



# Social Innovator Accelerator Applicant Guide

The Social Innovation Forum believes that social innovation is critical to ensuring that our public and private resources are leveraged in the most effective ways to address social problems. Yet, it is often difficult for emerging innovations to receive the recognition and support they need to develop and spread their impact. ***The Social Innovation Forum provides a unique opportunity for innovative nonprofits to gain visibility, expand their networks, and build capacity.***

For our 2018 – 2019 Social Innovator Accelerator, we will select one nonprofit Social Innovator for each of our eight “social issue tracks.”

## 2018 – 2019 SOCIAL ISSUE TRACKS AND SPONSORING PARTNERS

*Barr Foundation, the Boston Foundation, the Devonshire Foundation, and the Margaret Stewart Lindsay Foundation*

### **Building the Path to Success Through Workforce Development for Youth**

*Track Partner: Amelia Peabody Foundation*

### **Closing the Opportunity Gap Through Out-of-Classroom Engagement**

*Track Partner: Inspire Boston Funder Collaborative*

### **Creating Equity Through Leadership in Environmental Justice Communities**

*Track Partner: Cedar Tree Foundation*

### **Early Childhood Education: Building a Foundation for the Future**

*Track Partner: Wellington Management Foundation*

### **Ensuring Long-term Success for Young People with Disabilities\***

*Track Partner: Edith M. Ashley Fund at the Boston Foundation*

### **Pathways to Success for Young People Experiencing Homelessness**

*Track Partner: Liberty Mutual Insurance*

### **Promoting Access to Arts and Culture in New Bedford**

*Track Partner: Schrafft Charitable Trust*

### **Supporting and Advancing Health and Stability of Immigrant Families**

*Track Partner: Shipley Foundation*

**\*As of July 28, we are excited to announce the addition of a new social issue track to our Social Innovator Accelerator this year. Though applications on our seven other tracks closed on July 13, we are accepting nominations and applications on our eighth track, "Long-term Success for Young People with Disabilities" supported by the Edith M. Ashley Fund at the Boston Foundation, now through August 30.**



## BENEFITS TO SOCIAL INNOVATORS

**Each Social Innovator receives access to cash and benefits valued at more than \$150,000:**

- Five months of consulting services focused on enhancing the organization's ability to articulate the social problem it is addressing, its innovative approach, and its social impact. The consulting engagement culminates in the development of the following materials designed for funder/investor audiences:
  - Written investment prospectus
  - Five-minute pitch (with PowerPoint slides)
- Five months of executive coaching
- \$10,000 cash upon completion of the consulting engagement
- Showcasing via numerous events, including a spring Showcase (**May 14, 2019**) that annually attracts more than 350 business leaders, institutional funders, and individual philanthropists
- Networking and relationship-building support
- Graphic design services
- Presentation coaching
- Additional support from SIF's in-kind partners (e.g., legal, graphic design, PR, technology)
- \$2,500 capacity building grant in 2020

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

**The Social Innovator Accelerator is open to programs and organizations that:**

- Are a registered 501(c)(3) or use a fiscal agent that is a 501(c)(3) unless otherwise noted in the track description
- Address a specific social need as described in at least one of our [social issue tracks](#)
- Are working in the greater Boston area, unless otherwise noted in the track description
- Have been operating for at least one cycle (usually a year) and have a proven concept
- Have a minimum of 1.5 FTEs (full-time equivalents — counting full and part-time staff, not volunteers)
- Have an annual operating budget of \$100,000–\$2 million\*
- Are at an inflection point in their growth and development

*\*Note: Organizations with budgets greater than \$2 million are welcome to submit an application for a specific program/initiative that has a total budget of less than that amount. In these cases, the entire application must refer to the program/initiative, not the parent organization.*

## HOW TO APPLY

**To submit an application, follow these three steps:**

1. Read through this Applicant Guide to determine whether or not your organization is a good “fit” for the Social Innovator Accelerator and for at least one of our social issue tracks.
2. Self-nominate or be nominated via our [online nomination form](#). After nomination, the program or organization leader will receive an email with a link to the application and further instructions within one business day.
3. Complete the online application. **First round applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until Friday, July 13, at 5:00 pm.** Early submissions are *strongly* encouraged. \*

Starting on August 8, we will invite a select number of organizations to submit second round application materials. These second round materials will be due on **Thursday, August 30, 2018.**

**\*Both first and second round applications for the “Ensuring Long-term Success for Young People with Disabilities” track will be due on Thursday, August 30, 2018 at 5:00 pm.**



To learn more about our application process and what it means to be a Social Innovator, please attend one of our optional upcoming information sessions:

