapt to and integrate these new channels into their work.



**We the People Media and
Polk Brothers Foundation:**

YOUTH MEDIA FOR BETTER JOURNALISM

Grantee:

We the People
Media,
Chicago, IL

Funder:

Polk Brothers
Foundation,
Chicago, IL

Grant:

\$40,000
over two years

Residents' Journal was launched in 1996 to improve communication with residents in Chicago's public housing system. *Residents' Journal* is a bi-monthly magazine written, produced, and distributed entirely by Chicago public housing residents. It is distributed for free to all of the city's 35,000 public housing households. In 2000, when the Chicago Housing Authority cut off funding for *Residents' Journal*, We the People Media was formed to continue the publication.

Since its inauguration, *Residents' Journal* has been at the forefront of the debate over the future of public housing and social services for the poor. Early on, adult residents decided that it was important to involve young people to ensure that their perspectives were part of the coverage and to create the next generation of journalists from low-income communities.

Their interest led publisher Ethan Michaeli to create the Urban Youth Journalism Program to teach journalism skills to young people living in public housing in Chicago. Young people who join the program are





guided through completion of a Journalism 101 course, after which they can write articles and gain real world work experience as freelance writers for the youth section of *Residents' Journal*. Advanced students learn about the function of media in democracy and gain broadcasting techniques in the Journalism 201 course. More than 125 young people have completed these courses. Today, 25% of *Residents' Journal* is written by young people.

The Urban Youth Journalism Program is funded by the Polk Brothers Foundation, a Chicago-based family foundation. "It helps youth develop life skills; skills that make them employable. It also allows them to address issues that concern them and then go out and give voice to those issues," says program officer Evette Cardona.

Following a curriculum rich in communications skills and the principles of the Constitution's First Amendment, participants leave the program with the skills and contacts necessary to continue their education at a college level. Their training and experiences in writing, researching, editing, and analyzing information prepare them for higher education and interesting careers.

Michaeli points to success stories like James Lockhart to describe the impact of the program. James joined Urban Youth Journalism in 1998. He had grown up on the streets in Minneapolis before moving with his family to the Cabrini Green housing development. A poised and intelligent young man, James was heavily recruited by gangs in the neighborhood. Instead of joining a gang, James wrote for *Residents' Journal*, graduated high school, and went on to Morehouse College. Today he is attending medical school at Northwestern University. James says that Urban Youth Journalism Program gave him the imagination to see that he could become a doctor, and the skills and confidence he needed to pursue this goal.

"I judge my success by what we've been able to do with kids. I'm not crushed when they don't go into journalism as long as they are engaged in something productive and positive," says Michaeli.



Lessons Learned



Judge youth media groups by the quality of services, not the quantity of youth served.

Funders need to look at the depth, quality, and number of hours the program devotes to each youth rather than at the total number of youth served. The Polk Foundation saw this in the Urban Youth Journalism Program, which meets daily and requires a serious commitment from its participants. The Polk Brothers Foundation considered the fact that We the People staff members spend 12-15 hours with each young person during the journalism courses. Youth media organizations confront a challenging funding environment. “If you get past the

‘we don’t fund media but we fund youth’ litmus test, then you get the ‘I’ve got ten programs that are working with 100 or 200 youth’ problem,” says Cardona.

Recognize the powerful role of media in communities.

Funders need to consider the role of media in the lives of the communities they seek to serve. “The disadvantaged communities we are serving with our grant-making are very influenced by media. Our funding could be used to make the residents informed media consumers, which goes a long way towards improving their quality of life,” says Cardona.

Media is the textbook of the future.

Young people consider media to be an essential tool for learning and communicating. Funders need to appreciate the role of media for this generation of youth and invest in it. “Media is the vehicle through which youth learn today, so funding youth media makes sense,” says Cardona.

