nebraskachildren
AND FAMILIES FOUNDATION

Social Innovation Fund Grant Program
Rural Nebraska Connected Youth Initiative

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Released: September 4, 2015

Letter of Intent Submission Deadline: October 7, 2015 by 5:00 p.m. CST
Submit by email to: Jamie Anthony at janthony@nebraskachildren.org

Full Application Submission Deadline: November 20, 2015 by 5:00 p.m. CST
Submit online via grants portal: http://www.nebraskachildren.org/

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General Information and Key Dates

1. This RFP is available in full on the Nebraska Children and Families Foundation web site at **http://www.nebraskachildren.org/**

2. To ensure that applicants are eligible before completing a full proposal, Nebraska Children and Families Foundation (hereinafter, "Nebraska Children") requires that all potential applicants submit a non-binding Letter of Intent and Community Readiness Questionnaire by **5:00 p.m. CST on Wednesday, October 7, 2015** to Jamie Anthony at janthony@nebraskachildren.org.

   Refer to Appendix I. LOI & Community Readiness Questionnaire.

3. Nebraska Children will host three Bidder's Conferences via webinar to help explain, clarify and answer questions related to the RFP process. To be considered for funding, at least one representative from each applicant organization is required to attend a Bidder's Conference webinar.

4. Full proposals must be submitted through our online application process by **5:00 p.m. CST, Friday, November 20, 2015**.

5. To comply with federal guidelines, all questions, comments, or concerns must be submitted via our web site (http://www.nebraskachildren.org/connectedyouth.html). A list of all questions and responses will be posted on this site regularly.

Summary of Key Dates	
Release of RFP, subrecipient selection process, and external reviewer worksheet	Friday, September 4, 2015
Bidder's Conference I	Tuesday, September 22, 2015 10:00 a.m.
Bidder's Conference II	Wednesday, September 23, 2015 10:00 am
Bidder's Conference III	Thursday, September 24, 2015 10:00 a.m.
Letter of Intent Deadline	Wednesday, October 7, 2015 By 5:00 p.m. CST
Notification of Eligibility to Apply	Wednesday, October 14, 2015
Proposal Submission Deadline	Friday, November 20, 2015 By 5:00 p.m. CST
Post List of External Reviewers	Tuesday, December 8, 2015
External Review Process	December 8 – December 21, 2015
Subapplicant Overviews to SIF	December 22, 2015 – January 7, 2016
Award Announcements	Friday, January 15, 2016
Subrecipient Grant Period	January 15, 2016 – December 31, 2018
Post Summary of External Reviewer Comments	January 22, 2016
Post full applications of successful subrecipients	January 29, 2016

I. Summary

Nebraska Children issues this Request for Proposal and invites applications from high performing non-profit organizations in rural Nebraska communities that are currently convening cross-sector collaboratives focused on improving outcomes for high-risk populations with a priority consideration given to collaboratives focused on unconnected youth by creating a connected youth initiative (older youth system) that focuses on education, career, daily needs/transportation, health (mental, physical and dental), housing, permanency, and financial stability.

Unconnected youth are defined as young adults ages 14 -24 in rural Nebraska who find themselves disconnected from a positive life course due to child welfare, juvenile justice system involvement (including diversion or young adults transitioning out of Probation), who have experienced homelessness, and are lacking the services and supports they need to make successful transitions to adulthood.

Funding Opportunity Title:	Rural Nebraska Connected Youth Initiative
Estimated Number of Awards:	7 – 10
Minimum & Maximum Award Range:	$100,000 to $150,000/year for two years[1]
Cash Match Required:	1:1
Minimum number to be served	200 young people ages 14 – 24 with varying levels of high impact and low impact interventions
Length of Initial Project Period:	24 months
Project Start Date:	January 15, 2016

II. Funding Availability

This initiative and funding opportunity is made possible through a Social Innovation Fund (SIF) grant from the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) to Nebraska Children (Nebraska Children), along with matching grant support from Sherwood Foundation and the William and Ruth Scott family in Omaha, Nebraska. Nebraska Children's SIF award addresses the SIF Youth Development issue area, which is "Preparing America's youth for success in school, active citizenship, productive work, and healthy and safe lives, including crime reduction initiatives focused on juvenile delinquency and victimization prevention and response". The Social Innovation Fund is a key White House initiative and program of the CNCS and for more information on the Social Innovation Fund, visit: http://nationalservice.gov/programs/social-innovation-fund.

With these combined public and private funds, Nebraska Children will award subgrants of $100,000 to $150,000 per year for two years — with the potential for continuation funding for an additional three years — to seven to ten subrecipients for implementation in their communities for identified components of the Connected Youth Initiative to improve

[1] Nebraska Children will award subgrants of $100,000 to $150,000 per year for two years – with the potential for continuation funding for an additional three years based upon availability of federal funds, performance, and grant compliance.

outcomes for unconnected youth. Subrecipients will be required to match their subgrant awards on a dollar-for-dollar basis in cash from a combination of unobligated non-federal public and/or private funds. Subrecipients will be required to participate in a national evaluation commissioned and paid for by Nebraska Children to measure the success of the Connected Youth Initiative's interventions. Nebraska Children will provide subrecipients with technical assistance through on-site consultation, communications, additional capacity to help communities identify matching funding opportunities, liaison and coordination with other current existing older youth work in Nebraska, and a national learning network.

III. Overview

Geographic and Demographic Overview:

Nebraska is a geographically large and diverse state spanning 76,872 square miles with a 2013 estimated population of 1,868,516 people and 43 percent of these living in rural Nebraska (U.S. Dept. of Agriculture-Economic Research Service). According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 89.7% of the state's population is White, 4.8% Black/African-American, 1.3% American Indian & Alaska Native, 2.1% Asian, and 9.9% is of Hispanic/Latino origin (2013).

The Challenge:

This geography and population distribution creates statewide infrastructure development and program sustainability challenges, for a Connected Youth System, considering that some youth live in the rural frontier with sparse population bases and few services available or within a reasonable distance (55% of children and youth), while other youth (45%) live in densely populated inner city neighborhoods where there are more services and where service coordination and avoidance of duplication is a challenge. The Connected Youth Initiative known as Project Everlast is an established presence in our three urban counties, fully operational in Omaha (Sarpy and Douglas counties) since 2010 and in Lincoln (Lancaster) since 2014. The remaining 90 counties of Nebraska are presently lacking the formal structure and service array the Connected Youth Initiative can offer.

Despite Nebraska's low unemployment rate (3.6%) large middle class (56.6%) and high proportion of working parents with children between the ages of 6 to 17 (77.3%), 40.9% of Nebraska's children were living in families making under 200% of the federal poverty line and 14.6% of families with children lived at or below 100% of the federal poverty line in 2013. Involvement in child welfare, juvenile justice and homelessness systems is highly correlated to poverty status in these families.

Life and well-being outcomes for youth involved in the child welfare system are statistically, personally and socially dire. Kids Count in Nebraska's 2014 report reveals 15.5 percent of substantiated child maltreatment cases in 2013 were among teens age 13-18 and 10,534 juveniles were arrested the same year. Youth of color are overrepresented in both systems. Children of color comprise 31 percent of Nebraska's children but make up 45 percent of children in out-of-home care.

An average of 300 youth age out of the foster care system annually (NDHHS 2007-2011). Nebraska AFCARS 2012 data indicate 2,398 adolescents entered foster care between age 14 and 17, which is 80% of the youth who aged out of care in 2011 and 2012. The majority were in an independent living placement or a non-relative foster home. Primary issues identified for removal were "child behavior problem" (73.9%), and "neglect" (13.8%).

Data analysis done by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Center for Children, Families, and the Law showed:

- By age 23, 75.7% of NE youth formerly in care received a high school diploma or GED, compared to 92.7% of same-age youth nationwide.
- 81.2% of Nebraska youth formerly in care did not have health insurance.
- 50.3% have a mental health diagnosis.
- Youth formerly in care are only half as likely (37.6%) as their same-age counterparts (75.5%) to have paid full- or part-time employment.
- More than 1500 youth received one or more transition service between July 2012 and July 2013 including independent living needs assessment, academic supports, post-secondary education support, career preparation services, employment programs, budget and financial management, housing education and home management training, health education and risk prevention, family support and healthy relationship education, mentoring, supervised independent living, education and other financial assistance.

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, studies have shown that nationally:

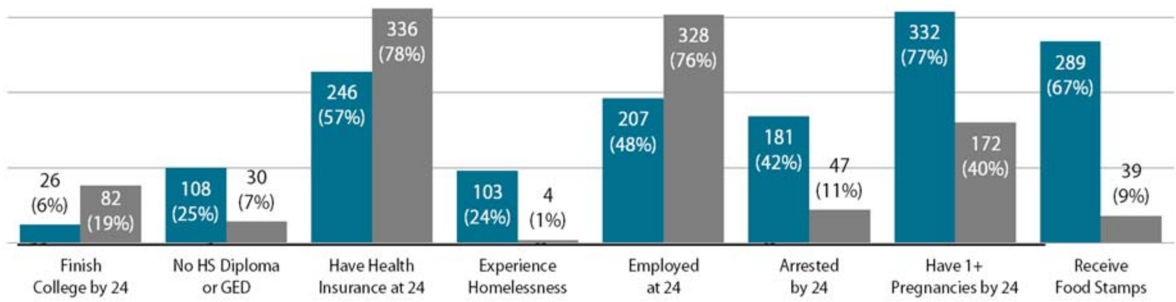
- One in seven young people between the ages of 10 and 18 will run away.
- Youth age 12 to 17 are more at risk of homelessness than adults.
- 75 percent of runaways are female.
- Estimates of the number of pregnant homeless girls are between 6 and 22 percent.
- Between 20 and 40 percent of homeless youth identify as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender or Questioning (GLBTQ).
- 75 percent of homeless or runaway youth have dropped out or will drop out of school.

According to Nebraska’s Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) 2012 database:

- 13% of unaccompanied homeless youth were between ages 14 and 17
- An estimated 5.2% of homeless youth ages 19-23 were formerly in foster care
- 9.2% of 19-23 year olds were couch surfing
- 3.5% of homeless unaccompanied youth seeking services in 2012 identified a foster care placement as their residence (e.g., ‘type of living situation’) on the evening prior to receiving a homeless service. Of youth exiting foster care the evening prior and identified as homeless, their ages ranged from 13 to 18 years with 62% over 16 years of age.

The Reality:
Without support from the community, these youth are at risk of falling victim to the statistics listed below. Here's a picture of the potential impact of our inaction:

Projected outcomes for the **431 foster youth** ages 17+ in Greater Nebraska, compared to **431 of their non-foster care peers.**



Nebraska Children's Connected Youth Initiative urban model, Project Everlast, is a grassroots effort that promotes using community resources to improve a youth's opportunities and networks for housing, transportation, health care, connections to supportive peers and adults, educational attainment, employment and career pathways, financial education and asset accumulation. In 2007, Nebraska Children led an intensive youth-driven planning process involving more than 40 public and private partners to create The Omaha Independent Living Plan. A steering committee of Omaha youth and representatives from the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, the Sherwood Foundation, the William and Ruth Scott Family Foundation and Nebraska Children developed this dynamic, innovative plan that when launched became Project Everlast. Project Everlast is a youth driven infrastructure that utilizes the best practices of Central Access navigation services, Individual Development Accounts (IDAs), Voluntary transitional case management services, and alignment of existing services to help youth transition towards self-reliance in adulthood.