### SOCIAL INNOVATOR INFORMATION SESSIONS

**Tuesday, June 26, 9:00 – 10:30 am**

One Congress Street, Floor 11, Suite 113, Boston, MA

**Thursday, June 28, 12:00 – 1:30 pm**

Coalition for Buzzards Bay, 114 Front St. New Bedford, MA

**Monday, August 13, 9:00 – 10:30 am \***

One Congress Street, Floor 11, Suite 113, Boston, MA

**\*This information session is for applicants on the “Ensuring Long-term Success for Young People with Disabilities” social issue track.**

To RSVP and receive directions, please email [team@socialinnovationforum.org](mailto:team@socialinnovationforum.org)

## Timeline and Commitments

### SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process begins on **Friday, July 13**, upon receipt of the first round applications and ends on **Friday, November 30, 2018** when we will call all of the finalists to let them know if they have been chosen to participate in this year’s program.

- **June:** The RFP is launched during the **week of June 4**. There are two information sessions held on **Tuesday, June 26** and **Wednesday, June 28**. First round applications are due on **Friday, July 13**. \*
- **July:** The Social Innovation Forum staff and track partners review first round applications to check that applicants meet our basic eligibility requirements and are a good “fit” for at least one of our social issue tracks. Starting on **Wednesday, August 8**, we will invite a select number of organizations to submit second round materials. \*

**\*First and second round applications for the track, “Ensuring Long-term Success for Young People with Disabilities”, are due on Thursday, August 30. There will be a special information session for applicants on the “Ensuring Long-term Success for Young People with Disabilities” track held on Monday, August 13 from 9:00-10:30 am.**

- **August and September:** A second round information session will be held on **Tuesday, August 21** and second round applications are due on **Thursday, August 30**. In September, a diverse evaluation committee composed of 10 to 15 issue-area experts, including business professionals, foundation staff, academics, government officials, and others, will read and score the applications for each social issue track. The Social Innovation Forum will moderate an in-person committee meeting and collect written comments from the evaluators for each track.
- **October and November:** For each social issue track, we will invite four to six organizations (finalists) to attend a half-day interview session with a panel of evaluators. These sessions will take place between **October 8 and November 2**.
- **November:** In November, the Social Innovation Forum will conduct due diligence on the finalists, including site visits and follow-up as needed. The 2019 Social Innovators will be notified of their selection **the week of November 26**.
- **December:** The new Innovators will then be publicly announced at a reception in early December.

### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES FOR SOCIAL INNOVATORS

The 2018 – 2019 Social Innovator Accelerator calendar is outlined below for planning purposes (Dates and events are subject to change). Those invited to submit a second round application will receive a more detailed calendar in early August.

DATE	EVENT
Week of June 4, 2018	RFP released
June 26 and June 28, 2018	First round information sessions for applicants
Friday, July 13, 2018	First round applications due
Wednesday, August 8, 2018	Second round invitations issued
<b>Monday, August 13, 2018</b>	<b>Special information session for applicants on the “Ensuring Long-term Success for Young People with Disabilities” social issue track</b>
Tuesday, August 21, 2018	Second round information session
Thursday, August 30, 2018	Second round applications due *
	<b>*First and second round applications due for the track, “Ensuring Long-term Success for Young People with Disabilities”</b>
October 8 – November 2, 2018	Finalist interviews (one half-day session per social issue track)
Week of November 26, 2018	Finalists are informed of their status
Early December 2018	2019 Social Innovators welcomed at an evening reception
Week of December 13, 2018	2019 Social Innovators attend an orientation session
December 2018 – April 2019	Working sessions with SIF consultants and in-kind partners
Early April 2019	Panel Presentations (a one-hour practice run of the Showcase presentation)
May 14, 2019	The 16 <sup>th</sup> Annual Social Innovator Showcase

### TIME COMMITMENT REQUIRED OF SOCIAL INNOVATORS

In order to take full advantage of the consulting, coaching, and other services that the Social Innovator Accelerator provides, Social Innovators should expect to commit on average six to eight hours per week for five months (December 2018 to April 2019). Starting in June 2019, Innovators will check in with the Social Innovation Forum staff once per quarter regarding performance measurement and will begin to work with their executive coaches. The Innovators will also have continued access to the Social Innovation Forum’s network and to our in-kind partners. From June 2019 to September 2019, we ask that the Innovators set aside a few hours per month for the following activities: a one-time debrief interview, a one-time group closure meeting, and preparation for the quarterly check-ins and executive coaching.

### OTHER COMMITMENTS REQUIRED OF SOCIAL INNOVATORS

In choosing Social Innovators, we look for leaders who are committed to partnering with us and who will be active participants in all meetings and events. Media release and other commitments of the process are outlined in our [Statement of Agreement](#). In order to submit an application for the Social Innovator Accelerator, nonprofit leaders *must* accept the terms of this agreement.