CRYSTAL MEDINA



At age 16, Crystal Medina signed up to be part of the first class of the Urban Youth Journalism Program. Growing up in Chicago’s public housing projects, Crystal was searching for a sense of purpose. “I always knew I wanted to continue my education, but this gave me direction,” she says. “It makes you want to keep learning. That’s what journalism is about; learning and getting information from different outlets.”

Today, Crystal writes an advice column for *Residents’ Journal* as well as a column called “Positive People,” which highlights people doing good deeds.

Video Machete and Time Warner:**YOUTH MEDIA FOR ART****Grantee:**

Video Machete,
Chicago, IL

Funder:

Time Warner Inc.
Office of Corporate
Responsibility,
New York, NY

Grant:

\$130,750

Video Machete was founded 12 years ago as a study group for young artists and activists who wanted to look at policy issues affecting their community. Today the program works with immigrant and first-generation American youth in Chicago public schools, which have the highest concentration of Mexican immigrants in all of the Midwest, teaching them to use video cameras to share their stories and study issues that affect their lives.

“We feel that immigrant communities, communities of color, and low income communities are often distorted or erased from mainstream media. We give them space to produce their own media,” says Demetrio Maguigad of Video Machete. “Through the pieces that the young people work on, they gain a deep ownership of Video Machete and of the world itself. This makes the process even stronger,” he adds.

Video Machete’s Global Youth Program matches elementary schools with high schools, bringing teachers together to work as a team to assess the needs of families





and youth in the community and at school. The teams work as combined arts and education councils to reinforce both disciplines.

For example, Video Machete is working with Telpochcalli elementary school in Little Village and with Jones College Prep. Telpochcalli has the highest concentration of Mexican immigrants in all of the Midwest, while Jones College Prep is a public magnet school. The schools developed a shared theme of arts action and Latino identity.

Students at Jones College Prep are producing four videos about young women disappearing along the Mexican border, the history of colonization, Latinos in the Chicago public school system, and Latinos in hip-hop. The elementary school students are exploring their personal connections to media by producing videos about their favorite artists. “We focus on creativity and message,” says Maguigad.

Video Machete facilitators give their students aesthetic challenges to encourage creative thinking. They also help students connect local issues and community awareness in their work. A recent group of students was asked to produce a public service announcement without showing any faces. Another group produced a documentary about the need for summer employment options for young people.

Time Warner has funded Video Machete since 2003. The company supports youth media and creative arts organizations that engage young

people in the process of creating media and art not only to develop their own voices but also to develop important learning and life skills. “We fund organizations that are engaging young people in media as a way to develop skills they need to be effective in work, at home, and in school,” says Luis Castro, director, Arts Development, at Time Warner. Video Machete helps young people develop skills in critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and analysis.

In addition to awarding Video Machete a two-year program grant, Time Warner has funded Video Machete to help them to build their capacity to evaluate programs. They distribute pre- and post-questionnaires at their programs and use logic models to measure impact. As part of its evaluation process, Video Machete sets goals before beginning each program. They use logic models to measure impact at the end of each project. Their approach is both qualitative and quantitative. “Being on the ground, there are things that you see or hear from your participants that can’t be documented or quantified. You see a change in their language or a change in their attitude,” says Maguigad.

Castro describes Video Machete as a hands-on organization with strong relationships between the instructors and the youth involved in the program. Maguigad agrees. “Not only are youth changed after a program, but we at Video Machete are as well,” he says.



Lessons Learned



Consider which aspect of youth media you want to support.

Youth media can enhance many areas of focus including youth development, artistic development, career development, and community engagement. As you review proposals, carefully consider how youth media fits into your program goals.

Evaluation should be an integral part of the program, not an add-on at the end.

Evaluation is most useful when it is integrated into the program from the outset. Video Machete establishes goals at the beginning of each project, then measures against them. “Funders want to know results,” says Maguigad.