In 2009, Community Action Partnership of Western Nebraska (CAPWN) became the "local collaborating partner" with NE Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Nebraska Children for one of six national demonstration grants from the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB). Supportive Services for Rural Homeless Youth (SSRHY) explored the impact of providing additional case management and supportive services (e.g. access to health care, mental health, education, employment training, and independent living skills) to older youth (ages 16-21) who are homeless or near homeless, including youth leaving the foster care system or in independent living. Caring about the youth, and connecting with other leaders and programs in the community was a major strength of the program. The community was focused on working together, thus barriers have been removed for youth. Relationship building between the staff and youth was a key component to the program.

In 2012, in addition to SSRHY, Nebraska Children conducted statewide focus groups of youth ages 14 to 21 with current or former foster care experience. A total of 108 youth participated in eight cities (six rural and two urban) with active Project Everlast Youth Councils. Youth suggestions included making supports more inclusive of non-college bound youth and older youth who do achieve permanency, being more flexible in initial and ongoing eligibility requirements - including an open door policy for youth who may walk away from available supports but decide at a later time to re-engage with services, offering more consistent and longer-term support and guidance, ensuring caseworkers and other service providers are knowledgeable about specific elements of services available, and raising awareness about services in general – both among service providers and youth.

The combination of a successful urban model (Project Everlast), a successful rural model (SSRHY), and statewide youth feedback to create an Extension of Foster Care to 21 program with DHHS (the Bridge to Independence program), has laid the foundation to the core elements and principles necessary to support older youth in rural Nebraska communities. This current funding opportunity will allow Nebraska Children and community partners to expand these established practices to serve more youth across the state of Nebraska.

IV. **Approach**

In order to significantly improve the effectiveness of the organizations and systems in place to serve and support unconnected youth and reconnect them with their communities, a cross-sector collaborative of high-level system leaders must:

1. Establish or enhance sustainable rural NE culturally competent, cross-sector, community collaboratives with an identified lead backbone organization capable of taking the Connected Youth Initiative (CYI) model to scale in their geographic areas;
2. Use of high quality data to ensure community collaboratives focus on priority needs of the target population;
3. Application of evidence-based practices and policies in the local implementation of the CYI model specific to priority youth needs;
4. Provision of capacity building supports to community collaboratives to support effective and efficient scaling of the CYI model;
5. Rigorous evaluation of the process and impact areas relevant to both the collaborative system of supports and the desired outcomes for target youth; and
6. Braiding existing and securing new financing mechanisms to a) meet the SIF local match requirements and b) grow and sustain a full array of services available locally for the target youth population.

<u>*Criteria to Determine Applicants Fit with Our Theory of Change (see Appendix II for Visual)*</u>

Nebraska Children has established a ***Community Readiness Questionnaire*** to identify current capabilities to implement the Connected Youth Initiative model. Applicant completion of this questionnaire will help Nebraska Children identify capacity building needs of prospective communities in preparation for scaling. The questionnaire uses leading questions followed by examples of the necessary people, structures, and resources the community must have in place to support a Connected Youth Initiative system model. It describes the seven outcome areas required for self-sufficiency and successful transition into adulthood and describes expectations of a Connected Youth Initiative model community. <u>Applicants are required to complete this during the Letter of Intent (LOI) phase</u>

and include it with the LOI submission documents.

V. **Goal of the Rural Nebraska Connected Youth Initiative, Social Innovation Fund (SIF)**

The goal of the Nebraska Children's Connected Youth Initiative, Social Innovation Fund competition is to select a diverse portfolio of 7 to 10 communities using a collective impact approach to improve outcomes for unconnected youth in rural communities. Successful applicants will have a high likelihood of success in implementing the core components of a Connected Youth system, have the financial management systems in place to manage a federal grant, and have the ability to participate in a third-party evaluation and support a performance management system.

The Core Components of a Connected Youth Initiative:

1. A cross–sector collaborative utilizing the Collective Impact functions and conditions
2. Minimum number of youth to be served - The CYI model in communities should provide high touch and low touch interventions to a minimum of 200 young people per grantee. High touch participation is defined as an individual who participates in one or more CYI services, including case management or supports (youth leadership) for duration of at least 3 months, and is available and participates in the evaluation process and should encompass at least 20% of the total youth served. Low touch supports include one-time supports needed for young people on any of the CYI components including referrals via the central navigation, need based funds and other one-time support and services
3. Project management for cross collaborative management, reports, grant contracts, financial reports, communication, grants management, data use and collection, accounting, resource coordination and development, capacity building, and coordinating training and education
4. Opportunities for youth leadership and advocacy through youth empowering processes
5. Central Navigation to support youth in accessing resources
6. Individual Development Accounts (IDA's) to support youth in achieving economic stability
7. An array of basic needs services and supports including: health, mental health, housing and transportation resources, assistance in obtaining personal records (birth certificates), parenting resources, nutrition and healthy lifestyles, which are provided by multiple community partners working in unison for youth
8. Educational supports for GED's, high school diploma's, enrollment and completion of post-secondary education, trade schools and specific career skill development
9. Employment supports to include the development or maintenance of work readiness skills, resume development, youth friendly employers
10. Financial stability through financial education, credit recovery, renter training
11. Permanence which is achieved through family finding, positive relationships with adult mentors and successful relationships
12. Evaluation (see evaluation section)

VI. **Outcome Areas of the Connected Youth Initiative**

The Connected Youth Initiative model looks at 7 outcome areas for self-sufficiency and successful transition into adulthood. The following sections provide definitions for the 7 outcome areas:

1. **Personal and Community Engagement**: Youth have supportive relationships, are able to access services in the community to achieve their personal goals and have a voice and connection to their community.
2. **Education**: Youth receive sufficient education and training to enable them to obtain and retain employment.
3. **Employment**: Youth generate a sufficient income to support themselves by obtaining and retaining employment.
4. **Daily Living/Housing and Transportation**: Youth have access to safe, stable, affordable housing in the community that is near public transportation, school and work.
5. **Physical and Mental Health**: Youth have sufficient and affordable health insurance and services for both physical and behavioral health.
6. **Permanence:** Youth have a network of stable, caring people in their life that will be around no matter what happens.
7. **Economic Stability**: Provide youth with assistance in understanding daily budgets, accessing financial assistance and services, opening/maintaining bank accounts, accumulating assets and other financial learning skills.

VII. **Community Readiness in the 7 Outcome Areas:**

This is a developmental process. The Community Readiness Questionnaire with the LOI requests applicants to assess progress in each of the outcome areas.

1. **Personal and Community Engagement:** Youth as partners are key to the work needed to influence a Connect Youth System. The following efforts must exist in your community to support their involvement in the process:
   - A. Cross – sector community collaborative
   - B. Youth organized social/community groups or leadership boards
   - C. Facilitation of peer support or other youth-to-youth informal mentoring
   - D. Intentional efforts to engage youth in activities and meetings to address policy changes, system/service coordination, and/or leadership roles within organizations, the community, or their schools
   - E. Efforts to assist youth in locating needed resources
   - F. Intentional efforts to assist youth in reducing poverty, early parenting risk factors and promoting youth-centered practices

2. **Education:** Post-secondary education has been identified as a predictor for future personal success and self-sufficiency. The following efforts must be in place in an effective Connected Youth system:

A. Youth have access to educational supports for higher academic achievement (mentoring programs, school-based learning supports, community-based study groups, etc.)
B. Youth receive assistance in obtaining their high school diplomas or GED through placement stabilization, secure housing, transportation, and/or other supportive needs services
C. Youth have help in applying for and are informed about scholarships or student loans
D. Youth are provided with a chance to visit local/regional/state colleges
E. Youth are familiar with certificate programs and other post-secondary career educational resources

3. **Employment:** Employment is essential to community connectedness and provides a place of belonging. The following efforts must be in place for youth to gain employment and job skills:
    A. Youth have access to job training programs (to include: internships, on-the-job training, trade union apprenticeships, or other job training programs)
    B. Employers have access to trainings for their staff and supervisors that focus on the needs of unconnected youth by addressing trauma informed practices, Bridges out of Poverty interventions, Positive Youth Development techniques, and other employment retention practices
    C. Youth have access to work clothes and other essential trade equipment at no, low, or reduced costs to help promote employment and reduce poverty within the community
    D. Youth are encouraged to work while in out-of-home placements to gain work history and experience

4. **Daily Living/Housing and Transportation**: Long term stability and consistency meeting essential needs is crucial for promoting self-sufficiency and transition into adulthood. The following efforts must be available for youth to meet their essential daily living needs in the community:
    A. Youth have access to food programs and pantries to address nutritional needs
    B. Youth are educated on healthy nutritional habits for themselves and their children, where applicable
    C. Youth have access to supports and services to maintain safe and adequate housing (local programs, emergency assistance funds, utility assistance, youth friendly landlord options, etc.)
    D. Youth have access to public transportation, carpool programs, or other transportation options in order to get to work, school, or other appointments

5. **Physical/Dental and Mental Health:** Preventative and maintenance mental/physical health care helps to reduce time missed at work/school, long-term

chronic illnesses, and better crisis cycle management. The following array of health care options must exist in the community:

A. Youth have access to health insurance through local employment, the health market (navigation services), or assistance in applying for Medicaid or other public health options
B. Prescription and medication needs can be served through options for low or no cost prescription plans with national, statue, or local pharmaceutical providers
C. Youth have access to all their essential mental/physical/dental health records
D. Youth have access to counseling or other mental health rehabilitation services within the community
E. Community support groups or other peer-to-peer mental health options are available to youth in time of need
F. The community has access to or the ability to interact with the Nebraska Telehealth Network

6. **Permanence:** Young people have access to informal and formal supports to help create lifelong supportive relationships. The following efforts to help youth connect to others in their community and/or extended families must exist in communities:
    A. Youth have access to Family Finding™ services
    B. Mentoring or other formal connections are available to help youth connect to others in their community
    C. Faith-based communities offer youth friendly opportunities to become members
    D. During or afterschool activities are offered and supported for youth currently in care
    E. Sibling activities are promoted and/or are offered as opportunities to strengthen family bonds (Camp Catch Up or local sibling activities)
    F. Parenting classes and other parenting resources are available to youth at risk of losing custody of their children to the Department of Health and Human Services

7. **Economic Stability:** Stability and knowledge around financial well-being is an essential component to preventing generational poverty in our communities. The following efforts concerning economic needs and financial management ability of youth must exist in communities:
    A. Basic financial education is offered to all youth in the community (budgeting, understanding the importance of credit scores, credit card practices, etc.)
    B. Youth are provided with assistance in establishing positive credit, even while in out-of-home placements (Youth have access to free credit checks and youth focused credit counseling)
    C. Youth are informed of predatory lending practices

D. Budgeting and debt consolidation is a youth friendly process and services are available to help youth consolidate debt
E. Asset purchase supports are available to youth (youth have access to an individual/program to help them in purchasing a car, a home, and/or educational loans or resources)

VIII. Evaluation

The Social Innovation Fund's purpose is to grow innovative, evidence-based approaches used by organizations to improve the lives of people served by those organizations. By building the evidence-base of what works in supporting unconnected youth transitioning to adulthood, our SIF project has the potential to improve how organized philanthropy, government, and community-based organizations deploy funds to address social challenges faced by unconnected young adults.

The SIF program nationally has three tiers of evidence: preliminary, moderate, and strong (defined later in this section). Nebraska Children is required to fund community applicants that:

1. Demonstrate that they have held responsibility for a program or service that has already been shown by credible research to have preliminary evidence of success as defined by SIF;
2. Demonstrate that they have experience collecting, reporting, and managing data; and
3. Demonstrate that they have experience collecting and managing data in a shared-use environment.

Using SIF and private funding, Nebraska Children will assist subrecipients to meet evaluation goals throughout the subrecipient's implementation of the Connected Youth model.