## 2018 – 2019 Social Issue Tracks

### BUILDING THE PATH TO SUCCESS THROUGH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT FOR YOUTH

#### Track Partner: Amelia Peabody Foundation

Youth employment provides an essential introduction to the workforce for many teenagers and young adults. It helps them learn new skills, gain experience, expand their networks, and explore professions that they'd like to pursue in the future. From early age employment, teens develop non-cognitive skills such as punctuality, team work, problem solving, communication, working under supervision, and customer service. Evidence shows that teens, particularly from under resourced families, who work during school, summer, and/or year round are more likely to work part-time after the summer, more likely to persist and finish high school, more likely to enroll in college and graduate, and more likely to be employed with higher earnings.<sup>1</sup> This early employment experience gives them an advantage in the labor market. Additionally, research has shown that access to employment and job training opportunities can help youth avoid a lifetime of negative justice-related consequences.<sup>2</sup>



Unfortunately, fewer young people today get early on-the-job experience. Over the past 16 years, the employment opportunities for teens in both Massachusetts and the U.S. have diminished sharply. Since 2000, the teen employment to population ratio, calculated as a yearly average, fell by 37 percent.<sup>3</sup>

There is broad consensus that young adults are more likely to engage with their schools and work environments if provided with career exploration opportunities, internships, and mentoring programs that help them grasp the practical relevance of education and work experience to their future success.

For this track, the Social Innovation Forum seeks applicants that provide educational and employment opportunities to young people aged 12 through 22 and conduct their work primarily in Eastern Massachusetts's low income neighborhoods and with a special interest in Gateways Cities and other similar communities (such as Brockton, Lawrence, Lynn, Malden, Quincy, etc.), though all applicable organizations are encouraged to apply. We are interested in applicants the are creating pathways for productive employment, skill development, and support services for youth through internship opportunities, job trainings, job placements, leadership development and mentoring programs, and more.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.childtrends.org/indicators/youth-employment/>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.justicepolicy.org/images/upload/07\\_10\\_rep\\_employmentandpublicsafety\\_ac.pdf](http://www.justicepolicy.org/images/upload/07_10_rep_employmentandpublicsafety_ac.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.bostonindicators.org/article-pages/2017/september/the-decades-long-decline-in-youth-jobs>

## CLOSING THE OPPORTUNITY GAP THROUGH OUT-OF-CLASSROOM ENGAGEMENT

### Track Partner: Inspire Boston Funder Collaborative

Children in Boston spend only 20% of their waking hours in school.<sup>4</sup> With these hours becoming increasingly test-focused, it is critical that out-of-school time be used to engage young people in constructive learning and enrichment activities. The Afterschool Alliance reports that children who participate in engaging afterschool programs are less likely to skip classes or drop out of high school, and are more likely to continue on to college.<sup>5</sup> However, barriers to accessing these types of programs create an opportunity gap which disadvantages lower-income students and leads to diminished academic and professional success.



While Boston is a national leader in providing students with out-of-school programs aimed at enriching their education, equipping them with practical skills, and reducing at-risk behavior, obstacles remain to ensuring that all of greater Boston's students have opportunities to make the most of their time outside of the classroom. In fact, according to the Afterschool Alliance, for every Massachusetts student engaged in after school programming, two more would participate if sufficient programming were available and accessible.<sup>6</sup> For low income families, the cost and need for transportation to after school programs often act as a barrier, excluding children from engagement and learning outside of the classroom. Compared to their wealthier counterparts, children from low-income families are half as likely to play afterschool sports, less than half as likely to be captains of sports teams, and far less likely to engage in music or theater programs.<sup>7</sup> Without access to opportunities for personal development and growth in afterschool activities, many students who enter post-secondary education or the workforce lack knowledge and training necessary to succeed as an adult. Access to these programs can help close the opportunity gap not only by helping young people achieve improved academic and behavioral outcomes, but also by providing opportunities for students to explore their talents, establish and maintain healthy relationships with peers and adults, and develop skills that will help them lead healthy, productive, and active lives.<sup>8</sup>

For this track, the Social Innovation Forum seeks innovative organizations working outside the classroom to engage students in fostering their identity, developing leadership and self-advocacy skills, building resiliency, and accessing new networks and opportunities in an effort to close the opportunity gap. This track is open to organizations serving youth between ages 11-22. Programs that foster family engagement, include exposure to learning in new contexts, and/or that are youth- or community-led are especially encouraged to apply.

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<sup>4</sup> "What Is the "opportunity Gap"?" Boston After School Beyond. <https://bostonbeyond.org/what-is-the-opportunity-gap/>.