RANDY MAGUIGAD



I joined Video Machete three years ago. We do lots of multimedia stuff: audio documentaries, video productions, digital diaries. Last summer I did a PSA on stereotypes and a short film on identity. Being part of Video Machete has really opened my eyes to a lot of things like corruption in immigration and politics. It has helped me get more focused about what I want to do. I want to be a social worker some day.

This year I got hired by Video Machete to co-facilitate a program in an elementary school. We taught 7th and 8th graders how to use media. A few of them had total attitude changes. One kid used to be a bad kid, but being part of the program, he totally changed. He was proud of his work. He was able to show off his work to his parents. I loved the look on his face when he saw that his parents were proud.

Guidance for Grantmakers

The process of evaluating youth media proposals presents unique challenges. Since few foundations have youth media programs, it is rare for a foundation to have internal guidelines for assessing youth media.

This checklist identifies six frequently asked questions about youth media proposals. These questions are meant to be guidelines. Every question will not apply to every youth media organization or every foundation. You may choose to use this list as is or alter it to suit the particular needs of your foundation.

Does this project fit within the mission of the foundation?

This is the question first and foremost in the mind of any program officer. If the subject matter, the role of young people in the work, and the intended impact of the project all match foundation goals, it is a proposal worth reviewing.

Is the process developmental for young people?

Youth media is more than individual young people posting their videos on the Internet. Great youth media projects are created when groups of young people, guided by adults, find creative ways to use media to add their voices to public discussion. For young people, the process builds skills, confidence, and sense of purpose. The proposal should describe the project's impact on young media makers.

Does the project communicate youth perspective, opinion, or experience?

The project should convey the authentic views and voices of young people. The messages should be both developed and executed by young people. The proposal should discuss the role organization staff will play in helping young people find their own voices. The organization should have a track record of media products that communicate youth perspective, opinion, and voice.

Is there a clear audience for the project and a distribution plan to reach that audience?

The proposal should clearly and specifically define the audience for the project. The audience for a particular project might be residents of one neighborhood, children in foster care, or Central American immigrants. The proposal should explain why the particular project is appropriate for the particular audience. The proposal should include a specific plan for distributing the media project. That plan should show:

- Who will see it
- Where they will see it
- When they will see it
- How they will learn about it.

Is there a community organizing strategy as part of this project?

If the youth media project has social change as part of its goal, the proposal should include information showing how the project will be used for social change. For example, the organization may propose starting a speakers' bureau or a community organizing program to maximize the impact of their product.

How will you evaluate the project?

There is not one easy way to evaluate the impact of a youth media product. Working on a youth media project can affect young people's education, relationships with adults and peers, and career choices. The final products can also affect the way the audience thinks about important issues in their lives. The youth media field is beginning to identify research protocols and strategies for evaluation. You will need to work in partnership with your grantee to develop a way to measure the impact of the program.

Resources

This resource list provides a range of resources for funders who want to learn more about ways to fund youth media. It is by no means exhaustive, nor is it meant to limit consideration of many worthy projects, organizations, and initiatives that cannot be listed here.

YOUTH MEDIA ORGANIZATIONS

PRINT

Children's PressLine, New York, NY

www.cplmedia.org

Children's PressLine seeks the unique insights and perspectives of children and brings them to the forefront of national discussions. It aims to provide a link between children's issues and the general public, legislators, and policy makers.

LA Youth, Los Angeles, CA

www.layouth.com

Published six times a year, *LA Youth* is a newspaper that addresses the needs and concerns of teens in the Los Angeles area.

Vox Teen Communications, Atlanta, GA

www.youthcommunication-vox.org

VOX Teen Communications is a nonprofit youth-development organization dedicated to raising youth voice. Through VOX, teenagers from around Atlanta work together, share information, develop skills, and express themselves by creating VOX teen newspaper and website. The organization is managed through a youth-adult partnership.

Pacific News Service, San Francisco, CA

www.pacificnews.org

www.youthoutlook.org

PNS, a network of media makers of diverse races, ages, and ethnic backgrounds, publishes several youth publications including *YO!*, a monthly journal of life in the Bay Area, and *The Beat Within*, a publication of writings from juvenile halls.

