

Selection Panel Booklet

Everything a Panelist Needs to Know

A Message to Panelists

Thank you for serving as a Panelist for this Youth Venture Selection Panel. This packet contains everything you'll need for your role as Panelist; please review it before the scheduled Panel event, and bring it with you when you come.

In case you are not yet familiar with Youth Venture, or if you have only a basic sense of who Youth Venture is and what they do, the next page of this packet provides some introduction.

The criteria for selection into Youth Venture are included in the following pages; these are the criteria upon which we ask that you judge the candidates. It is up to the panel to decide, based on the selection criteria, whether teams are approved to become official Youth Venture Teams, and it is up to the panel to decide the amount of Youth Venture grant funding a team is eligible to receive. You will ultimately be asked to recommend one of the following: Unconditional approval; Conditional approval; or Rejection. In addition, you will be asked to provide feedback and suggestions that may be useful to the team collectively, or to the individual presenters.

The action plan(s) of the team(s) presenting at this Panel are included in the packet, each preceded by an Executive Summary and Panelist Recommendation Form. You will be asked to submit that form to the Panel facilitator to indicate your recommendations.

The Youth Venture Selection Panel is a key juncture marking the transition for the youth from idea stage to implementation. In this Panel process, our aim is both to select strong teams, and to equip them with recommendations and feedback that will help them with the strongest start possible. Your role on both fronts is paramount, and we appreciate your involvement.

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A Youth Venture Synopsis

Youth Venture is:

Youth Venture is a national private nonprofit organization that helps young people (ages 12-20) start new, self-sustaining community-benefiting Ventures (school clubs, community-based organizations, nonprofit businesses, even for-profit businesses that benefit the community) which address issues of concern in their schools, neighborhoods, or larger communities. A Venture can be any youth-created, youth-led organization designed to provide a positive lasting benefit in the school, neighborhood, or larger community.

Examples include:

- a community youth center designed to keep youth out of trouble with music and art programs (Team Revolution, Brooklyn, NY)
- a school-based anti-peer pressure education campaign (Why Tease?, Chicago IL)
- a for-profit landscape business that also provides monthly free or at-cost services to local elderly or disabled residents (A&J Curb Appeal, Hampstead, NH)

Among the ways that Youth Venture helps young people include: providing a process and guidance for developing business plans for their Venture ideas; providing seed funding of up to \$1,000 for start-up expenses; providing advice for overcoming implementation obstacles; providing connections with mentors and other Venture teams; and providing exposure to opportunities for publicity, training, grants, and scholarships.

The Vision:

Youth Venture seeks to provide every young person the opportunity to have the life-transforming experience of realizing an idea, building and leading a team, and creating an ongoing benefit for his/her community. We envision ultimately 100,000 Venture Teams involving millions of young people. We expect that a handful of successful Ventures in a school or community can tip the view of youth from one of youth as largely apathetic, disengaged, or incapable of affecting or sustaining meaningful community impact, to one which expects, and in fact, promotes productive civic involvement and problem-solving among all youth. On a larger scale, we anticipate that the Youth Venture movement can transform youth culture nationally from an attitude of “can’t” to “can” and result in a generation of youth developing into the involved citizens and leaders of the future.

Youth Venture so far:

Through its first several years of operation and program and partnership development, Youth Venture has been the catalyst for nearly 600 venture teams (involving over 12,000 youth) from 42 states. Youth Venture is now growing at an exponential rate that is yielding hundreds of new teams per year, and by the end of this decade, we expect thousands of teams per year. The Youth Venture-New Hampshire office was established in 2004 and is the first place where Youth Venture is launching a statewide program.

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The Role of the Panelist - YV's "Top Ten" Tips

- 1. EVALUATE BASED SOLELY ON YV CRITERIA.** As a panelist, you are assessing young people's preparedness to become Youth Venturers. Will the idea make a difference in the community? Is the Venture youth-led? Is there a solid Venture plan? Are an Ally and a team of youth involved? Is the Venture designed to be ongoing? Do the youth convey the energy, ethics, and commitment necessary to succeed? If young people meet these requirements, they are ready to begin!
- 2. ASSESS INDIVIDUALLY.** Venture teams are not in competition. The Selection Panel should select every team that proves its readiness to become a Youth Venture. Assess each presentation based on the YV criteria – not on comparisons.
- 3. UNDERSTAND THE PRESENTERS.** Recognize that YV presenters might never have given a presentation like this before. They have worked hard as a team to develop their plan and prepare for the panel. At the Selection Panel they are under pressure and they might take some time to articulate their ideas. The Selection Panel itself provides a learning opportunity for them – give them the support they need to convey their Venture plan as clearly as possible.
- 4. LISTEN TO THE SPOKEN AND THE UNSPOKEN WORD.** Look for what is and is not mentioned by presenters. As best as you can, try to understand what the young people wish to convey. Be on the lookout for unmentioned items, and consider these when evaluating where the Venture team needs additional guidance.
- 5. CAREFULLY CONSIDER PRESENTATIONS.** If the Ventures do not meet Youth Venture's criteria, find a way to respect the presenters' efforts and ambitions, while encouraging them to continue working. Let them know where your concerns lie and invite them to re-present at the next panel. Above all, recognize their interest and be supportive of their work.
- 6. REMEMBER YOUR ROLE.** You were selected to evaluate the presentation provided. They and their Ally are responsible for developing a Venture idea that reflects the strengths, passions, and creativity of the Venturers, and for the management and marketing behind the Venture. It is your role to determine whether they are prepared to begin operations.
- 7. AVOID INSTRUCTION.** Youth Venture is committed to enabling young people to lead, while providing the support of others to assist as needed. It is important to convey constructive comments in a way that guides the team without instructing or demanding.
- 8. EVALUATE TEAM BUDGETS.** Youth Venture grants can only be used to fund start up costs crucial to the team's success, and teams should have made efforts to keep costs as low as possible. Teams requesting financial support are expected to raise a portion of the start-up budget themselves. In determining the amount of seed money Youth Venture will provide, panelists should review the team's budget to determine whether efforts have been made to raise outside funding. Use the team's budget, the Youth Venture Funding Guidelines, or consult the Selection Panel moderator to decide on a fair amount that ensures YV support and the continued commitment of the Venture Team.
- 9. BE CREATIVE.** If a team meets all of the criteria despite minor concerns, be creative about addressing these concerns as a panel. Maybe you will list provisions required before becoming Youth Venturers. Maybe a Venture Team will be selected, but will only receive partial funding until they meet goals that they have specified in their plan. Use your expertise as panelists to find a way to support young people, while doing your best to ensure the venture's success.
- 10. ASK QUESTIONS.** Your concerns are vital to the Selection Process. Do not assume that presenters have neglected an issue simply because it was not addressed. They are under time constraints and might not have placed enough emphasis on an area you think is important. When in doubt, ask questions.