Evaluation Design:
Nebraska Children will implement a rigorous evaluation plan in partnership with a third-party independent evaluator, the successful community subrecipients selected through this RFP process, and with guidance and support from the federal CNCS SIF evaluation team. Subrecipients are required to commit significant time and resources to ensure formal evaluations of the local Connected Youth Initiative framework throughout the funded grant period.

Pending approval of the final evaluation plan by the federal CNCS SIF evaluation team, Nebraska Children intends to evaluate the Connected Youth Initiative expansion in rural Nebraska using a quasi-experimental design. Because the capacity of the Connected Youth Initiative System as it will be implemented in each community is such that it will not initially be able to serve all possible youth participants, potential youth participants in a given community will be randomly assigned to either a waitlist group or a group to take part in the program immediately. This waitlist group will form the comparison group for each given community. Pre-test data will be gathered at the outset of the program from both the participant group and the comparison group. Post-test data will be gathered at the end of an established interval, likely 6 or 12 months.

While sample sizes for a given community may be relatively small, and thus the types of statistical analysis that are appropriate may be limited, this quasi-experimental research design will shed valuable light on the how and the extent to which the CYI impacts participants in the desired outcome areas.

This evaluation approach will help identify and validate effective approaches to meeting priority needs of a diverse population in a range of community contexts across Nebraska, it will build the number and quality of high-impact organizations in rural areas that focus resources on results, and it will produce best practices that inform the entire Youth Development Issues field.

Three Levels of Evidence:
Based on the existing level of evidence for the Connected Youth System interventions—which the Corporation for National and Community Service defines as preliminary— we expect that subrecipients will help move the Connected Youth System model to at least a **moderate level of evidence over the 3-5 year project period**. The Corporation's definitions of the three levels of evidence are:

1. **Preliminary evidence** means evidence that is based on a reasonable hypothesis supported by credible research findings. Thus research that has yielded promising results for either the program model or a similar program model meets the criteria.
2. **Moderate evidence** means evidence from studies on the program, the designs of which can support causal conclusions (i.e., studies with high internal validity) but have limited generalizability (i.e., moderate external validity). This also includes studies for which the reverse is true—studies that only support moderate causal conclusions but have broad general applicability.
3. **Strong evidence** means evidence from previous studies on the program, the designs of which can support causal conclusions (i.e., studies with high internal validity), and that, in total, include enough of the range of participants and settings to support scaling up to the state, regional, or national level (i.e., studies with high external validity).

Evaluation Support:
Nebraska Children will assist each awarded subrecipient in developing an individual evaluation capacity plan identifying the technical assistance strategies, evaluation design, data collection and reporting processes and requirements, youth participant protections, and roles and responsibilities of each involved evaluation party, including Nebraska Children staff, the independent third-party evaluator and the Corporation for National and Community Service as part of national data collection from SIF grantees. Nebraska Children will provide any necessary capacity building and technical assistance to subrecipients to ensure they are able to build their capacity to accomplish all Social Innovation Fund-related

evaluation requirements and continue to measure the Connected Youth System model's impact into the future.

Evaluation Costs:
A significant share of total evaluation costs to be incurred by subrecipients in the implementation of SIF-funded activities is borne by Nebraska Children in our project budget. However, subrecipients must share in the costs of some evaluation activities and are expected to budget within their grant proposals to us, the following evaluation costs at minimum:

1. Subrecipient data collection and reporting software (product to be determined) and licenses for the community-based service providers that will need them,
2. Personnel time to collect, enter, report and analyze evaluation data in cooperation with the Nebraska Children evaluators, including the third-party contractor, and personnel time and any other resources necessary for effective application of evaluation findings in the implementation and administration of their local Connected Youth System model (such as professional development of community providers around cultural or linguistic needs of youth, or adoption of an evidence-based practice model for dual-generation supports for youth who are pregnant or parenting, etc.).

IX. Performance Management

All subrecipients will be required to use performance measures to assess progress toward achieving their stated goals. Subrecipients will create community implementation plans that will include process for scaling the model, tracking central access data, and gathering initial and follow-up survey information from youth. These plans will also include annual goals and benchmarks for raising the local match funds.

Subrecipients will report quarterly on their progress toward their performance goals and benchmarks, and will also submit quarterly financial reports. Nebraska Children will review each site's progress by working with the community collaborative to identify and address any performance issues in a timely manner.

X. Technical Assistance

Nebraska Children will provide technical assistance to the backbone organization and collaborative in each community, along with the anchor programs implementing the Connected Youth System. Nebraska Children will provide coaching to the backbone/collaborative on data collection and analysis for shared measurement, accountability, evaluation, continuous improvement, and sustainability planning.

Nebraska Children Connected Youth Initiative team will consist of community consultants, a communications position, an individual to help communities build their capacity to sustain services, and a Connected Youth Initiative project manager. This team will work with each community to help expand the community's ability to meet the evaluation and financial requirements of the Connected Youth System. Nebraska Children will also offer two annual cross-site convening's, bi-monthly program lead meetings, and monthly conference calls to build and support a robust community of practice among SIF subrecipients and to maintain fidelity to the Connected Youth Initiative model.

Nebraska Children will support the development of long-term sustainability plans as part of the technical assistance to subrecipients. This will help subrecipients meet the expectation that they develop a long-term sustainability plan for continuing to scale up effective interventions after SIF funding has ended. Sustainability plans will be expected to outline the specific public and private funding streams that have been leveraged to support the sustainability of the interventions.

Nebraska Children will provide technical assistance on Performance and Population measures for a connected youth system in rural Nebraska communities. Nebraska Children will also apply a results based accountability framework (Mark Friedman) allowing communities to fully link evaluation results to decision-making and investment strategies.

Nebraska Children will provide technical assistance to subrecipients on participation in the evaluation beginning at the first subrecipient orientation and continuing on a regularly scheduled basis with individual subrecipients based on their level of experience (to be identified in each subrecipient's annual subgrant agreement) and in group convenings held quarterly in-person, web-based, or a combination. This technical assistance will consist of:

1. Providing an overview of the process and requirements of a quasi-experimental evaluation design to achieve a moderate level of evidence;
2. Partnering cooperatively with evaluation personnel to help identify the intervention and matched comparison groups and to clarify and facilitate data collection and management;
3. Helping to address key data challenges that emerge over the course of the grant, Facilitating cross-site groups on data issues, challenges and successes through meetings and webinars, Offering support around best practices in data collection, tracking and reporting method; and
4. Using data to inform decision-making and continuous improvement and to effectively communicate results to multiple stakeholders.

Nebraska Children will assess needs for and provide technical assistance to build subrecipient capacity to fully engage in the local evaluation work, including purchasing / learning / using data collection tools, completing data reporting requirements and timeframes, and developing a thorough understanding of the purposes and beneficial outcomes to be realized by their participation in the Evaluation Plan.

XI. General Information

All prospective applicants for 2015 funds from the Social Innovation Fund (SIF) grant program must submit a "Letter of Intent" prior to submitting a formal application. The format and contents of the Letters of Intent should conform to the requirements specified below in Section XII.

The submission of a Letter of Intent enables a prospective applicant to vet its project ideas with Nebraska Children staff, who can then identify those projects that have a reasonable chance of success in the competitive grant process. Nebraska Children will solicit full proposals for only those projects that have a reasonable chance of success in the grant competition process based on Nebraska Children's analysis of the information provided in the Letters of Intent. <u>Applicants submitting a Letter of Intent will be notified of their eligibility to apply by Wednesday, October 14, 2015</u>.

XII. Eligibility Requirements

All organizations must adhere to the criteria below to be eligible for consideration:

A. Legal Status of Applicant

1. Organizations with Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(3) status;
2. Any entity or organization with Internal Revenue Code 170 (c)(2) status such as:
    a. A corporation, trust, or community chest, fund, or foundation-
        i. Created or organized in the United States or in any possession thereof, or under the law of the U.S., any State, the District of Columbia, or any possession of the U.S.;
        ii. Organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable, scientific, literary, or educational purposes, or to foster national or international amateur sports competition, or for the prevention of cruelty to children or animals;
        iii. No part of the net earnings of which inures to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual; and
        iv. Which is not disqualified for tax exemption under section 501(c)(3) by reason of attempting to influence legislation, and which does not participate in, or intervene in, any political campaign on behalf of (or in opposition to) any candidate for public office.

B. Geographic Service Area

Successful applicants will be physically located and providing services in **<u>rural areas of Nebraska</u>**, - defined for the purposes of this RFP as any county, community or group of communities and counties located outside Douglas, Sarpy and Lancaster counties.

Proposals to serve low-income, philanthropically underserved areas will be prioritized in the subrecipient selection process (refer to Section D. below for definitions).

Proposals need to have minimum number of youth to be served and supported in the Connected Youth Initiative.

C. **Expertise**

Applying organizations/collaboratives in rural Nebraska must be working in a structured collaborative taking a collective impact approach to improve outcomes for at-risk populations. A priority is given to collaboratives with experience in increasing support and services for unconnected youth as a community outcome.

D. **Focus on Low-Income and Philanthropically Underserved**

Low-Income Community

For purposes of this RFP, "low-income community" means either:

1. A population of individuals or households being served by a subrecipient on the basis of having a household income that is 200 percent or less of the applicable federal poverty guideline, OR
2. Either a population of individuals or households, or a specific local geographic area, with specific measurable indicators that correlate to low-income status, such as, but not exclusive to, K-12 students qualifying for free or reduced lunch, long-term unemployment, risk of homelessness, low school achievement, persistent hunger, or serious mental illness. An application that proposes to rely on measurable indicators should fully describe the basis for relying upon those indicators (including citations to appropriate studies). The application also must describe and cite the source of data supporting the conclusion that the targeted community meets the indicators.

Significantly Philanthropically Underserved

For purposes of this RFP, we consider applicants to be serving significantly philanthropically underserved communities if they operate in low-income communities that have considerably less than the average number of active philanthropic investments as similarly populated communities.

E. **Characteristics of Strong Applicants**

High-performing nonprofit organizations with the capacity to rapidly take the Connected Youth Initiative (CYI) model to scale in their intended service area.

High-performing nonprofit organizations are those:

1. That are well-run and financially healthy with capable leadership, clear goals and objectives;
2. That diligently collect quality data and use this data to understand which of their efforts work and which do not; and
3. That use this knowledge to make adjustments to their approach to continuously improve.

Other key success factors:

Specifically, application reviewers will look for documentation providing sufficient evidence of experience and capacity as defined in Section XIII of this RFP package.

Applicants that:

- Have experience serving the target population of vulnerable youth ages 14-24,
- Provide documented preliminary, moderate or strong levels of evidence that their youth services are successful in improving life outcomes for the target youth population,
- Is a leading member of a community collaborative focused on the target population and which functions within a collective impact framework,
- Describes a high degree of commitment and readiness to adopt the Connected Youth model with fidelity as evidenced by number and quality of community partners aligned with the applicant's organization willing to invest time and resources in the process and desired outcomes,
- Provides specific evidence of how the 1:1 local cash match requirement will be met based on prior fund development experience,
- Provides a sufficient plan of how the Connected Youth model will be sustained after the SIF grant funding period ends,
- Has financial and organizational capacity and experience to manage a grant of this size and scope,
- Describes a geographic area to be served which is high need based on statistics such as number of youth in public systems and child poverty rate, and is philanthropically underserved,
- Demonstrate overall fiscal integrity.

F. **Applicant Compliance and Eligibility Review**

As a first review step, Nebraska Children staff will review all applications to determine compliance with eligibility, deadlines and completeness. Nebraska Children might ask some applicants to provide clarifying information concerning eligibility. A request for clarification does not guarantee a grant award. Failure to respond to a request for clarification by the date set forth in the request will result in removal of the application from consideration.