Teen Voices, Boston, MA

www.teenvoices.com

Teen Voices magazine and its companion web magazine, *Teen Voices Online*, are written by, for, and about teenage girls and have an editorial board consisting of youth.

We the People Media, Chicago, IL

www.wethepeoplemedia.org

We the People Media's Urban Youth Journalism Program broadens the intellectual,

educational, and career horizons of youths who live in public housing and other low-income neighborhoods by training them to communicate their perspectives and priorities in print news and feature articles that appear in *Residents' Journal*.

Y-Press, Indianapolis, IN

www.ypress.org

Housed at The Indianapolis Star, Y-Press is a youth-driven organization that gives children a voice in the world through journalism. Members build communication skills by producing stories with a youth perspective.

Youth Communication, New York, NY

www.youthcomm.org

Youth Communication works with teenagers to develop their skills in reading, writing, thinking, and reflection, and to produce two magazines, *Represent*, for and by youth in foster care, and *New Youth Connections*, a general interest teen magazine.

RADIO

Blunt Youth Radio Project, Portland, ME

www.bluntradio.org

The Blunt Youth Radio Project produces an hour-long weekly public affairs program that is hosted and produced entirely by local teenagers. Their outreach programs include a radio-training program for incarcerated youth.

Generation PRX

www.generation.prx.org

Generation PRX, a new project of Public Radio Exchange (PRX), advocates for youth radio and works to explore new channels for distribution.

Latin American Youth Center,

Washington, DC

www.layc-dc.org

YouthRadio DC is a joint program of the Latin American Youth Center and Youth Radio that brings the voice of DC youth to national audiences. *YouthRadio DC* promotes young people's intellectual, creative, and professional growth through training and hands-on production experience.

Radio Arte, Chicago, IL

www.wrte.org

Radio Arte, a project of the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum, is an all-youth produced bilingual community radio station that trains and encourages youth to develop self-expression through the broadcast medium.

Radio Rookies, New York, NY

www.wnyc.org/radiorookies

Radio Rookies is a WNYC program that trains young people to use words and sounds to tell true stories about themselves, their community, and the world. Through a series of workshops, each held in a new neighborhood, *Radio Rookies* gives teenagers the tools to become radio journalists.

Youth Radio, Berkeley, CA

www.youthradio.org

Youth Radio promotes young people's intellectual, creative, and professional growth through training and access to media. Through hands-on practice, working relationships with industry professionals, and production of award-winning programming, Youth Radio students learn the basics of broadcasting.

WEB/MULTIMEDIA

Wiretap, San Francisco, CA

www.wiretapmag.org

Wiretap, an Altnet.org-sponsored online magazine, is an independent information source created by and for socially conscious youth. It showcases youth-produced writing and artwork, fosters youth activism, and promotes youth perspectives in the media.

Youth Innovation Fund, New York, NY

www.theyouthfund.org

The Youth Innovation Fund seeks approaches to civic issues and problems that involve new ways of thinking, new methods of action, and higher levels of youth ownership and sustainability over time. Several sites incorporate youth media.

VIDEO/TV

Appalshop-Appalachian Media Institute, Whitesburg, KY
www.appalshop.org/ami

Based at *Appalshop*, the Appalachian Media Institute is an intensive media literacy and television and radio production program that encourages youth to ask, and begin to answer, critical questions of themselves and their communities.

Downtown Community Television Center, New York, NY
www.dctvny.org

DCTV is dedicated to the belief that expanding public access to the electronic media arts invigorates democracy. Through grassroots media education, DCTV teaches young people and emerging artists within low-income and minority communities to produce insightful and artistic television.

Educational Video Center, New York, NY
www.evc.org

EVC is a community-based media center that teaches documentary video production and media analysis to youth, educators, and community organizers.