<sup>5</sup> "Afterschool Alliance Fact Sheet." Afterschool Alliance. August 12, 2008. [http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/FactSheet\\_AfterschoolEssentialstats04\\_08FINAL.pdf](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/FactSheet_AfterschoolEssentialstats04_08FINAL.pdf).

<sup>6</sup> Pradhan, Susanna. "This Is Afterschool: In Massachusetts." The Afterschool Alliance. April 2018. <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org/documents/MA-afterschool-facts.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> "Afterschool Programs: Inspiring Students with a Connected Learning Approach." Afterschool Alliance. January 2015. [http://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Afterschool\\_and\\_Connected\\_Learning.pdf](http://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/Afterschool_and_Connected_Learning.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> McCombs, Jennifer, Anamarie Whitaker, and Paul Yoo. "The Value of Out-Of-School Time Programs." Wallace Foundation. 2017. <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/The-Value-of-Out-of-School-Time-Programs.pdf>.

## CREATING EQUITY THROUGH LEADERSHIP IN ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE COMMUNITIES

Track Partner: Cedar Tree Foundation



### The History:

Low-income communities across the United States, especially those dominated by people of color, have been unfairly burdened by polluting industries and infrastructures, such as diesel bus depots, oil storage facilities, landfills, superfund sites, and coal-fired power plants. These communities bear the consequences of contaminated air and water, as well as impacts to health, education, and economic development.<sup>9</sup>

Environmental justice has received greater recognition in federal and state public policy over the past 15 years. In 2002, Massachusetts issued its first Environmental Justice Policy, which focused on equity in environmental decision making.<sup>10</sup> More than a decade later, the Governor's office issued an Executive Order requiring that further action be taken and identified those living in environmental justice populations as "*mostly lower income and of color*" who are "*at risk of being disparately and negatively impacted by environmental policies and overburdened by a higher density of known contaminated sites and by air and water pollution.*"<sup>11</sup> Despite the call to action in this Executive Order, the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs reported in the 2010 census that of the 351 municipalities in the Commonwealth, 137 are classified as environmental justice communities.<sup>12</sup>

### Framing the Issue:

People of color are too often excluded from environmental decision-making that impacts their communities despite the fact that this involvement is key to achieving environmental justice. Residents who are eager to get involved face obstacles to participation, such as language barriers, work schedules, and limited access to educational resources.<sup>13</sup> Nonprofit organizations frequently play a valuable role in representing the interests of these communities; however, the leaders of these organizations rarely come from the impacted areas. Of the 191 environmental nonprofits surveyed by Dorceta E. Taylor, Ph.D., for the comprehensive report *The State of Diversity in Environmental Organizations*, only 12% of those in a leadership position were people of color.<sup>14</sup> If environmental justice eludes communities of color, then leadership from those very communities is necessary.

For this track, Social Innovation Forum seeks organizations with leaders of color who are building a positive and hopeful future for impacted communities. Organizations considered for this track include those that address environmental benefits (i.e., access to parks or safe places to play and exercise) or burdens (i.e., infrastructure projects or pollution). A variety of strategies will be eligible, including those that directly address sources of contamination, build movements to create policy change, promote community voices in environmental review processes, and develop environmental leadership and/or job training for people of the global majority. Organizations that develop green energy, energy efficiency, and healthy food access are also welcome to apply.

<sup>9</sup> [http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/unitedchurchofchrist/legacy\\_url/13567/toxwrace87.pdf?1418439935](http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/unitedchurchofchrist/legacy_url/13567/toxwrace87.pdf?1418439935)

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/eea/ej/ej-policy-english.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.mass.gov/courts/docs/lawlib/eo500-599/eo552.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/smart-growth-smart-energy-toolkit-modules-environmental-justice-ej>

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/smart-growth-smart-energy-toolkit-modules-environmental-justice-ej>

<sup>14</sup>(Taylor Ph.D., 2014) [https://www.diversegreen.org/wpcontent/uploads/2015/10/FullReport\\_Green2.0\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.diversegreen.org/wpcontent/uploads/2015/10/FullReport_Green2.0_FINAL.pdf)





## EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION: BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE

Track Partner: **Wellington Management Foundation**

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For most children, grade school is usually a period of educational development that is filled with joyful memories of learning, playing, and building new friendships. Unfortunately, this foundational period of time can be overwhelming and difficult to navigate for children living in low-income environments. Compared to their peers, children living in poverty consistently score lower in early vocabulary and literacy development. When they fall behind, it becomes difficult to close the achievement gap as they get older.<sup>15</sup> Every child deserves equitable education, but individual and societal factors like poverty and homelessness can impede their success as a student.<sup>16</sup>

Often times, parents and guardians play a critical role as their children's first teachers, especially before they enter formal schooling. However, in the state of Massachusetts, 30 percent of children live in low-income families and parents and guardians who fall in this category face many challenges that preclude them from being effective and supportive in this role.<sup>3</sup> In particular, parents and guardians who work long hours in order to provide basic resources for their families may not be available to devote enough time and energy to prepare their children for kindergarten and support them through grade school.