Applications determined to be non-compliant will not be considered. An application is compliant if the applicant satisfies all of the following requirements:

- Is an eligible organization.
- Submitted an application and required documentation by the submission deadline.
- Submitted an application that is complete; in that it contains all required elements and additional documents and follows the instructions provided in the notice.

- Submitted a budget reflecting required work activities, including applicant share of local evaluation costs.

G. **Other Applicant and Nebraska Children Requirements of Special Note to Applicants**

1. **Risk Based Applicant Evaluation and Subrecipient Selection Decisions**. Nebraska Children will evaluate the risks to the project posed by applicants, including conducting due diligence to ensure an applicant's ability to manage federal funds. This is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant's eligibility and the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this review will inform funding decisions.

   If Nebraska Children determines that an award will be made, special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed may be applied to the award.

   In evaluating risks, Nebraska Children may consider the following:

   a. Financial stability
   b. Quality of management systems and the ability to meet the management standards prescribed in applicable OMB Guidance
   c. Applicant's record in managing previous public and private awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:
      i. Timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements
      ii. Accuracy of data reported
      iii. Validity of performance measure data reported
      iv. Conformance to the terms and conditions of previous federal awards
      v. If applicable, the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards
      vi. Information available through OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as:
         - Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity information System (FAPIIS)
         - Dun & Bradstreet and System for Award Management (SAM)
         - "Do Not Pay"
      vii. Reports and findings from single audits performed under Subpart F – Audit Requirements, 2 CFR Part 200 and findings and reports of any other available audits
      viii. IRS Tax Form 990
      ix. Applicant organization's annual report
      x. Publicly available information, including information from the applicant organization's website

xi. Applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on award recipients.

2. **Mandatory Public Information Sharing**

   Applicants should be aware that Nebraska Children is required under the federal SIF guidelines to release, at a minimum, the following information about the subaward process:

   a. A description of our subrecipient selection process
   b. A list of External Reviewers for the subrecipient selection process
   c. A list of awarded subrecipients
   d. Summaries of External Reviewer comments on successful subaward applications
   e. The full applications of successful subrecipients
   f. Nebraska Children is required to report at www.FSRS.gov on all subawards made over $25,000, and may be required to report on executive compensation SIF subrecipients. Subrecipients must have the necessary systems in place to collect and report this information. (Reference 2 CFR Part 170 for more information and to determine how these requirements apply)

XIII. **Letter of Intent**

In order to apply, potential applicants must first submit to Nebraska Children a Letter of Intent that indicates how they meet the eligibility criteria. Letters of Intent must be completed and submitted by **5:00 p.m. CST on Wednesday, October 7, 2015** to Jamie Anthony at janthony@nebraskachildren.org. Applicants are strongly encouraged to complete their Letter of Intent and Community Readiness Survey submissions as early as possible. Only those who submit a Letter of Intent and receive approval to apply from Nebraska Children will be invited to submit a proposal for funding.

Nebraska Children will not accept applications submitted after the application deadline, therefore, allow sufficient time for online submission. Nebraska Children will provide confirmation via email upon the completed electronic submission of each Letter of Intent. Keep this email as verification that the applicant's LOI was submitted. If no confirmation email is received, inquire about the status of your LOI by emailing Jamie Anthony at janthony@nebraskachildren.org.

<u>**Refer to Appendix I for the complete packet of requirements for the Letter of Intent and Community Readiness Questionnaire**</u>

XIV. **Full Proposal (Final Checklist in Appendix III)**

1. Proposal Cover Sheet
   A. Refer to **Appendix IV**.

2. Table of contents

A. Include a table of contents that identifies the material by section, page number, and a reference to the information to be contained in the proposal.

3. Executive Summary
    A. The Executive Summary should be about 1-3 brief paragraphs describing the Project.

4. Project Narrative (**Not to exceed 30 pages**)

    Description of Need - ***10 points***

    A. Describe how the identified community (geographic area) that the project intends to serve, meets criteria for serving a "low income community" and is "philanthropically underserved" (refer to Section X. D.) Additionally, describe youth in need ages 14-24 that may be served or are exiting public service systems such as child welfare and juvenile justice, are runaway or homeless or otherwise indicate additional need for supports and services as they transition to adulthood. Assessment of need should look at what resources and strengths exist as well as identifying the gap for services that this project is intended to fill. If services described in this application already exists, current evaluative results and/or "lessons learned" should be included in this assessment of need to gain a better overall picture of current activity in this area.

    Organizational and Collaborative Capacity - ***25 Points***

    A. Applicants should clearly state the vision, mission, and goals of the collaborative.
    B. Include the history of the collaborative, its structure, membership, and leadership.
    C. Include information about the organization, staff who will lead the project, their experience and qualifications to perform the activities that will be funded (include resumes and job descriptions for all personnel that will be working on the project).
    D. Describe experience with implementing a collective impact framework for collaboration in the targeted community (geographic region). Describe experience in driving long-term systemic change.
    E. Describe how the collaborative through the backbone organization has the financial capability, infrastructure, and policies/procedures to accept federal and local match funding.
    F. Describe the organizational and collaborative capacity to demonstrate that the applicant:
        1. Has held responsibility for a program or service that has already been shown by credible research to have preliminary evidence of success as defined by SIF (refer to page 13 for definition of preliminary evidence.

   2. Has experience collecting, reporting, and managing data.
   3. Has experience collecting and managing data in a "shared-use environment" (i.e., technology, collaborating on data management collection systems, and sharing, analyzing and planning).

G. The described project is further supported by attached memorandums of understanding, and/or letters of support from organizations or individuals who are collaborating that identify their roles and commitment to success.

<u>Project Description</u> – ***Narrative - 35 points*** ***Timeline – 10 points***

A. Narrative: Developing a connected youth system for supports and services through community collaboration is an ongoing process. Recognizing all communities have strengths and gaps, and challenges, applicants shall describe how the collaborative will develop the core components of a Connected Youth System in the identified community (geographic region).
   1. Target Population to be served. # of youth and how they were identified
   2. Any efforts that have been undertaken to identify the barriers these youth face with youth
   3. Identification of community barriers and strengths and how they will address.
   4. A cross–sector collaborative utilizing the Collective Impact functions and conditions.
   5. Project management for cross collaborative management, reports, grant contracts, financial reports, communication, grants management, data use and collection, accounting, resource coordination and development, capacity building, and coordinating training and education.
   6. Opportunities for youth leadership and advocacy through youth empowering processes. What already exists that might be enhanced. Positive Youth Development efforts?
   7. Central Navigation to support youth in accessing resources.
   8. Individual Development Accounts (IDA's) to support youth in achieving economic stability.
   9. An array of basic needs services and supports including: health, mental health, housing and transportation resources, assistance in obtaining personal records (birth certificates), parenting resources, nutrition and healthy lifestyles, which are provided by multiple community partners working in unison for youth.
   10. Educational supports for GED's, high school diploma's, enrollment and completion of post-secondary education, trade schools and specific career skill development.
   11. Employment supports to include the development or maintenance of work readiness skills, resume development, youth friendly employers.

12. Financial stability through financial education, credit recovery, renter training.
13. Permanence which is achieved through family finding, positive relationships with adult mentors and successful relationships.
14. Evaluation: Participants must indicate a willingness and describe capacity to participate in the final evaluation plans designed in partnership with Nebraska Children, a third party evaluator and the federal CNCS SIF evaluation team.

B. Project and Budget Timeline: Using your Project Description, provide the reader with a timeline that shows the chronological order in which the activities listed under each goal heading will be undertaken and/or completed. Also include information about how/when funds that are awarded will be spent to support each activity.

Note: The timeline should be an attachment and is not counted in the maximum page count.

5. Budget, Budget Narrative, Match, and Financial Capacity – ***20 points***

The Budget and accounting section includes three areas: Budget Form, Budget Narrative, and Description of Match Available. **The Budget should reflect the grant amount requested between $100,000-$150,000 per year for two years.**

A. **Budget Form**
The application needs to include a budget completed on the form provided. **Refer to Appendix V. Budget Worksheet.**

Two Year Budgets should take into account any funds needed to increase grantees' capacity for evaluation and data gathering.

B. **Budget Narrative**
In addition to the budget form, applications must include a budget narrative that clearly justifies expenditures for this project. The Budget Narrative outline with guidance regarding budget categories. **Refer to Appendix VI. Budget Narrative.**

C. **Description of Match**
Please identify any existing match sources currently available to meet the matching requirements. These funds should be reflected in your Budget.

(Note: The grantee must provide a 1:1 cash match that is, at a minimum, equal to 100% of the grant funds you are requesting from Nebraska Children. The project budget must reflect total costs inclusive of both the grant award and the required 1:1 match. Nebraska Children retains the discretion to determine the breakdown of costs between the grant award and the required 1:1 match. In general, half of each item of cost will be reimbursed. In remote cases, Nebraska Children may approve a different breakdown between the grant award and required 1:1 match by item of cost. The match must qualify under federal requirements. Please note that in-kind match (i.e., goods or services that you do not pay for) is not acceptable under the terms of this grant. Match cannot be previously-obligated funding that is redirected for purposes of meeting the match requirement.)

D. **Complete Financial Questionnaire**
Using the form provided (**Appendix VII**), please provide information regarding your organization's financial systems, staffing, and capacity as well as experience managing federal grants.

6. Appendices (include the following as attachments):
   i. IRS tax-exempt status determination letter
   ii. Current Organizational Chart
   iii. List of Staff, Officers, and Board of Directors
   iv. Resumes and job descriptions for all personnel that will be working on the project
   v. Project and Budget Timeline
   vi. Latest Annual Audited Financial Statements
   vii. Current General Operation Budget
   viii. Letters of commitment for any project consultants or subcontractors
   ix. Three (3) letters of support from key collaborative partners.
   x. Letters of support for your local cash match requirement identifying the possible sources and plans to develop a local cash match.

XV. Selection Criteria

No award will be made under this announcement on the basis of an incomplete application. Each application will be screened to determine eligibility as described in Section XII. Disqualified applications are considered to be "non-responsive" and are excluded from the competitive review process. Applicants will be notified of a disqualification determination by email or by USPS postal mail within 30 business days from the closing date of this funding opportunity announcement.

Objective Review and Results

Nebraska Children senior staff will initially review all Letters of Intent and Community Readiness criteria to determine whether they conform to the required format and clearly present all of the required elements and meet the eligibility requirements. These requirements are listed in the Letter of Intent and described in the RFP. Failure to meet these requirements may result in rejection of the Letter of Intent. Nebraska Children may ask applicants for clarification during this process.

Each proposal will be reviewed to identify those Letters of Intent that propose projects with a high likelihood of success in implementing the core components of a Connected

Youth System (as described in Section IV of the RFP), have the financial management systems in place to manage a federal grant, and have the ability to participate in a third-party evaluation and support a performance management system. The Letters of Intent will also be reviewed to determine the extent to which the project proposed is clearly described and well thought out, offers major benefits to our targeted client community, is cost-effective, involves all of the parties needed to make it successful and sustainable, and is either innovative or a cost effective replication of prior successful projects. Those applicants satisfying these criteria will be invited to submit full applications. Successful applicants will have until **5:00 p.m. CST, Friday, November 20, 2015 to complete full applications** via the online grants portal system.

Proposals received by November 20, 2015 meeting eligibility criteria will be reviewed and scored by members of a review team made up of Nebraska Children senior staff, two (2) young people and up to three (3) external reviewers. Each proposal will be reviewed by at least two reviewers who will independently review and score each proposal using a standardized evaluation tool that aligns with the selection criteria further described below which aligns with the proposal outline/guidance described in Section XIV

During the review process, Nebraska Children may request clarifying information of applicants concerning eligibility. A request for clarification does not guarantee a grant award. Failure to respond to a request for clarification by the date set forth in the request will result in removal of the application from consideration.

