Indy Summer Youth Programs

2026 Summer Youth Program Fund Orientation

Welcome



Ahmed Young

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Community Leadership Officer, Indianapolis Foundation



Thank you Sponsors!

the Indianapolis Foundation

Lilly Endowment Inc.

A private foundation since 1937

ROCK Community Center

For Youth & Children

Partners

MARION COUNTY COMMISSION ON YOUTH

MCCOY

GLEANERS

INDY PARKS & Recreation

Resources

MARION COUNTY COMMISSION ON YOUTH
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COMMUNITY-ENGAGED ALLIANCE

INDIANA YOUTH INSTITUTE

GLEANERS

INDIANA Afterschool NETWORK

Agenda

01 **Ice Breaker**

02 **SYPF Overview:**
- Proccess & Timeline
- Funder Priorities

03 **Partner Resources**
- MCCOY
- Indy Parks
- Gleaners

04 **Lunch and Optional Workshops**

Icebreaker

Let’s Connect!

Turn to someone at your table and share:

- Your name and the organization you represent
- One resource, connection, or support, other than funding that you’re looking for as you plan your Summer 2027 programming.

SYPF Overview

01

Established in 1995

The Summer Youth Program Fund (SYPF) is a **collaborative grantmaking initiative** in Marion County, Indiana, that provides local nonprofits with funding to operate safe, affordable, and enriching summer activities for youth.

02

SYPF serves approximately **80,000** Indianapolis youth every year—about 24% of all the city's residents aged 4 to 24

$60 million in funds granted since 1995

286 programs funded for 2026

03

Summer Youth Programs focus on providing safe and positive experiences for children and teens, ages 4 to 24, at little or no cost to families.

How it works

01

Grant-seekers fill out one common application that all funders review.

Applications are submitted through CICF's Smart Simple online platform.

02

Funders make grants according to their own criteria but collaborate in the allocations process.

Grantees submit one final report that all funders see.

03

Evaluators do site visits, focus groups and other check-ins over the course of the summer.

04

Grantees have access to, and are encouraged to get, technical assistance training and best practices from MCCOY.

What funding is available?

Program Grants

- Staff or youth wages, program materials and supplies, transportation, snacks, training, space, rentals, and/or equipment
    - Programs must serve youth ages 4-24 during the summer for dedicated summer programs
    - The everage allocation in 2026 was **$16,604** (the average request was **$29,529**)

What funding is available?

Capital Grants

- From Lilly Endowment Inc.
  - Modest capital equipment purchases for your summer program
  - Max request is $45,000
  - A separate application is due to LEI

What's in the application?

- **Program Description:** Primary category and focus area
- **Program Structure:** Length of program, fees, scholarships, and accommodations
- **Program Activities & Goals:** What activities you will offer, how frequently they will occur, the goals they are designed to achieve, and how you will measure success
- **Partnerships & Support:** Community partners, transportation, meals, and other participant supports
- **Youth Voice:** How young people are involved in shaping, planning, implementing, or evaluating the program
- **Participant Demographics:** Who you serve, including ages, race/ethnicity, language, disability, and other relevant characteristics
- **Staffing:** Number of staff, roles and responsibilities, and staff-to-youth ratio

Budget

Table 1:

Program Budget: This budget table shows the total cost of operating your summer program. (staffing, youth wages, materials, transportation, food, space, training/certifications, etc.)

Table 2:

Sources of Funding for Your Summer Program: This table shows the breakdown of your request to SYPF (I.e., how SYPF funds will be spent) as well as other income sources for your summer program.

- **Committed Funding:** Secured funding, such as grants, operating dollars, or projected enrollment fees.
- **Potential & In-Kind Support:** Unsecured funding you plan to seek (grants, sponsorships, etc.) and the value of donated goods or services.

Contingency:

How will you adjust plans if your full request is not met.

Application Changes

- **Would the project be willing to accept partial funding? (Yes/No Dropdown question)**
  - If yes, what is the minimum amount of funding from your original request needed for the project to move forward?

- **How would the project's scope, timeline, or outcomes change if partially funded, and which elements of the project would still continue in the event of future funding challenges?**

- **How has the organization adapted to previous funding or operational challenges related to its summer program?**

INDY SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAMS

Meet the Funders

Lilly Endowment Inc.

Lilly Endowment Inc.

A private foundation since 1937

Program Grants

- Academic achievement
- Arts enrichment
- Career exploration
- Leadership development
- Mentorship
- Recreation
- Youth employment
- Health and wellness

Capital Grants

- Examples: computer equipment, vans, instruments, playground equipment, minor building or grounds improvements such as fences, cooling equipment, etc.
- Expect to award 25-30 grants up to $45k each
- Eligibility: must have been SYPF recipient two of last three years (2024, 2025 or 2026) AND will be a recipient of a program grant in 2027

Allen Whitehill Clowes Charitable Foundation, Inc.

- Arts & humanities
- Use of arts for expression, healing, beauty, and/or knowledge

ALLEN
WHITEHILL
CLOWES
CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

Department of Metropolitan Development

Funding Requirements

- Funding for eligible costs is disbursed on a reimbursement basis only
- At least 51% of program participants must earn 80% or less of the Area Median Income (e.g. a family of four can make up to $88,250)
- Program focuses on youth employment and career readiness

Funding Priorities

- High risk youth served
- Participants paid ≥minimum wage
- Transportation and meals provided
- Participants previously involved with judicial system are not excluded
- Trained and experienced staff

Nina Mason Pulliam Charitable Trust

- Programs that provide academic enrichment and educational opportunities
- Literacy programs
- Youth employment

NINA MASON PULLIAM
CHARITABLE TRUST

The Clowes Fund, Inc.