A way to improve school readiness and success for children living in such challenging environments is through the integration of intervention programs. The benefits children receive from these types of programs include more developed cognitive abilities, improved social skills, and an appreciation for the excitement of learning.<sup>17</sup> Consequently, success in grade school drives students towards higher education, job security, increased wages, and the potential to close the achievement gap for future generations. Jane Knitzer, Director of The National Center of Children in Poverty, has stated that "starting early and continuing investments in high quality early learning through the preschool years, and indeed, into the early school years, are critical to America's future productivity."<sup>18</sup>

For this track, the Social Innovation Forum seeks organizations in Eastern Massachusetts (defined as east of Worcester and includes cities from Lawrence to Fall River/New Bedford) that are implementing solutions for children birth through 3rd grade to close the achievement gap in reading, writing, and critical thinking. Organizations considered for this track include afterschool, Pre-K, and early elementary programs, along with programs offering teacher trainings as well as parental coaching support. Applicants must also show that 75% or more of those who receive their services qualify as low income.

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<sup>15</sup> <http://www.nccp.org/topics/earlycareandlearning.html>

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.ascd.org/publications/newsletters/policy-priorities/apr06/num45/toc.aspx>

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/may13/vol70/num08/How-Preschool-Fights-Poverty.aspx>.

<sup>18</sup> [http://www.nccp.org/media/releases/release\\_34.html](http://www.nccp.org/media/releases/release_34.html)

## ENSURING LONG-TERM SUCCESS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Track Partner: Edith M. Ashley Fund at the Boston Foundation

In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, more than 785,000 individuals – 11.7% of the population – live with a disability. This includes individuals living with visual, hearing, ambulatory, cognitive, independent living, and self-care disabilities. Despite progress in health care and accessibility nationwide, people with disabilities continue to encounter challenges in a variety of areas, including housing, employment, and education. On average, people with disabilities make 63 cents for every dollar made by their non-disabled colleagues for the same job.<sup>19</sup> Additionally, only 38.6% of individuals with disabilities between the ages of 18 and 65 in Massachusetts are employed, as compared to 80% of the general population within that age range. In other states, such as North Dakota, Utah, and Minnesota, up to 54% of individuals with disabilities are employed, which suggests that there is ample room for growth in Massachusetts.<sup>20</sup>

To successfully address these issues, it is vital that individuals with disabilities gain access to key resources early in their lives and during key transitional moments throughout their lives. Workforce development, educational opportunities, and accessible housing, among other supports, can empower young people with disabilities to live fulfilling adult lives. These resources can also curtail the risks of poor health and socioeconomic outcomes experienced by the families of people with disabilities.<sup>21</sup> However, these crucial opportunities are not equitably distributed. The *American Journal of Public Health* classifies individuals with disabilities as an “unrecognized health disparity population,” with alarmingly limited and unequal access to health care and other critical resources.<sup>22</sup>

For this track, the Social Innovation Forum seeks organizations or programs working to support successful transitions to adulthood for young people with disabilities, especially those with physical disabilities ages 14-24, by eliminating isolation, increasing integration, promoting skill development, and/or expanding opportunities. This includes organizations focused on workforce development, housing, education, family and community support, leadership and advocacy, and access to health care, along with other issues and services. Organizations that provide a coordinated approach to building the capacity of young people and families are especially encouraged to apply. We also welcome applications from organizations working to influence policy and systems changes with the goal of improving efficiencies in order to better serve youth with disabilities. Eligibility for participation in this track is limited to organizations that can demonstrate their programming is inclusive of youth with physical disabilities. Programs and organizations that work with individuals who are typically underserved by the resources listed above, including low-income individuals, immigrants, and people of color, are of particular interest on this track.