Applications determined to be non-compliant will not be considered. An application is compliant if the applicant satisfies all of the following requirements:

1. Is an eligible organization.
2. Submitted an application and required documentation by the submission deadline.
3. Submitted an application that is complete; in that it contains all required elements and additional documents and follows the instructions provided in the notice.
4. Submitted a budget reflecting required work activities, including applicant share of local evaluation costs.

Application Review and Scoring in Accordance with Key Selection Criteria

Proposal Section	Key Selection Criteria	Points/Weight
Project Narrative		
Description of Need	Low Income Community/Philanthropically Underserved	10
Organizational and Collaborative Capacity	High Performing Non-Profit, Cross-Sector Collaboration of Connected Youth System, Collect and Analyze Data, Evaluation Capacity	25

Project Description – Narrative	Comprehensive plan for addressing the supports and service needs for youth transitioning to adulthood.	35
Project Description – Timeline	Specific, Achievable	10
Budget, Budget Narrative, Match, & Financial Questionnaire	Reasonable Budget, High Performing Non-Profit/Fiscally Sound, Match	20

A. Low Income and Underserved:
See definitions for Low Income Community and Philanthropically Underserved in Section XII. D. Preference will also be given to collaboratives that are in communities that are philanthropically underserved, as these communities are a priority for the Social Innovation Fund. CNCS considers applicants to be serving significantly philanthropically underserved communities if they carry out activities in low-income communities that have considerably less than the average number of active philanthropic institutions or investments as similarly populated communities in their state or region. If applicable, applicants should describe, using data and statistics, why and how this definition applies to their community.

B. High Performing Non-Profit:
Applicants will be **high-performing nonprofits** (meeting the requirements of section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and exempt from taxation under section 501(a)) with the capacity to increase scale and impact and with the demonstrated capacity to serve as the convener or "backbone organization" of the community's collective impact collaborative.

1. They will have a leadership team, staff, and board of directors that are aligned around the organization's mission, strategy, and desire to facilitate a collaborative that drives implementation and scaling of evidence-based interventions for unconnected youth.
2. They will be fiscally sound and have the capacity to manage a federal grant, including quarterly financial reports, and adhere to Federal cost principles and procedures (which can be found in Section III.B. in the Social Innovation Fund Terms and Conditions, which can be found here: https://egrants.cns.gov/termsandconditions/2014SIF_Terms_and_Conditions_final_20140911.pdf), administrative requirements, and audit requirements
3. They will be capable of conducting criminal history checks for all staff supported with federal funds and all volunteers in SIF-funded programs with recurring access to children under 18. Information on criminal history check requirements can be found here: http://www.nationalservice.gov/sites/default/files/documents/fy13_12_1005_48.pdf
4. They will have experience in developing a long-term sustainability plan for a major initiative. Applicants will be required to develop sustainability plans that

outline the specific public and private funding streams they will leverage to support the sustainability of the interventions after SIF funding has ended.

5. They will have demonstrated capacity to manage evaluation data gathered from multiple providers implementing the Connected Youth System interventions and to provide the data required as part of the performance management system.

C . Cross-sector collaboration:

Applicants are providing backbone support to cross sector collaboratives, using a **collective impact approach** and with an explicit focus on unconnected youth, demonstrated through evidence of prior efforts to improve outcomes for the population. Cross-sector collaboratives will include high-level participation of the key sectors that touch unconnected youth, and community-based organizations that serve the population (refer to collaborative partner list in Community Readiness Questionnaire). Preference will be given to cross-sector collaboratives that include unconnected youth as leaders in their collaborative and have a structure to sustain youth input and decision-making.

D . Additional Indicators of Strong Collaboration and Readiness to Implement:

- Community collaboratives must have a set of guiding principles. Guiding Principles are defined as the "values in your community that all agree upon as a common experience that is unique and special to your community." These values highlight the strengths and challenges that are found in the community context. They can be represented in a shared list of values, a common vision for the community, and a communal mission.
- A community should have an existing partnership/group that focuses on prevention, public health, child well-being, Juvenile Justice reform, Project Everlast, etc. (e.g. advisory committees, broad based collaborative, other existing coalitions that represent multi-sector leaders) and that meets regularly to exchange information and solve problems.
- Collaborative partners need to show commitment and experience to the connected youth initiative through sharing of resources, alignment of existing resources and willingness to work together to fill gap in services and share ownership for outcomes.
- Collaborative structure that supports all members of the community to address community context (see definition in **Appendix VIII**) and environment, norms for older youth and shared planning, assessment and implementation
- Collective Impact functions (refer to **Appendix VIII).**
- Referrals and access to services. Referral networks within the community need to be established and support a culture of youth centered practices.
- Cultural Inclusion (see definition in **Appendix VIII**) – a community needs to understand and provide demographic breakdown of ethnic minority youth in the system and services most accessed Cultural inclusion needs to be documented both in plans and in process for all racial and ethnic minorities. Please describe plan to

ensure inclusivity of the community cultures is reflected in the planning and delivery of services for older youth. The community plan must be equitable and assure that all persons within the service area have equal access to the services and the cultural norms of the community support all youth to succeed. A statement detailing ways in which this will be done is required. The make-up of the collaborative and partnerships needed is key to assuring that inclusion and equity are achieved. We believe that a community that is inclusive and sensitive to equity issues will achieve successful outcomes for older youth.

E. Strong, specific, and achievable plan**:**
Applicants describe a specific, measurable, achievable plan. Including but not limited to:
   1. The number of disconnected youth that will be served in the connected youth system that they are developing, in one and two years;
   2. Firm commitments (in the form of at least 3 letters of commitment or Memoranda of Understanding) from the direct service providers and collaborative partners regarding the specific steps each will take to ensure careful and quality implementation of the pre-identified interventions.

In order to promote self-sufficiency and successful transition into adulthood it is important that a Connected Youth System address the 7 key areas of focus (Refer to Section V.)

F. Evaluation Capacity:
Applicants will demonstrate the capacity to participate in a third-party evaluation of the intervention and will demonstrate the capacity to collect, report, and manage data in a shared-use environment. Specific requirements that need to be addressed in the Letter of Intent are as follows:

   1. Applicants need to a) describe their collaborative's experience, if any, administering a program or service that has been shown by credible research to have at least a preliminary evidence of success as defined by SIF (refer to Appendix VIII. Definitions for a definition of preliminary evidence), and b) attach a copy of the deliverable (i.e. the evaluation report or similar) documenting this experience. Nebraska Children sees experience administering a program or service that has been shown by credible research to have at least preliminary evidence of success as a proxy measure of the applicant's ability to participate in a third-party evaluation and a proxy measure of the applicant's ability to collect, analyze, and manage data.

      Note: If applicants do not have experience administering a program or service that has already been shown by credible research to have preliminary evidence of success, they need to describe their potential capacity to do so.

2. Applicants need to describe their experience collecting, reporting, and managing data. This description should include a) the types of data they routinely collect and b) how this data is managed. Nebraska Children will use this to assess the applicant's ability to collect, report, and manage data. Note: If applicants do not have experience collecting, reporting, and managing data, they need to describe their potential capacity to do so.

3. Applicants need to describe their experience collecting and managing data in a shared-use environment. Examples of a shared-use environment include, but are not limited to: collaboration across multiple organizations through the use of the same technology platform; and collaboration across organizations in terms of data management collection systems, data sharing, data analysis, and/or data planning. Nebraska Children will use this information to assess the applicant's ability to collect and manage data in a shared-use environment.

   Note: If applicants do not have experience collecting and managing data collecting and managing data in a shared-use environment they need to describe their potential capacity to do so.

G. Capacity to meet Match Requirements and Fiscally Sound:
   1. Applicants will demonstrate a credible plan for securing, within a year, at least a **1:1 committed cash match** of unobligated non-federal funds to the SIF funds.
      a. Match funding must be non-federal funds, in cash.
      b. Applicants will have to satisfy the matching requirement on an annual basis before the next year's funding will be provided.
      c. The plan for raising match dollars will provide evidence of previous success of raising match funds, two-three strategies in play for raising the match including potential funders, a clear understanding of the local/regional funder terrain and any letters of commitment/interest from funders. The plan will also include goals and benchmarks for raising the match.
   2. **Budget and Narrative** is clearly justified, reasonable, meets requirements.
   3. **Fiscally Sound:** Nebraska Children will evaluate the risks to the program posed by applicants, including conducting due diligence to ensure an applicant's ability to manage federal funds. This is in addition to the evaluation of the applicant's eligibility and the quality of its application on the basis of the Selection Criteria. Results from this review will inform funding decisions.
   4. If Nebraska Children determines that an award will be made, special conditions that correspond to the degree of risk assessed may be applied to the award.
   5. In evaluating risks, Nebraska Children may consider the following:
      a. Financial stability
      b. Quality of management systems and the ability to meet the management standards prescribed in applicable OMB Guidance
      c. Applicant's record in managing previous public and private awards, cooperative agreements, or procurement awards, including:

i. Timeliness of compliance with applicable reporting requirements
ii. Accuracy of data reported
iii. Validity of performance measure data reported
iv. Conformance to the terms and conditions of previous federal awards
v. If applicable, the extent to which any previously awarded amounts will be expended prior to future awards
vi. Information available through OMB-designated repositories of government-wide eligibility qualification or financial integrity information, such as:
    1. Federal Awardee Performance and Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)
    2. Dun & Bradstreet and SAM
    3. "Do Not Pay"

d. Reports and findings from single audits performed under Subpart F – Audit Requirements, 2 CFR Part 200 and findings and reports of any other available audits
e. IRS Tax Form 990
f. Applicant organization's annual report
g. Publicly available information, including information from the applicant organization's website
h. Applicant's ability to effectively implement statutory, regulatory, or other requirements imposed on award recipients.

Based on the information gathered through the Letter of Intent with the Community Readiness tool, and the rating of the proposal using the selection criteria described, Nebraska Children will determine which applicants both meet the selection criteria and have the highest likelihood of success in implementing the interventions, and will select finalist subrecipients to forward to CNCS; based on CNCS input**, Nebraska Children will make final selection of subrecipients by January 15, 2016.**

APPENDIX I

Social Innovation Fund
Rural Nebraska Connected Youth Initiative

NOTICE

Request for Letters of Intent to Apply for 2015 – 2016 Grant Funding

Released: September 4, 2015

Letter of Intent Submission Deadline: October 7, 2015 by 5:00 p.m. CST
Submit by email to: Jamie Anthony at janthony@nebraskachildren.org

Components of Letter of Intent:

1. Legal Status of Applicant (refer to Section XI. A. of RFP).

2. Describe the geographic region that your collaborative will serve (be sure to include the cities and counties).

3. Describe the demographics of the population that your collaborative will reach. Nebraska Children encourages that collaborations attempt to serve a minimum of 200 unconnected youth annually but recognizing that some possible grantees will have varied amounts of potential population. Please provide an estimation of the possible number of young people (ages 14-24 and would be eligible for services through this grant) that your collaboration geographically expects to serve per year. Be sure to utilize and cite data sources (e.g. the Census) in your description. Collaborations can span across multiple counties or other designated regional coalitions.
   Please include the following:

   ____ # of unaccompanied former wards
   ____# of unaccompanied youth with former probation concerns
   ____ # of unaccompanied youth

4. Please provide a brief narrative summary (2-3 paragraphs) of your proposed project.

5. Please briefly describe your experience leading collaborative work in your target geography.

6. Describe your organization/collaborative commitment to cultural inclusion and equity.

7. Completed Community Readiness Questionnaire.

8. Copy of the deliverable (i.e. the evaluation report or similar) documenting your organization's experience administering a program or service that has already been shown by credible research to have at least preliminary evidence of success as defined by the Corporation for National and Community Service.