Global Action Project, New York, NY
www.global-action.org

Global Action Project, Inc. is a media arts organization that provides training in video production and new media technologies for youth both locally and internationally.

MNN Youth Channel, New York, NY
www.youthchannel.org

MNN Youth Channel is an alternative to mass media that was created to provide equal access to New York City's young people, regardless of ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or social status. It strives to build confidence, establish role models, inform, educate, and entertain.

Spy Hop Productions, Salt Lake City, UT
www.spyhop.org

Spy Hop Productions is a youth media center specializing in utilizing multimedia arts to cultivate the visions and voices of an emerging generation via the big screen, the airwaves, and the World Wide Web.

Street-Level, Chicago, IL
www.street-level.org

Street-Level Youth Media educates Chicago's inner-city youth in media arts and emerging

technologies for use in self-expression, communication, and social change. Using video production, computer art, and the Internet, young people address community issues, access advanced technology, and gain inclusion in our information-based society.

Video Machete, Chicago, IL
www.videomachete.org

Through multimedia, video production, and alternative press, Video Machete supports youth as they explore and document the stories and perspectives of communities that are ignored by mainstream media.

Youth Rights Media
www.youthrightsmedia.org

YRM engages youth in video media production and community organizing so that young people are equipped with tools, skills, and strategies for effecting change within themselves, their communities, and Connecticut's deeply troubled juvenile justice system.

MEDIA, OUTREACH, DISTRIBUTION & RESOURCES

Youth Media Reporter
www.ymreporter.org

Youth Media Reporter is a web journal hosted by Academy for Educational Development's Youth Innovation Fund. Designed as a forum for stakeholders in the youth media field, *YMR* discusses emerging ideas, trends, and practices, to help deepen and extend knowledge about the developing youth media field.

Youth Media Learning Network
Contacts: Steven Goodman, EVC Executive Director, Sgoodman@evc.org
Tony Streit, Director of EDC/YouthLearn Tstreit@edc.org

The Youth Media Learning Network offers peer institutes to bring together youth media practitioners in forums where they can learn from one another. The Learning Network hones leadership skills and disseminates best practices in the field.

Listen Up!, New York, NY
www.listenup.org

Listen Up! offers a network of resources and opportunities to over 70 youth media organizations nationwide whose young media makers are producing stereotype-challenging messages for the "America's Youth Speak Out" public service campaign.

National Alliance of Media Arts & Culture, San Francisco, CA
www.namac.org

NAMAC is a nonprofit association composed of diverse member organizations that are dedicated to encouraging film, video, audio, and online/multimedia arts, and to promoting the cultural contributions of individual media artists. NAMAC houses a Youth Media Initiative.

National Federation of Community Broadcasters, Oakland, CA
www.nfcb.org

NFCB is a grassroots organization of non-commercial, educational, public radio stations that are distinguished by their community support, control, and programming. NFCB hosts a National Youth in Radio Training Program for over one hundred youth radio producers and practitioners at its annual conference.

P.O.V.'s Youth Views, New York, NY
www.pbs.org/pov/utis/youthviews.html

A project of PBS's POV documentary series, Youth Views is a peer-led initiative, offering new models for working with youth and the media to encourage civic engagement at youth-serving and issue-based organizations across the country.

Radio & Television News Directors Foundation, Washington, DC
www.rtndf.org/

RTNDF's High School Journalism Program looks to strengthen scholastic broadcast journalism programs by fostering collaborations between educators and professional journalists.

Student Press Law Center, Arlington, VA
www.splc.org/

The center is the only legal assistance agency in the United States that is devoted exclusively to educating high school and college journalists about their First Amendment rights and responsibilities.

Third Coast International Audio Festival, Chicago, IL
www.thirdcoastfestival.org/

TCIAF is a radio festival that provides a venue for producers of documentary and feature reporting from around the globe to share expertise and to excite a new generation of artists and journalists.

Wide Angle Community Media

www.wideanglemedia.org

Wide Angle partners with community groups, providing them with media education and resources, to communicate their perspectives and amplify their voices.

