USAID Youth Excel: Our Knowledge, Leading Change Program

Call for Youth Led/Youth Serving Organizations as Participants in the Issue-Based Collaborative Networks (ICONs)

To Enhance Youth Work Readiness in Kisumu County, Kenya

Release Date: 22nd April 2021

Deadline: 11.59p.m. 13th May 2021

What is the purpose of the USAID Youth Excel: Our Knowledge Leading Change program and the call for ICON participants?

The USAID Youth Excel: Our Knowledge Leading Change program implemented by IREX and its consortium supports young leaders and youth-led and youth-serving organizations around the globe to conduct quality “research-for-change” (implementation research); use data and learnings to improve their own cross-sectoral, positive youth development programs; synthesize data and learning; and engage in intergenerational dialogue with adult decision-makers so that together youth and adults can shape and advance data-informed development policies, agendas, and programs. Youth Excel works with local youth-led and youth-serving organizations to enhance their program outcomes, learning cultures, networks, and leadership for positive youth development through “research-for-change” in Kenya.

In Kisumu, Kenya, Youth Excel will convene and facilitate an Issue-Based Collaborative Network (ICON). See definition below. This ICON will focus on enhancing youth work readiness by promoting engagement between youth, higher education institutions, private sector, and public sector in Kisumu.

Youth Excel seeks Kisumu County-based youth-led or youth-serving organizations or groups to participate in the Kisumu County ICON activity. The ICON participants will implement pilot projects and gather data about ‘what works’ to enhance youth work readiness by promoting engagement between youth, higher education institutions, private sector, and public sector.

Through this call for ICON participants, Youth Excel seeks Kisumu County based youth-led or youth-serving organizations to become ICON participants who will work closely with the Anchor partner (responsible for co-facilitating ICON with the Technical Lead, managing ICON logistics, and disbursing micro/small grants to ICON participants) in the implementation of an Issue-Based Collaborative Network (ICON).

Issuance of this call for selection does not constitute an award commitment on the part of Youth Excel, nor does it commit Youth Excel, IREX, or USAID to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. The application is submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

What is an Issue-Based Collaborative Network (ICON)?

An Issue-Based Collaborative Network (ICON) brings together different types of local stakeholders working in youth workforce readiness in Kisumu County, Kenya to collaboratively address a common problem facing them through their ongoing initiatives and existing assets. ICON participants work
together to learn about the issue and turn what they learn into what they do to better address the issue through an iterative process. *See more description on participants’ role below.*

**Who are ICON participants?**

ICON participants will include diverse young leaders, youth-led/youth-serving organizations and groups, as well as adult decision-makers/donors (public & private sector). In this call, we are recruiting youth-led and youth-serving organizations and groups.

**ICON Participant past-experience:** ICON participants (a YL/YSO or group, or young leader/activist) **that** already have a program or project or initiative that is working on, or that has recently worked on, the ICON activity theme which is “to enhance youth work readiness by promoting engagement between youth, higher education institutions, private sector, and public sector”.

What will be the work of the ICON participants?

The ICON participants will collaborate together to develop innovative solutions for the key issue. They will learn together. They will receive small and micro grants to carry out Implementation Research component for their existing projects and gather data about ‘what works’ to enhance youth work readiness by promoting engagement between youth, higher education institutions, private sector, and public sector.

**ICON Participants Role:**

- Attend a series of 4-5 workshops over 6-9 months to build skills in ‘research for change’ (implementation research), including data skills and, in some cases, advocacy skills.
- In between workshops, “work apart” through micro-grants and, in some cases, small grants, to implement initiatives and use ‘research for change’ methodologies to gather data to improve their initiatives.
- Share data and learnings with each other and, as appropriate, with stakeholders and the community.
- Receive ongoing technical mentorship and peer support from the anchor partner and technical lead.

**ICON Participant selection criteria:**

1. Locally led CSO, NGO, or social enterprise, as well as existing youth network/umbrella organizations, with youth leadership preferred, Youth Led Organizations, Youth Serving organizations, informal youth groups/organizations.
2. Be in good standing with the community. Established presence and previous working experience in Kisumu County, good reputation and relations with the community where they work.
3. Currently engaged in projects or other work related “to enhance youth work readiness by promoting engagement between youth, higher education institutions, private sector, and public sector”.


What kind of micro-grant and small grant is available for the ICON participant role?

- **Number:** 5-8 *Subject to the availability of funds, Youth Excel/IREX and the anchor partner reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.*

- **Type:** Micro-grants and small grants. Organizations/groups that are not registered are eligible to receive micro-grants in amounts up to $1,000 that will be disbursed directly to an individual representative to manage on behalf of the organization/group. Organizations that are registered are eligible to receive small sub-grants in amounts up to $5,000 that will be disbursed to the organization.

- **Amount:** USD $800-$ 5,000 *Cost share is not required.*

- **Start:** May 2021

- **Length:** 1-2 Months during the work apart sessions

**How can eligible organizations apply?**

Complete responses in the ICON participants selection form by 13th May 2021 at 11:59 pm Kenya Time.

At: [https://form.jotform.com/211104594554149](https://form.jotform.com/211104594554149)

- Note that responses cannot be saved in the online submission form. Please save your responses in a document and submit them online when they are complete.

### 1. ICON Participants Details for formal organizations eligible for up to USD $5,000

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<th>Organization Legal Name</th>
<th>Organization Address</th>
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**Organization Type** *(select all that apply)*

- [ ] Local (Kenyan)
- [ ] Registered
- [ ] Non-governmental
- [ ] Youth-led or youth-serving

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<tr>
<th>Organization DUNS Number (if available)</th>
<th>Signatory Name</th>
<th>Signatory Title</th>
<th>Signatory Phone</th>
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### 2. ICON Participants Details for informal organizations eligible for up to USD $1,000

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<th>Organization/Group Address</th>
<th>Organization/Group Type</th>
<th>Representative Name</th>
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1. Please write describing why you are interested in the role of ICON participant and the previous project experience that you would bring to that role. Please describe your experience in enhancing youth work readiness by promoting engagement between youth, higher education institutions, private sector, and public sector (400 Words)

2. Please describe how you will work with all of the other ICONs partners, as an ICON participant, to make the ICON activity successful. Please elaborate on your experience in working in a partnership/network and your contribution to making it work. How will your organization build partnerships with other ICON participants addressing youth work readiness? (400 Words)

3. Describe how you have worked and related with community stakeholders, education institutions and the public/private sector. Describe how you have engaged and gained trust with the local actors and organizations in addressing youth work readiness. (400 words)

4. What organizations do you go to for information, ideas, or support to enhance youth work readiness in Kisumu County? By “youth work readiness” we mean the skills and practices youth need to transition into the workforce. Please use this survey form (https://forms.gle/256RKYJJa8ELHphcg7) List the full names of 5-20 registered and non-registered, local and international organizations, businesses, higher education institutions, youth groups, youth networks, self-help groups, chamas, or government agencies that you have worked with in the past year. (Examples: Kisumu Youth Self-Help Group, World Vision, Ministry of ICT, Innovation, and Youth Affairs) Indicate how frequently you have interacted with each organization.

Reference Letters

Submit two signed reference letters (on official letterhead) from other YL/YSOs and Youth leaders not officially affiliated with you demonstrating positive reputation, strong relationships, and community trust in your organization.

I, [Name], on behalf of [Organization] hereby confirm that all information submitted is true and I understand that issuance of false information will lead to the automatic disqualification of my application.

[Signature]
[Title]
[Organization]
[Date]