Appendices:

1. IRS tax-exempt status determination letter
2. Members of Collaborative list (refer to **Appendix IX**)

Community Readiness Questionnaire for Connected Youth Initiative

Organizational, Grant and Contact Information

Legal Name of Collaborative Entity:
Is this a new (one year or less) or existing collaboration? (circle) New Existing
Communities or Counties Involved:
Total Population of All Communities or Counties:
Projected Unaccompanied Youth Population:

Key Contact Information
Name:
Position in collaboration:
Agency:
Mailing Address:
Phone Number:
Email Address:

If a formal non-profit collaboration exists
Name:
Mailing Address:
City:
State:
Zip Code
Phone Number:
Fax Number:
Primary Contact:
Website:
President or Board Chairperson:

Financial Information
Name of fiscal officer or accounting firm:
Mailing Address:
City:
State:
Zip Code:
Phone Number:
Fax Number:
Email Address:

Collective Impact Capacity
Please describe the community collaborative:

Organizational Structure:

1. How long has the collaborative been existence?

2. Why was the collaborative formed?

3. How does the collaborative attract participants?
   - Complete the attached "Members of the Collaborative" form
     - Be sure to include current members or participants - include name & title, organization, role in the collaborative, address, and contact information.
   - What strategies has your community pursued to ensure that all parts of your community are represented in this group?

4. Provide the Mission and Vision Statements of the collaborative.

5. Describe 1-2 issues your collaborative faced in the past 1-3 years. Describe the challenges and what steps your group took to overcome the challenge.

6. Share 2-3 successes that your collaborative has experienced in the past 1-3 years. Describe how they were successful.

7. What strategies has your community pursued to ensure that all parts of your community are represented in this group?

8. Which of the following applies to the structure of the group? Please check all that apply.

	Formal leadership structure
	Committees, task forces
	Membership opportunities
	Regular meetings, communication
	Memorandum of agreement
	Fiscal agent identified for collaborative work
	Established policies and procedures, by-laws
	Formal decision making process
	Public and/or private funding

Community Capacity Assessment:

Following is a list of community agencies and roles. Please check all that apply to that item in relation to your community collaborative.

	Service Provider/ List serve	Provides resources when needed	Leadership role	Attends meetings	Not involved	Focus groups	Not in this area
Parents/consumers							
Youth							
Educators/Schools							
Early Childhood Providers							
Regional Mental Health							
Private Mental Health providers							
Public Health							
Health Care (hospital, clinics)							
Early Learning Connection Partnership							
Youth Councils							
DHHS – Service area Administrator							
Department of Labor							
Substance Use Prevention							
Disabled Services							
Probation							
Law Enforcement							
County Attorney							
Advocacy Groups and Parent Organization							
Food Pantries							
CoC Housing and Homelessness							
Colleges/Post-secondary							
Local Foundations							
United Way							

Chambers of Commerce							

	Service Provider/ List serve	Provides resources when needed	Leadership role	Attends meetings	Not involved	Focus groups	Not in this area
Economic Development							
Businesses							
Faith Community							
Service Organizations							
Local government leaders							
Extension Educators							
Non–profit groups (please list)							
e.g. Community Action Agency							

9. Does your community have any other existing partnership/group that focuses on prevention, public health, child well-being, Juvenile Justice reform, Project Everlast, etc. (e.g. advisory committees, broad based collaborative, other existing coalitions that represent multi-sector leaders) and that meets regularly to exchange information and solve problems?
    a. If so, how do you see their work meshing with the efforts of the developing Connected Youth Initiative?

Community Assessments:

10. Many communities have participated in formal assessments and planning efforts. Please indicate which of the following has occurred in your community in the last five years, approximate date, and geographic boundaries of the effort:

Process	Date of Plan	Geographic Area(s)
Juvenile Justice Plan		
Public Health Assessments		
Service Array		

Child Well Being Assessments		
Community Early Childhood System Of Care (ECSOC) Self-Assessment		
Developmental Assets Profile		
Youth Leadership Inventory		
Nebraska Maternal Infant Early childhood Home Visiting (N-MIECHV) Community Assessment Tool Box for Home Visiting		
Environmental scan		
Other (specify)		

11. If you have completed some of the above assessments, indicate which ones have an ongoing effort to implement plans developed from the findings, and who is responsible for the implementation.

12. Is your community data informed (data is gathered for particular community decisions and processes) and/or is it data driven (data is shared within the collaborative and is updated through an ongoing and continuous process)?

13. Does your community have a Central Access/Coordinated referral system (Community response, Alternative response, etc.)?

14. Does your referral system have a common referral form?

15. Is there a process to identify data at the time of intake into services?

OUTCOMES:
The 7 outcome areas for self-sufficiency and successful transition into adulthood include:

1. **Personal and Community Engagement**: Youth have supportive relationships, are able to access services in the community to achieve their personal goals and have a voice and connection to their community.
2. **Education**: Youth receive sufficient education and training to enable them to obtain and retain employment.
3. **Employment**: Youth generate a sufficient income to support themselves by obtaining and retaining employment.
4. **Daily Living/Housing and Transportation**: Youth have access to safe, stable, affordable housing in the community that is near public transportation, school and work.
5. **Physical and Mental Health**: Youth have sufficient and affordable health insurance and services for both physical and behavioral health.
6. **Permanence:** Young people have a network of stable, caring people in their life that will be around no matter what happens.

7. **Economic Stability**: Provide youth with assistance in understanding daily budgets, accessing financial assistance and services, opening/maintaining bank accounts, and other financial learning skills.

In order to promote self-sufficiency and successful transition into adulthood it is important that a Connected Youth System address 7 key areas of focus.

Please answer the following questions about your community in the following areas:

- **If the following statements are checked as existing in the community, please provide an explanation in each comments section and explain how this is being exhibited within the community or surrounding communities.**

Personal and Community Engagement:
Youth as partners are key to the work needed to influence a connected youth system, are any of these current efforts in your community to support their involvement in the process. Please check all that apply:

____ Cross – sector community collaborative
____ Youth organized social/community groups or leadership boards
____ Facilitation of peer support or other youth-to-youth informal mentoring
____ Intentional efforts to engage youth in activities and meetings to address policy changes, system/service coordination, and/or leadership roles within organizations, the community, or their schools
____ Efforts to assist youth in locating needed resources
____ Intentional efforts to assist youth in reducing poverty and early parenting risk factors and promoting youth centered practices

Comments:

Education: Post-secondary education has been identified as a predictor for future personal success and self-sufficiency. Please review the following statements about opportunities for youth to access on-going education and supports. Please check all that currently apply in your community:

____ Youth have access to educational supports for higher academic achievement (mentoring programs, school based learning supports, community based study groups, etc.)
____ Youth receive assistance in obtaining their high school diplomas or GED through placement stabilization, secure housing, transportation, and/or other supportive needs services
____ Youth have help in applying for and educated about scholarships or student loans

____ Youth are provided with a chance to visit local/regional/state colleges
____ Youth are familiar with certificate programs and other post-secondary career educational resources

Comments:

Employment: Employment is essential to community connectedness and the ability provides a place of belonging. Please review the following statements about opportunities for youth to gain employment and job skills. Please check all that currently apply in your community:

____ Youth have access to job training programs (to include: internships, on the job training, trade unions, or other job training programs)
____ Employers have access to trainings for their staff and supervisors that focus on the needs of unconnected youth by addressing trauma informed practices, Bridges out of Poverty interventions, Positive Youth Development techniques, and other employment retention practices
____ Youth have access to work clothes and other essential trade equipment at no, low, or reduced costs to help promote employment and reduce poverty within the community
____ Youth are encouraged to work while in out of home placements to gain work history and experience

Comments:

Daily Living/Housing and Transportation: Long term stability and consistency with essential needs is crucial for promoting self-sufficiency and transition into adulthood. Please review the following statements about the availability and opportunity for youth to meet their essential needs in the community and check all that currently apply in your community:

____ Youth have access to food programs and pantries to address nutritional needs
____ Youth are educated on healthy nutritional habits for themselves and their children, where applicable
____ Youth have access to supports and services to maintain safe and adequate housing (local programs, emergency assistance funds, utility assistance, youth friendly landlord options, etc.)

____ Youth have access to public transportation, car pool programs, or other transportation options in order to get to work, school, or other appointments

Comments:

Physical/Dental and Mental Health: Preventative and maintenance mental/physical health care helps to reduce time missed at work/school, long-term chronic illnesses, and better crisis cycle management. Please review the following statements about the different mental/physical health options that exist in the community and check all that currently apply in your community:

____ Youth have access to health insurance through local employment, the health market (navigation services), or assistance in applying for Medicaid or other public health options

____ Prescription and medication needs can be served through options for low or no cost prescription plans with national, statue, or local pharmaceutical providers

____ Youth have access to all their essential mental/physical/dental health records

____ Youth have access to counseling or other mental health rehabilitation services within the community

____ Community support groups or other peer-to-peer mental health options are available to youth in time of need

____ The community has access to or the ability to interact with the Nebraska Telehealth Network

Comments:

Permanence: Young people have access to informal and formal supports to help create lifelong supportive relationships. Please review the following statements about how youth connect to others in their community and/or extended families: and check all that currently apply in your community**:**

____ Youth have access to Family Finding™ services

____ Mentoring or other formal connections are available to help youth connect to others in their community

____ Faith Based communities offer youth friendly opportunities to become members

____ During or afterschool activities are offered and supported for youth currently in care

____ Sibling activities are promoted and/or are offered as opportunities to strengthen family bonds (Camp Catch Up or local sibling activities)

____ Parenting classes and other parenting resources are available to youth at risk of losing custody of their children to the Department of Health and Human Services

Comments:

Economic Stability: Stability and knowledge around financial well-being is an essential component to preventing generational poverty in our communities. Please review the following statements around economic needs and financial ability of youth in your community:

____ Basic financial education is offered to all youth in the community (budgeting, understanding the importance of credit scores, credit card practices, etc.)

____ Youth are provided with assistance in establishing positive credit, even while in out-of-home placements (Youth have access to free credit checks and youth focused credit counseling)

____ Youth are informed of predatory lending practices

____ Budgeting and debt consolidation is a youth friendly process and services are available to help youth consolidate debt

____ Asset purchase supports are available to youth (youth have access to an individual/program to help them in purchasing a car, a home, and/or educational loans or resources)

Comments:

16. What are other areas or risk factors that a connected youth system should be aware of and address within your community?

____ Lack of Quality Child Care

____ Insufficient Mental Health services

____ School Absenteeism

____ Unplanned Pregnancies

____ STI rates

____ Lack of affordable housing

____ Lack of living wage jobs

____ Transportation barriers

____ Racial or ethnic inequalities

____ Insufficient amount of food pantries

____ Other (specify):

17. What are strengths that the community currently has that can or is being utilized to help older youth reach self-sufficiency and transition into adulthood more successfully?

Evaluation Capacity

1. Please describe your community collaborative's experience, if any, administering a program or service that has already been shown by credible research to have at least a preliminary evidence of success as defined by the Corporation for National and Community Service AND attach a copy of the deliverable (i.e. the evaluation report or similar) documenting this experience. **Refer to Appendix VIII. Definitions for a definition of preliminary evidence.**
    - If your community collaborative does not have experience with the above, describe your community collaborative's potential capacity to administer such a program.