YMDi.org, New York, NY

www.ymdi.org

YMDi.org, a project of Mediarights.org, works to improve the distribution of independent youth-created film, video, radio, and new media by providing information and tools that are essential to increasing the visibility of youth-made media.

Youth Media Council, Oakland CA

www.youthmediacouncil.org

The Youth Media Council is a youth organizing, leadership development, media capacity-building, and watchdog project dedicated to amplifying the public voice of marginalized youth and their communities.

YouthLearn, New York, NY

www.youthlearn.org

The YouthLearn website offers information and links about how media-making supports youth development, and how youth media organizations and practitioners are promoting media literacy, community engagement, and 21st-century learning.

READING MATERIALS

Book: Teaching Youth Media: A Critical Guide to Literacy, Video Production and Social Change by Steven Goodman

This book explores the power of using media education to help urban teenagers develop their critical thinking and literacy skills. Drawing on twenty years of experience working with youth at the acclaimed Educational Video Center (EVC) in New York City, Steven Goodman looks at both the problems and possibilities of this model of media education. Available for purchase at: www.evc.org/publications/teaching.html

Report: A Closer Look: Media Arts 2003 by NAMAC

This report showcases youth media organizations nationwide that are developing successful new models, solving problems or meeting organizational challenges in new and innovative ways. Topics for organizational case

studies in *A Closer Look 2003* include the use of youth media for conflict resolution after riots, a longitudinal look at community building, and extending youth media production to peer leadership and organizing efforts. Available for purchase at:

www.namac.org

Report: Insight: Turning the Leadership Corner by Grantmakers for Children, Youth, & Families

This report contains an article on youth media that highlights the transformational role youth media programs play in lives of young people. Available at:

www.gcyf.org/library

Report: Why Fund Media? by Grantmakers in Film & Electronic Media and the Council on Foundations

Why Fund Media? explores ways that grantmakers have supported innovative media projects to further their program goals. The report contains a section dedicated to youth media called "A Voice of Their Own."

Available at: www.fundfilm.org/for_grant/for_grant_fund.htm

Study: Youth Media's Impact on Audience and Channels of Distribution

This study reports on research by Social Policy Research Associates. It offers a framework for measuring the impact of youth media on individuals and systems. Available at <http://scs.aed.org/projects/youth.html>

Toolkit: Youth Media Evaluation Toolkit

Created by Social Policy Research Associates, this toolkit guides youth media organizations through the process of planning and evaluation, conducting the evaluation, and analyzing the data to inform and improve practice. It includes sample evaluation tools and helpful worksheets. Available at <http://scs.aed.org/projects/youth.html>

Study: Youth as E-Citizens: Engaging the Digital Generation

This study provides a groundbreaking overview of web-based efforts to increase youth civic engagement. Beginning with a close-up examination of website content, the report also examines the organizations and institutions creating that content, and the larger environment in which civic sites function. Available at: www.centerforsocialmedia.org/ecitizens/index2.htm

About GFEM



GRANTMAKERS IN
FILM • ELECTRONIC MEDIA

Grantmakers in Film and Electronic Media (GFEM) is an association of grantmakers committed to advancing the field of media arts and public interest media funding. GFEM serves as a resource for grantmakers who fund media programming, infrastructure, and policy, as well as those who employ media to further their program goals.