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<sup>19</sup> <https://www.air.org/resource/air-index-pay-gap-workers-disabilities>

<sup>20</sup> [https://disabilitycompendium.org/sites/default/files/user-uploads/Compendium\\_2017\\_Final.pdf](https://disabilitycompendium.org/sites/default/files/user-uploads/Compendium_2017_Final.pdf)

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/features/unrecognizedpopulation.html#Graph>

<sup>22</sup> <https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/abs/10.210z5/AJPH.2014.302182>

## PATHWAYS TO SUCCESS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

### Track Partner: Liberty Mutual Insurance

Voices of Youth Count, an organization set up by UNICEF to help children across the world, recently revealed that approximately one in 10 American young adults ages 18 to 25, and at least one in 30 adolescent minors ages 13 to 17, endures some form of homelessness.<sup>23</sup> In a single night in the summer of 2016, the organization identified 335 homeless youth in Suffolk County. Meanwhile, a complementary survey of runaway and homeless youth providers in Boston found that only 16 beds were available in the county for youth 18-25, and only two were available for youth 13-17. Youth homelessness is a pervasive nation-wide problem that has a compounding effect on young people's ability to begin careers and become productive members of society. The National Runaway Switchboard estimates that on any given night there are approximately 1.3 million homeless youth living unsupervised on the streets, in abandoned buildings, with friends or with strangers,<sup>24</sup> while in Massachusetts, during the 2016-2017 academic year, public schools across the state were able to identify more than 21,000 students who were experiencing homelessness.<sup>25</sup>



Public health research shows that youth making the transition from adolescence to adulthood face higher levels of vulnerability and are at a higher risk of long-term mental health problems, substance abuse, unsafe sexual practices, and higher rates of survival-related criminal activity. The consequences of homelessness for this age group, then, are more severe and have more long-term effects than those in other age ranges. Moreover, studies in Suffolk County showed that 56% of homeless youth had experiences with foster care or the juvenile justice system. Minority populations also face higher risks of youth homelessness. In Suffolk County, Black and African American youth are disproportionately represented among homeless youth populations at 40%.<sup>26</sup> It is estimated that 5%-10% of all youth in the U.S. identify as LGBT; by contrast 20%-40% of homeless youth identified as LGBT.<sup>27</sup>

For this social issue track, the Social Innovation Forum seeks nonprofit organizations that address homelessness for individuals aged 13-24, including homeless youth who are also parents, in the greater Boston area. Special attention will be given to those organizations that work to both shelter homeless youth and provide additional services to young people that cater to their unique developmental needs and position them for college and/or career.

<sup>23</sup> <http://voicesofyouthcount.org/brief/national-estimates-of-youth-homelessness/>

<sup>24</sup> <http://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/homeless-and-runaway-youth.aspx>

<sup>25</sup> <https://www.mahomeless.org/about-us/basic-facts>

<sup>26</sup> [https://www.mahomeless.org/images/Suffolk\\_Site\\_Report\\_-\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](https://www.mahomeless.org/images/Suffolk_Site_Report_-_Final_Report.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> On the Streets, supra note 2; Kaya Lurie & Breanne Schuster, Policy Brief, Discrimination at the Margins

## PROMOTING ACCESS TO ARTS AND CULTURE IN NEW BEDFORD

Track Partner: **Schrafft Charitable Trust**

Once the backbone of vibrant whaling, fishing, and textile industries, a stop on the Underground Railroad, and home to abolitionists including Frederick Douglass, New Bedford has been known as a destination for history and culture. New Bedford has become recognized as a home for artists and as an arts hub in the last decade. In fact, it was named the most creative community in the state in 2017 by Massachusetts Cultural Council.<sup>28</sup>

## Schrafft Charitable Trust

However, despite its rich history and past thriving economy, New Bedford's economic vibrancy has declined in the last century. In 2016, 23.5 % of New Bedford's residents lived in poverty, compared to 11.4% of all Massachusetts residents. Among children under 18, the rate was 34.8% compared to the statewide rate of 14.9%.<sup>29</sup> Many young people live in neighborhoods with high rates of violence and unemployment and face family and community circumstances that make their journey to adulthood exceptionally difficult.

Recent research indicates that education in the arts is a critical tool in addressing both academic and social challenges faced by these youth. According to Harvard University's Project Zero, instruction in the arts unequivocally correlates with improved verbal and spatial ability relevant to academic achievement, a correlation strongest among students from low-income backgrounds.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, arts education, by encouraging creativity and a sense of agency, fosters independent thinking that can later be applied to the pursuit of economic and social goals.<sup>31</sup> According to the Massachusetts Cultural Council, young people engaged in the arts during school or after school are more involved in their communities than their peers who do not participate in arts programs.<sup>32</sup> Community engagement plus the opportunity to explore interests, build skills, and develop supportive relationships with adults greatly enhances the likelihood that disadvantaged youth will succeed in school and in life.<sup>33</sup>

For this track, the Social Innovation Forum seeks nonprofit organizations in and around New Bedford that have demonstrated success working with youth and engaging them in the arts and/or culture. We are interested in organizations that have a commitment to continuous learning and assessment, a history of successfully working with partner organizations and community leaders, and a determination to apply resources to strengthening the potential of youth in New Bedford through arts and culture.