2. Please describe your community collaborative's experience collecting, reporting, and managing data.
    - Applicants should note the types of data they routinely collect and how this data is managed.
    - If your community collaborative does not have experience collecting, reporting, and managing data, describe your community collaborative's potential capacity to do so.

3. Please describe your and/or your staff's experience collecting and managing data in a shared-used environment. Examples of a shared-use environment include, but are not limited to: collaboration across multiple organizations through the use of the same technology platform; and collaboration across organizations in terms of data management collection systems, data sharing, data analysis, and/or data planning.
    - If you and/or your staff do not have such experience, describe your and/or your staff's potential capacity to do so.

APPENDIX II

Connected Youth Initiative System

For Unconnected Youth (Youth involved in Juvenile Justice System (not currently on probation), Foster Care System and/or is experiencing homelessness)

Core Principles

Broad Based Collaborative with Collective Impact Backbone and Functions which supports:

- Community Ownership
- Alignment of resources and ability to fill gaps in services and supports to focus on the

Components

Youth Engagement, Leadership
Central Access Navigation/Common Referral process
Fiscal Readiness/IDA programs
Additional Transitional Services

Results in Improved Outcomes for Young People:

- Personal and Community Engagement
- Education
- Employment
- Daily Living/Housing and Transportation Physical and Mental Health
- Permanence
- Economic Stability

APPENDIX III

Applicant Final Check Sheet

☐ Proposal Cover Sheet

☐ Completed Proposal

☐ Appendices

_____IRS tax-exempt status determination letter
_____Current Organizational Chart
_____List of Staff, Officers, and Board of Directors
_____Resumes and job descriptions for all personnel that will be working on the project
_____Project and Budget Timeline
_____Latest Annual Audited Financial Statements
_____Current General Operation Budget
_____Letters of commitment for any project consultants or subcontractors
_____Three (3) letters of support from key collaborative partners
_____Letters of support for your local cash match requirement identifying the possible sources and plans to develop a local cash match

☐ Signature of Assurances

APPENDIX IV

SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND (SIF)
RURAL NEBRASKA CONNECTED YOUTH INITIATIVE

PROPOSAL COVER SHEET

PROPOSAL DUE: November 20, 2015; 5:00 p.m. CST

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Legal Name of Organization Applying: ____

Proposal Contact Person: ____

Proposal Contact Phone: ____

Proposal Contact Email: ____

Organization EIN: ____

Organization DUNS #: ____

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

Total Amount Requested: ____

Project Title: ____

APPENDIX VI

Directions for Completing Budget Narrative

PROJECT CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS:

Collective Impact / Systems Management (up to 25% of budget) — Management and follow-through to ensure project outcomes are created, actions sufficient to achieve the outcomes are created, accountabilities are assigned, follow-up is done, project status and tracking are done, and communications between vendors and all participants is done.

Central Access (up to 15% of budget) — Central Access process is designed to be a systematic approach to a continuum of care and provide a place of reference, referral, coordination, and gather data in order to identify service trends and population needs. Central Access process will provide youth with:

- a youth centered approach to help identify needs and services available
- Maintain a "warm hand-off" approach to referrals by advocating for the youth with agencies and organizations that will deliver services
- Collect data that helps to identify gaps in services, tracks who is accessing services, how many youth after age 14-24 are in the service area, what are the immediate needs of youth, mapping the referral practices for the service area, etc.
- Maintain or develop an extensive referral network with community partners

Nebraska Youth IDA Accounts (up to 25% of budget) — A matched savings account, which could be personal bank account or an Individual Development Account (IDA), is designed to help an individual establish a pattern of regular savings and accumulate assets. An "asset" is something of value that is likely to return substantial long-term benefits to its owner—benefits like security, stability, and opportunities for more income.

- Nebraska Youth IDA will provide financial literacy curriculum to increase youth knowledge around financial matters
- Help youth identify their credit score and financial coaching in order to help unconnected establish, repair, or maintain their credit scores

Evaluation (minimum of 15% of budget) — Evaluation costs are those associated with the gathering, storage, and reporting of data in relation to the grant and/or project. The suggestion is that evaluation be a minimum of 15% of total costs. These should be independent, local evaluators chosen in collaboration with Nebraska Children. Any personnel costs required for evaluation should be detailed under Wages. These costs may include:

- Subgrantee data collection and reporting software (product to be determined)
- Licenses for the community-based service providers that will need access to a data collection system
- Personnel time to collect, enter, report and analyze evaluation data in cooperation with the Nebraska Children local evaluators, including the third-party contractor, and personnel

time and any other resources necessary for effective application of evaluation findings in the implementation and administration of their local CYI model (such as professional development of community providers around cultural or linguistic needs of youth, or adoption of an evidence-based practice model for dual-generation supports for youth who are pregnant or parenting, etc.)

- The evaluation budgets will likely change over time and will be re-examined annually prior to execution of the subsequent year’s subgrantee contract

Youth Voice / Services (up to 20% of budget) — Members serving on a standing or ad-hoc community committee, council, and/or leadership group, in order to provide a consistent avenue for youth voice at an agency, community, and system level.

- Efforts should be made to remove barriers to participation such as transportation, childcare, missed work or conflicts with school

Connected Youth Systems Management (up to 20% of budget) — Connected Youth System Management is the process to maintain oversight and collaboration across the communities connected youth system and stakeholders.

- Role will include but not be limited to contracting for services, managing resources to adapt to regional area capacity needs, maintaining collaborative relationships between agencies, budget oversight, oral and written reports to funders and overall program continuous quality improvement

Additional Outcome Areas (up to 10% of budget) —

Post-Secondary/Employment: Youth receive sufficient education and training to enable them to obtain and retain employment.
Housing: Youth have access to safe, stable, affordable housing in the community.
Physical and Mental Health: Youth have sufficient and affordable health insurance and services for both physical and mental health.
Daily Needs: Youth have access to food and other items to support daily activities and lifestyle.
Community Training, Education and Policies: connected youth system has the ability to develop and look at best practices in order to address the individual needs of youth in the community.

EXPENSE CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS:

Personnel Wages — List each position by title. Show the annual salary rate and the percentage of time to be devoted to the grant. Compensation paid for employees engaged in grant activities must be consistent with that paid for similar work within your organization. List only the employees of the applicant organization; all other grant-funded positions should be listed under the “Contract/Consulting” category.

Personnel Benefits and Payroll Taxes — Payroll Taxes Include costs of benefit(s) for the project staff. Identify the types of fringe benefits to be covered and the costs of benefit(s) for each staff position. Allowable fringe benefits typically include FICA, Worker’s Compensation, Retirement, SUTA, Health and Life Insurance, IRA, and 401K. You may provide a calculation for total benefits as a percentage of the salaries to which they apply or list each benefit as a separate item. If a fringe benefit amount is over 30%, please list covered items separately and justify the high cost. Holidays, leave, and other similar vacation benefits are not included in the fringe benefit rates, but are absorbed into the personnel expenses (salary) budget line item. *Ex. Fringe benefit rate = 28%: Direct Salaries of $42,000 x .28 = $11,760 in Fringe Benefits*

Travel — Itemize travel expenses for project personnel by purpose (e.g., staff to training, field interviews, and advisory group meetings). Show how you calculated these costs (e.g., six people to 3-day training at $X airfare, $X lodging, $X meals). For training projects, list travel and meals for trainees separately. Show the number of trainees and the unit costs involved. Identify the location of travel, if known. Indicate the source of any travel policies you have applied, and if applicant or federal travel regulations apply.

Supplies — Include the funds for the purchase of consumable supplies and materials that do not fit the definition of Equipment. List any single item costing $1,000 or more. Applicants should provide the calculation for cost determinations. *Ex. Consumable office supplies (e.g. paper, pens) @ $250 and conference supplies (name badges, table tents) @ $320 for a total of $570*

Training and Outreach — List activity (e.g., training, professional development, parent education/engagement). List items (e.g., registration fees, website development, marketing expenses, training materials, and meeting expenses) by major type and show how you calculated the costs.

Vendor Contracts — Refer to the contract regarding agreed upon process for vendor contracts.

- Contracts: Describe the product or service to be procured by contract and provide an estimate of the cost.
- Consultant Fees: For each consultant, enter the name, if known, service to be provided, hourly or daily fee (8-hour day), and estimated time on the project.
- Consultant Expenses: List all expenses to be paid from the grant to the individual consultant(s) in addition to their fees (e.g., travel, meals, and lodging).

Other Expenses — If applicable, list and describe any expenses that do not fit into the specified categories identified.

Indirect Expenses — If you have a federally negotiated indirect cost rate (requires federal approval), you must use it. If you do not have a federal indirect cost rate, indirect costs should be entered as direct expenses detailed out specifically under "Other Expenses." If you are a nonprofit organization and have never had a federal indirect cost rate, instead of entering indirect costs as direct costs, you could also enter an amount up to 10% of your modified total direct costs.

APPENDIX V and VII

Budget Form and Financial Question (questions below) - see Excel Spreadsheet

FINANCIAL QUESTIONNAIRE

ORGANIZATION

Organization Name:
Address:
Representative Name and Title:
Phone:
Email:
Year Established:
EIN#:
DUNS#:
Organization Type: Non-profit, For Profit, Educational, or State/Local Govt
Number of Employees: Full time: _____, Part time: _____
Year Established:

AUDIT

Date of Last Financial Statement Audit:
Fiscal Period Audited:
Audit Firm:
Type of Opinion (Qualified/Unqualified)
If Qualified Opinion, Explain:
Date of Last OMB A-133/Single Audit:
Fiscal Period Audited:
Audit Firm:
If Findings Reported, Explain:

ACCOUNTING SYSTEM

Provides for the recording of grant/contract costs according to the categories of the approved budget?
Identifies receipt and expenditure of funds separately for each grant or contract?
Recording of cost sharing/matching for each project?
Describe budgetary controls
Describe any challenges you anticipate in providing detailed reporting on the use of this grant on a quarterly basis.

TIMEKEEPING SYSTEM

Time records are maintained for each employee and account for 100% of time?

FEDERAL FUNDS MANAGEMENT

New Recipient of Federal funds?

Separate bank account for Federal funds?

If separate bank account not maintained, can Federal funds and expenses be readily identified?

Procedures in place to minimize time between the transfer of funds and organization's expenditure of these funds?

Active registration with Central Contractor Registration at www.sam.gov?

Describe knowledge of federal cost principles and procedures.

FINANCIAL HEALTH

Please describe your financial and organizational capacity to manage a grant of this size and scope.

Assessment of scaling ability.

APPENDIX VIII

DEFINITIONS

Collective Impact

The commitment of a group of actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem, using a structured form of collaboration. The concept of collective impact was first articulated in the 2011 Stanford Social Innovation Review article *Collective Impact*, written by John Kania, Managing Director at FSG, and Mark Kramer, Kennedy School at Harvard and Co-founder FSG.

For this initiative, the concept of collective impact hinges on the idea that in order for organizations to create lasting solutions to social problems on a large-scale, they need to coordinate their efforts and work together around clearly identified goals for unconnected youth.

Initiatives must meet five criteria in order to be considered collective impact:

- ***Common Agenda:*** All participating organizations and participants have a shared vision for social change that includes a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving the problem through agreed upon actions.
- ***Shared Measurement System:*** Agreement on the ways success will be measured and reported with a short list of key indicators across all participating organizations.
- ***Mutually Reinforcing Activities:*** Engagement of a diverse set of stakeholders, typically across sectors, coordinating a set of differentiated activities through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.
- ***Continuous Communication:*** Frequent communications over a long period of time among key players within and across organizations, to build trust and inform ongoing learning and adaptation of strategy.
- ***Backbone Organization:*** Ongoing support provided by an independent staff dedicated to the initiative. The backbone staff tends to play six roles to move the initiative forward. *Guide Vision and Strategy*; *Support Aligned Activity*; *Establish Shared Measurement Practices*; *Build Public Will; Advance Policy; and Mobilize Funding*.