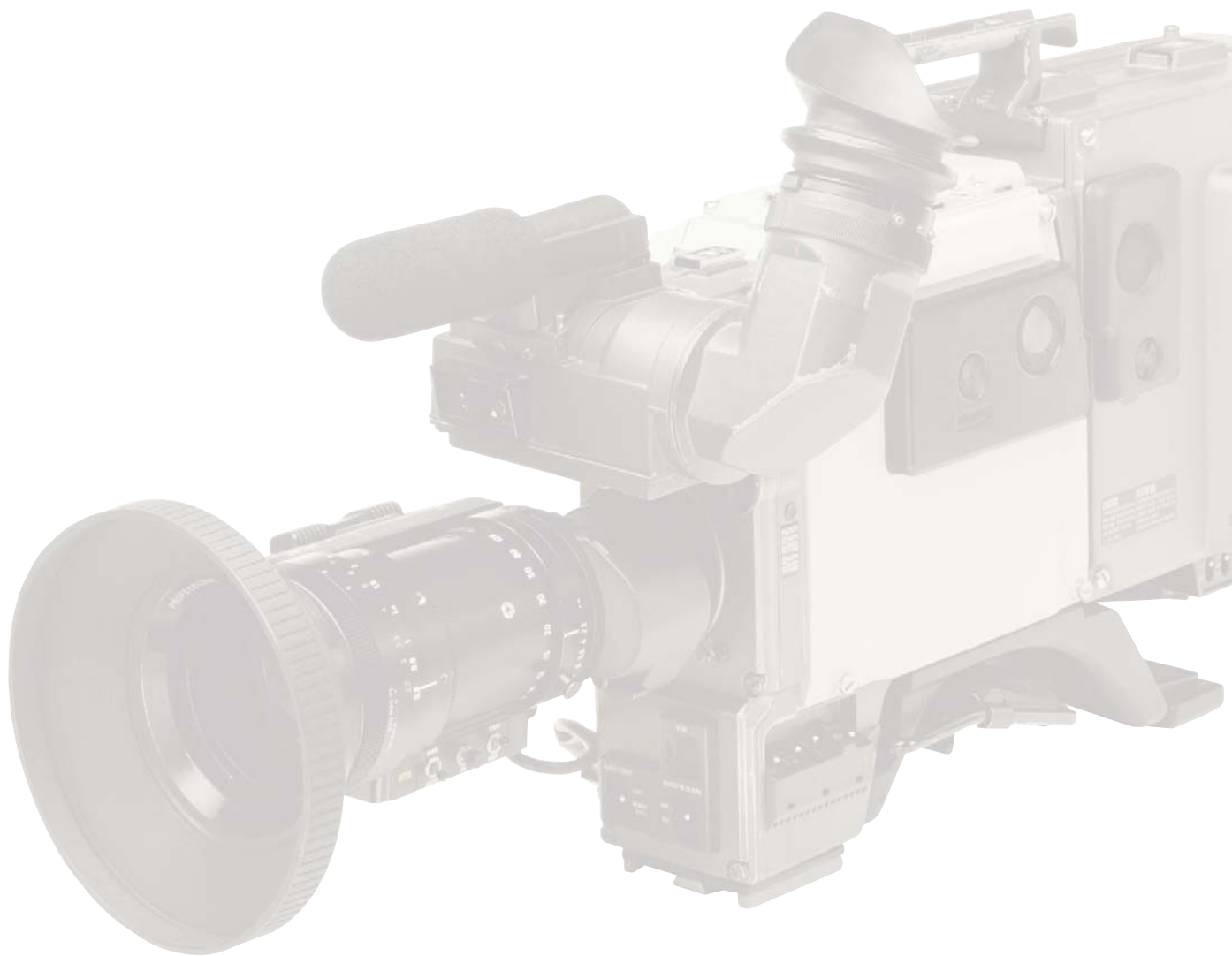
GFEM members have a broad range of interests and approaches, but share the view that moving image media is a vital form of human expression, communication, and creativity, and plays a key role in building public will and shaping civil society.

www.gfem.org

About OSI

OSI's Youth Media Program (1998-2005) was framed as a strategy to support opportunities for authentic self-expression while teaching young people the practical and ethical aspects of journalism. The program goals were to provide ways for young people to affect public debate and become more civically engaged; to support the development of alternative media or a new segment of mainstream media; to influence how mainstream media covers youth-related issues; and to expand freedom of expression, countering censorship in and out of schools.

www.soros.org



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