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<sup>28</sup> <http://www.southcoasttoday.com/news/20161222/new-bedford-named-states-most-creative-community>

<sup>29</sup> <https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>

<sup>30</sup> <http://www.tbf.org/indicators2004/culturalLife/indicators.asp?id=2478>

<sup>31</sup> Heath, Shirley Brice. "Imaginative Actuality: Learning in the Arts during the Nonschool Hours" as published in *Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning*.

<sup>32</sup> <http://www.massculturalcouncil.org/issues/youthdevelopment.html>

<sup>33</sup> Grant makers in Health. Positive Youth Development: A Pathway to Health Teens, [www.gih.org/usr\\_doc/positive\\_youth\\_development.pdf](http://www.gih.org/usr_doc/positive_youth_development.pdf). See also, Catalano R., et al (1998). Positive Youth Development in the United States: Research Findings on Evaluations of Positive Youth Development Programs, <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/PositiveYouthDev99/index.htm#toc>.

## SUPPORTING AND ADVANCING HEALTH AND STABILITY OF IMMIGRANT FAMILIES

### Track Partner: Shibley Foundation



SHIBLEY FOUNDATION, INC.

Immigrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers are deeply rooted in communities across the United States, with 27% of the U.S. population made up of immigrants and their U.S. born children.<sup>34</sup> In fact, nearly a quarter of young people in the United States are children of immigrants, with approximately 18 million children under the age of 18 living with at least one immigrant parent.<sup>35</sup> In Massachusetts, the foreign-born population represents roughly 1 in 6 residents of the state with steady growth each year.<sup>36</sup> These immigrants play a critical role in the Boston economy as consumers, business owners, employees, and tax payers. Our shared future is directly impacted by the ability of all immigrants and their families to work, contribute to the economy, and flourish.

Despite being such an integral part of our society, immigrants, refugees, and asylum-seekers often do not have access to the support, safety, or stability necessary for their families to achieve successful integration and advancement in society. Research shows that in order to thrive, children need strong relationships with loving adults, a stable environment, and consistent access to food, housing, education, and health care. However, many immigrant families go without consistent access to these basic necessities.<sup>37</sup> Stress and trauma related to instability are known to have detrimental effects on children and families. In 2018, a report by Clasp, a national, nonpartisan, anti-poverty nonprofit, showed key findings on how the current immigration policies are affecting young children of immigrants. Many are afraid that their parents will be taken away and are becoming more isolated from their communities. As a result, they are not accessing much needed nutrition services, health care services, and educational opportunities.<sup>38</sup> The adults in these families also experience fear and stress, all of which put kids at an increased risk of being exposed to poverty, hunger, homelessness, and trauma with the potential for long-term negative consequences to their physical and mental health.

For this track, the Social Innovation Forum seeks organizations or programs that support children of immigrants, and their families, by promoting integration and stability in their homes, communities, and schools. We are interested in a range of applicants, including but not limited to those promoting physical and mental health, providing workforce development, economic opportunity, education and tutoring, legal services, and language support. We also are interested in nonprofits that show a history of collaboration with other organizations in order to provide the most effective services. Organizations with immigrant leadership are encouraged to apply.

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<sup>34</sup><https://www.migrationpolicy.org/article/frequently-requested-statistics-immigrants-and-immigration-united-states>

<sup>35</sup> <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/children-immigrant-families>

<sup>36</sup> <http://americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/immigrants-in-massachusetts>

<sup>37</sup> <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/stabilizing-childrens-lives-insights-research-and-action>

<sup>38</sup> [https://www.clasp.org/sites/default/files/publications/2018/03/2018\\_ourchildrensfears.pdf](https://www.clasp.org/sites/default/files/publications/2018/03/2018_ourchildrensfears.pdf)

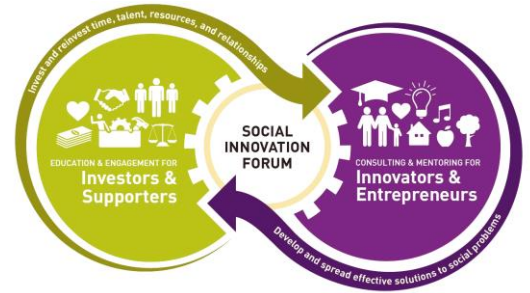
## Frequently Asked Questions

### WHAT IS THE SOCIAL INNOVATION FORUM?

The Social Innovation Forum (SIF) brings together nonprofits, philanthropy, government, and business to support the spread of emerging social innovations in greater Boston. SIF creates positive social change in

greater Boston by:

- Engaging and informing funders and investors so they can direct resources most effectively
- Educating and supporting leaders of nonprofit organizations so they can deliver the most effective solutions to social issues
- Making connections and building relationships across diverse communities so people can help each other generate significant social change



The Social Innovator Accelerator provides a unique opportunity for innovative nonprofit organizations to gain visibility, expand their networks, and build capacity. Each year, we partner with leading local funders to identify and support a small cohort of Social Innovators. Our search and selection process lasts six months and involves two rounds of written applications, in-person interviews, and other forms of due diligence. This process brings together a range of stakeholders, including SIF staff, track partners, and an evaluation committee made up of more than 90 business, government, and foundation leaders.