Youth leadership/advocacy

Members serving on a standing or ad-hoc community committee, council, and/or leadership group, in order to provide a consistent avenue for youth voice at an agency, community, and system level.

- Efforts should be made to remove barriers to participation such as transportation, childcare, missed work or conflicts with school.

Central Access Navigation

The Central Access process is designed to be a systematic approach to a continuum of care and to provide a place of reference, referral and coordination, and system-wide data collection for connected youth resources and services. A strong Central Access process will:

- Provide a youth centered approach to help identify needs and services available

- Maintain a “warm hand-off” approach to referrals by advocating for the youth with agencies and organizations that will deliver services
- Collect data that helps to identify gaps in services, tracks who is accessing services, how many youth after age 14-24 are in the service area, what are the immediate needs of youth, mapping the referral practices for the service area, etc.
- Maintain or develop an extensive referral network with community partners

Nebraska Youth Individual Development Accounts

A matched savings account, which could be personal bank account or an Individual Development Account (IDA), designed to help an individual establish a pattern of regular savings and accumulate assets. An “asset” is something of value that is likely to return substantial long-term benefits to its owner—benefits like security, stability, and opportunities for more income.

- Nebraska Youth IDA will provide financial literacy curriculum to increase youth knowledge around financial matters
- Help youth identify their credit score and financially coach the youth through a process of establishing, repairing, or maintaining their credit scores

Post-Secondary/Employment: Youth receive sufficient supports and resources to achieve educational goals and have access to employment trainings/internships to enable them the opportunity to obtain and retain employment.

Housing: Youth have access to available, safe, stable, and affordable housing in the community to help provide a place of belonging and self-reliance. Housing should be dependable and in order to be self-reliant youth must be able to have an affordability plan to maintain their housing opportunity.

Physical and Mental Health: Youth have sufficient and affordable health insurance and services for both physical, dental, and mental health. Health services should also provide special considerations for addiction, medications, and supports for parenting and pregnant unconnected youth.

Daily Needs: Youth have access to food and other items to support daily activities and lifestyle. Reliable access to transportation should be addressed as a daily need in order to maintain employment, get to needed health services, achieve educational goals, and establish a long term housing option.

Community Training, Education and Policies: Unconnected youth community systems will need to develop and identify local best practices in order to address the individual needs of youth in the community.

Family Finding: Is a method of identifying an unconnected youth’s lifetime support network through an interview process which the youth leads in order to identify people of significance in their life history, conducting a search through credited locating data base or organizations, and help the youth to initiate and establish a health reconnection to important people from their past.

Social Innovation Fund Evidence Tiers
Evidence Tiers: The Corporation for National Service Social Innovation Fund uses the following definitions of preliminary, moderate, and strong evidence, recognizing that there are multiple levels of development within each tier. These definitions are consistent with those used by the Office of Management and Budget:

- Preliminary evidence means evidence that is based on a reasonable hypothesis supported by credible research findings. Thus, research that has yielded promising results for either the program model or a similar program model will meet CNCS' criteria. Examples of research that meet the standards include: 1) outcome studies that track participants through a program and measure participants' responses at the end of the program; and 2) third-party pre- and post-test research that determines whether the participants have improved on an intended outcome.

- Moderate evidence means evidence from previous studies on the program, the designs of which can support casual conclusions (i.e., studies with high internal validity) but have limited generalizability (i.e., moderate external validity). This also can include studies for which the reverse is true—studies that only support moderate casual conclusions but have broad general applicability.

  The following would constitute moderate evidence:
  1. at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental or quasi-experimental study supporting the effectiveness of the practice strategy, or program, with small sample sizes or other conditions of implementation or analysis that limit generalizability;
  2. at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental or quasi-experimental study that does not demonstrate equivalence between the intervention and comparison groups at program entry but has no other major flaws related to internal validity; or
  3. correlational research with strong statistical controls for selection bias and for discerning the influence of internal factors.

- Strong evidence means evidence from previous studies on the program, the designs of which can support casual conclusions (i.e., studies with high internal validity), and that, in total, include enough of the range of participants and settings to support scaling up to the state, regional, or national level (i.e., studies with high external validity).

  The following are examples of strong evidence:
  1. More than one well- designed and well-implemented experimental study or well-designed and well- implemented quasi-experimental study that supports the effectiveness of the practice, strategy, or program; or
  2. One large, well-designed and well-implemented randomized controlled, multisite trial that supports the effectiveness of the practice, strategy, or program.

Cultural Inclusion/Community Context
Community Inclusion refers to the process of assuring that all members of the community have equitable roles in the development of the community. Cultural inclusion refers to those who are most likely to be excluded from community due to racial, ethnic, religious and socioeconomic status. While this work focuses on rural communities as a unique culture, use of a rural framework for cultural inclusion negates the importance of assuring inclusion of those "least likely to have a voice "in community decisions.

Community members must first establish inclusive relationships and decision making within communities and coalitions. Cultural inclusion is therefore an integral component of assessment and planning in community systems, community context, collaborative development, and planning for services or initiatives. Success in changing outcomes in any initiative is in large part based on developing and strengthening relationships within communities.

Cultural inclusion requires an ongoing partnership with All community members in the assessment, planning, implementation, evaluation, and sustainability of systems and services. This occurs within collaborative capacity, data collection, community context, and the connected youth system. Cultural inclusion is therefore imbedded in the work plan for each step of the process.

- Collaboration and community dialogue and consensus about what constitutes cultural competency, cultural relevance, and cultural inclusion.
- Partnerships between cultural organizations/coalitions and other community coalitions to complete all facets of the functions listed above.
- Assuring opportunities for multiple people from a culture to learn and participate through ongoing community meetings (held in culturally competent ways, including a meal) where community members feel safe and free to talk openly. The most successful of these groups engage people from a number of family groups, enhance relationships within this community, and honor the values of the culture.
- Education of mainstream community members about mechanisms for race equity and inclusion, including dialogue about the wealth, power and status within the community and how this impacts persons from racial and ethnic minorities.
- Assuring that a diverse group of people from within racial and ethnic groups fully participate and affirm the selection of programs and any cultural adaptations that might be made.
- Service delivery by people from within the culture. Establishing a community process for affirmation of those hired to provide services to assure acceptance within the community.
- Community agencies and organizations adoption of culturally relevant employment policies.
- Development of culturally competent evaluation process designed and implemented within the culture by people from the culture.
- Strategies for focusing on the positive contributions from other cultures. All too often our focus on racial and ethnic differences is on the identification of problems. Identification of community norms includes norms from racial and ethnic groups.

APPENDIX IX

Members of the Collaborative

Use to identify collaborative members, their role in the collaborative, and their contact information.

Please indicate who was involved in completing this form:

Name & Title	Organization	Role in Collaborative	Address	Contact Information (phone & email)

APPENDIX X

Subrecipient Assurances Statement

Name of Organization: ____

On behalf of the above named organization, I assure to comply with the following requirements:

I. **National Service Criminal History Background Checks**

Subrecipients must ensure compliance with the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) National Service Criminal History Check requirements. Subrecipients must agree to conduct CNCS-compliant criminal history background checks for all employees or other individuals who receive a salary, stipend or similar payment from the SIF grant subaward and/or from the applicant's non-CNCS cash match. Nebraska Children will cover the costs of subrecipients completing these required background checks on a cost reimbursement basis.

The National Service Criminal History Check (NSCHC) includes:

1. A nationwide name-based search of the National Sex Offender Public Website (NSOPW); and
2. Either:
    a. A name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person's state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work, or
    b. A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

Special Rule for Persons Serving Vulnerable Populations:
Subrecipient staff, national service participants, and volunteers with recurring access to vulnerable populations (i.e., children age 17 or younger, individuals age 60 or older, or individuals with disabilities) must undergo NSCHCs that include:

1. A nationwide name-based check of the NSOPW; and
2. Both:
    a. A name- or fingerprint-based search of the statewide criminal history registry in the person's state of residence and in the state where the person will serve/work; and
    b. A fingerprint-based FBI criminal history check.

An individual is ineligible to serve in a position that receives CNCS-SIF funding if the individual is registered, or required to be registered, as a sex offender or has been convicted of murder.

Subrecipients selected by Nebraska Children for SIF awards will receive training on conducting compliant NSCHC, the procedure to submit the completed check to Nebraska Children personnel authorized to collect and maintain such information in a private and secure manner, and the process for reimbursement of incurred NSCHC completion costs to the Subrecipient.

II. **Non-Discrimination Requirements**

Nebraska Children and its selected SIF Subrecipients must comply with all federal statutes relating to nondiscrimination. These include but are not limited to: (a) Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin; (b) Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. 1681-1683, and 1685-1686). which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex; (c) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. 794), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability (d) The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. 6101-6107), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age; (e) The Drug Abuse Office and Treatment Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-255), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of drug abuse; (f) The Comprehensive Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation Act of 1970 (P.L. 91-616), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination on the basis of alcohol abuse or alcoholism; (g) sections 523 and 527 of the Public Health Service Act of 1912 (42 U.S.C. 290dd-3 and 290ee-3), as amended, relating to confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records; (h) Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (42 U.S.C. 3601 et seq.), as amended, relating to nondiscrimination in the sale, rental or financing of housing; (i) any other nondiscrimination provisions in the National and Community Service Act of 1990, as amended; and (j) the requirements of any other nondiscrimination statute(s) which may apply to the application.

Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient (LEP) Persons. Pursuant to Executive Order (EO) 13166 – Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, Subrecipients are required to provide meaningful access to their programs and activities by LEP persons.

Public Notice of Non-discrimination. The subrecipient must notify members, community beneficiaries, applicants, program staff, and the public, including those with impaired vision or hearing, that it operates its program or activity subject to the non-discrimination requirements applicable to their program found at §§175 and 176(f) of the NCSA or §417 of the DVSA, and relevant program regulations found at 45 CFR Parts 2540 (AmeriCorps State and National), 2551 (Senior Companion Program), 2552 (Foster Grandparent Program), 2553 (RSVP), and 2556 (AmeriCorps VISTA). The notice must summarize the requirements, note the availability of compliance information and briefly explain procedures for filing discrimination complaints with the federal agency providing SIF funding: CNCS.

III. **Assurance of Additional Requirements**

1. The applying organization will be a part of a proactive and interactive partnership, and is willing and/or designated to serve as a backbone organization using the collective impact model to implement the Connected Youth Initiative model
2. The applying organization will adhere to all federal grant program guidelines, including background checks, financial compliance, and future reporting.
3. The applying organization must understand that costs associated with the grant are required to meet federal standards for allowable costs, which do not necessarily include all costs that the organization will incur in order to perform their awards. For example, the costs of raising funds in order to meet the non-federal share of the budget ("matching funds") are not allowable costs under OMB cost principles. Applicants should refer to the Federal cost principles at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/index.html. As described in the OMB cost principles, applicant budgets will include a combination of direct and indirect costs. Applicants with approved indirect cost rates for federal grants must use those rates for any indirect costs they include in their budgets.
4. Applicants should also note that disbursements to awardees of the SIF will be made upon signature and onboarding requirements are fulfilled. At this time 25% of the grant will be provided. Quarterly documentation and budget reports will be submitted to receive the remaining 75% per year. The cost reimbursement basis will continue for the full two years upon submission and approval of proper documentation of expenses.

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Authorized Signer & Title Date