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The Agenda

- _____ Panelists Convene; review Action Plans and orient to Panel process and panelists' role
- _____ Presenters convene; welcome and introductions of all present, and explanation by the Facilitator of the Panel process
- _____ Venture Presentation(s) with questions and answers with the Panel following the presentation
- _____ Concluding remarks and Panel deliberations
- _____ Expected conclusion

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Selection Criteria

Criteria	Inadequate	Barely Adequate	Good	Strong
Makes a Difference in the Community	Venture has little or no impact on the community, other than on the Venturers themselves.	Venture will impact a small number of people beyond the Venturers.	Venture will be a resource and source of pride for many in the community.	Venture potentially will make major positive impacts in building the community and demonstrating nationally that youth are resources.
Youth Created, Led and Managed	Appears adult led. Youth play supporting roles and do not have substantial responsibility.	Youth lead most aspects of the venture. Adults are engaged in some aspects.	Youth lead almost all aspects of the venture. Adults are involved minimally.	Young people lead all aspects of the venture – the creating, planning and execution.
Designed to be a Lasting/Ongoing Organization	Venture is structured as a one-time project, and is not likely to continue.	Venture has the potential to become ongoing, but plans are vague. The venture is not structured for the future.	Venture has good potential, a good plan, and is structured to handle future Venturer turnover.	Venture has clear plans to become ongoing, including transition plans & structured roles of responsibility for future Venturers.
Involves a Strong Team	Venture is not structured as a team.	Venture involves no other youth other than the core Venture team.	Venture has a strong core leadership team, and has a plan for broader youth involvement in the Venture.	Venture has a strong core leadership team, and has a strong team of additional youth in place to implement the activities of the Venture.
Clear, Attainable Goals	Venture has no clear goals.	Venture may have some vague goals, but has little or no explanation of how they will be reached.	Venture has clear short-term goals, but has not developed longer-term goals.	Venture has clear goals for short term and clear and viable long-term goals.
Credible Plan and Budget	Venture has no plans for future sustenance and no budget.	Venture has an outline of a plan and a vague budget, or a budget that does not match the activity plan.	Venture has a clear and credible plan and budget, though revisions or more detail are needed, and/or the grant request is somewhat ill-justified.	Venture has a clear, focused plan and budget outlining how the venture will meet its goals, and the grant request is justified.
Energy and Skills to Succeed	Youth show limited energy and commitment and are missing skills needed to succeed.	Youth show some energy and commitment, and have some abilities needed to succeed.	Most youth have high energy, a high level of commitment, and most of the abilities needed to succeed.	Youth demonstrate high energy levels, commitment, and the abilities to make the venture succeed.
Involves an Ally	Venture has no Ally.	Venture has an Ally, but the Ally's strength or commitment is unknown.	Venture has an Ally who has demonstrated generally good support to the Venture team.	Venture has a strong, and clearly committed Ally who supports effectively, leaving youth in charge.
Ethical Standards	Youth show tendencies to involve in unethical behavior.	Youth understand right from wrong, and guide their actions ethically.	Youth demonstrate pride in their strong morals and integrity.	Youth are role models in their community for ethical behavior.

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Executive Summary and Panelist Recommendations

Venture name	
Venturers and their ages	
Ally	
Venture Synopsis	
Panelist's name	
Panelist's recommendation <i>Panelists: Please check one.</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Approve without conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Approve conditionally (add notes in next section) <input type="checkbox"/> Do not approve
Conditions for Acceptance <i>Panelists: If you recommend approval with conditions, note here items that you'd recommend be made conditional for approval as a Venture.</i>	
Panelist Suggestions <i>Panelists: Note here items that you'd recommend be offered just as suggestions for the Venture team.</i>	
Grant Request	\$
Grant Recommendation	

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Attach Venture Team Applications