Our unique approach, working with both funders and practitioners, creates a “Social Impact Marketplace” that is informed, connected, and engaged in the pursuit of positive social change and measurable results. Thus, our direct work is leveraged to create broader impact throughout the community.

### WHAT ARE THE SOCIAL INNOVATOR ACCELERATOR’S RESULTS?

To date, the Social Innovation Forum has directed more than \$35 million in cash and in-kind services to help more than 106 portfolio organizations -- both nonprofits and social impact businesses -- accelerate their growth and amplify their impact. Our rigorous selection process brings together more than 2,600 philanthropists, foundation staff, and business professionals who support these innovative, effective approaches to address important social issues. On average, our nonprofit Social Innovators more than double their revenue four years after engaging with SIF and experience average annual revenue growth that is 10x the Massachusetts nonprofit average.

### HOW DO YOU DEFINE SOCIAL INNOVATION?

Although much debate surrounds the precise definition of social innovation, at its core, the term encapsulates a drive toward progress in the way society addresses social issues. As we define it at the Social Innovation Forum, social innovation is the process of finding, testing, and honing potentially transformative approaches to solving persistent social problems.

The Social Innovation Forum believes that social innovation often starts with an individual idea, but it takes a vast community of stakeholders to spread the ideas that are demonstrating results. Nonprofits, foundations, businesses, and government agencies are most successful in creating lasting social impact when they work together to advance social innovations through the stages of early development, proliferation, proven outcomes, and widespread impact.



## MUST AN ORGANIZATION BE RECOMMENDED BY A MEMBER OF THE NOMINATION COMMITTEE IN ORDER TO APPLY?

No, not at all! Organizations are welcome to nominate themselves via our [online nomination form](#). However, please read through the track descriptions and eligibility requirements closely before doing so. Also, note that the online nomination form is not a first round application. We make no distinction between applicants that self-nominate and applicants that are nominated by others.

### NOMINATION COMMITTEE AS OF JUNE 19, 2018

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KRISTEN MCCORMACK, BOSTON UNIVERSITY	
ALEX MCCUE, THE BRIDGESPAN GROUP	

## IS IT POSSIBLE TO APPLY AS A PROGRAM OR INITIATIVE WITHIN AN ORGANIZATION?

Yes. Any program or initiative with an operating budget between \$100,000 and \$2 million may apply. In these cases, the program director as well as a representative from the parent organization must be committed to participating in Social Innovation Forum meetings and events. In addition, the entire application must refer to the program, *not* the parent organization (budget numbers, performance metrics, etc.).

## IF APPLYING TO MORE THAN ONE SOCIAL ISSUE TRACK, MUST AN ORGANIZATION SUBMIT MORE THAN ONE APPLICATION?

**In general, yes.** Each track has its own set of evaluators who are experts on that particular social issue. While a fair amount of information may be copied and pasted from one application to the next, we ask that multiple-track applicants tailor their answers to some of the more thoughtful, paragraph-response questions to demonstrate their “fit” with each of those tracks. Our evaluators like to see that applicants have thought about how their organizations address specific social issues and what makes them innovators in those spaces.



### **WHAT IS THE APPLICATION PROCESS FOR THOSE WHO APPLIED DURING A PREVIOUS CYCLE OF THE SOCIAL INNOVATION FORUM AND WERE NOT SELECTED?**

The application itself changes from year to year. In order for us to have consistent information across applicants, all applicants for this year's cycle must complete a 2018 – 2019 application. However, it is often possible to copy and paste responses from a previous application into corresponding sections of the current year's application. To assist you, we are happy to provide copies of your past application(s) upon request.

### **WHAT IS THE SOCIAL INNOVATOR SHOWCASE?**

**The Social Innovator Showcase** is focused on highlighting the Social Innovators to potential investors, as well as sparking conversations on the best approaches to developing and spreading innovation. More than 350 business, government, and philanthropic leaders from greater Boston attend the event, in addition to the nonprofit leaders presenting their work. The 16th annual Social Innovator Showcase will be held in May 14, 2019.



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**WHOM SHOULD I CONTACT WITH QUESTIONS?**

If you have any questions about the application process, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Dingee, Program Coordinator at Social Innovation Forum, at [team@socialinnovationforum.org](mailto:team@socialinnovationforum.org) or at 617.492.2305.