- Job skill training for youth with limited opportunities to access high-quality summer programming, including programs that primarily serve immigrant populations.

The Clowes Fund
A Family Foundation

Cummins

- Academic achievement
- Career exploration
- Leadership development
- Workforce development
- Mentorship
- Extended learning

Anonymous Family Foundation

- Academic enrichment
- Youth employment
- Career exploration

INDY SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAMS

Indianapolis Foundation

- Programs that serve a high percentage of BIPOC youth
- Grassroots and BIPOC-led organizations
- Programs that provide all-day care at low/no cost
- Hands-on and exploratory programs that close opportunity gaps for BIPOC youth
- Youth employment & skill development
- Academic achievement
- Through the Romine Fund, programs in above categories with a faith component

the Indianapolis Foundation

Indianapolis Foundation - Library Fund

- Summer programs at Library Fund-eligible institutions
  - the Indianapolis Public Library; libraries at IU Indianapolis, Purdue University in Indianapolis, Marian University, University of Indianapolis; and any Marion County high school library.

the Indianapolis Foundation
The Library Fund

INDY SUMMER YOUTH PROGRAMS

What's My Progam Type?

Program Categories (Pick 1)

Daily

Program meets daily throughout the summer and provides all-day, low-cost care to families; may incorporate many types of activities throughout the summer

Youth Employment

The primary purpose of the program is to provide summer jobs to teens

Overnight or Residential

Traditional overnight camps, often but not always for a week-long experience

Enrichment

All other summer programs, including most arts, sports, academic enrichment, college or career exploration, and leadership development. Includes programs that "drop in" or partner with daily programs.

Focus Areas (Pick up to 3)

- Academic remediation
- Arts
- College or career exploration
- Career skills training or entrepreneurship
- Food or nutrition
- Leadership development
- Mental health or SEL (Social-Emotional Learning)
- Outdoor recreation
- Physical fitness or sports
- STEM

Example 1

High school students are recruited to serve as junior counselors for a daily elementary summer program. They work full-time, support camp logistics, and attend weekly workshops on financial literacy, goal setting, and interview skills.

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✨ ***Answer:*** *Youth Employment | Career Skills Training or Entrepreneurship + Leadership Development*

Example 2

Middle schoolers attend a free overnight camp in the mountains for one week. They unplug from devices, participate in guided hikes, canoeing, and daily camp fire discussions about friendships and emotions.

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✨ ***Answer:*** *Overnight or Residential | Outdoor Recreation + Mental Health or SEL (Social-Emotional Learning)*

Example 3

For six weeks, high school students meet at a local university for SAT prep, resume building, college essay writing, and campus tours. They also hear from guest speakers in different career fields.

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✨ ***Answer:*** *Enrichment | College or Career Exploration + Academic Remediation*

Example 4

This six-week program runs Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 6pm. Kids rotate through STEM experiments, team sports, arts & crafts, and receive breakfast and lunch every day. The program costs just $25 a week.

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✨ ***Answer:*** *Daily | STEM + Physical Fitness or Sports + Arts*

Tips

- Describe your summer program thoroughly.
  - Help reviewers visualize what happens during the program, what your goals are, who you serve, what the flow is.

- Don't write your application "for" a funder.

- Research your budget costs so that they are realistic and reasonable.

- Don't wait until the last minute, especially to request technical assistance.

Common Application Challenges

- **Incomplete or unclear financial information:** Project budgets may be incomplete, inconsistent, or difficult to understand.
- **Limited evaluation plans:** Plans for measuring program outcomes and success may be underdeveloped or missing.
- **Staffing and capacity concerns:** Staff may lack the skills or experience needed to effectively implement the program, or staff-to-youth ratios may limit meaningful individual engagement.
- **Limited subject matter expertise:** The application may not demonstrate sufficient knowledge of the topic area or relevant best practices.
- **Unclear or unjustified budget expenses:** Proposed expenditures may not be adequately explained or may not align with the program's activities and goals.
- **Limited co-investment:** A lack of additional funding sources may raise questions about the program's overall financial sustainability and viability.

Additional Resources

- **Handouts**
  - 2027 Funder Priorities (including what we're looking for)
  - 2027 Application Preview
  - Community Development Block Grant Overview from the City of Indianapolis
  - Capital Grants Instructions and Application from LEI
- **Videos**
  - SYPF Overview
  - How to Prepare Your Budget
  - Smart Simple 101 Guide

2026-2027 Timeline

Application Opens – August 17, 2026 at 8am
Application Closes - October 16, 2026 at 4pm
Applicants Notified – Week of February 1-5, 2027
Summer Youth Program Takes Place – May – August 2027
Final Reports Due – September 30, 2027 at 5pm

Questions


MARION COUNTY
COMMISSION ON YOUTH
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INDY
PARKS
& Recreation



GLEANERS

Workshops

Adapting to the Current Climate: Funding & Resource Sharing

Room: Gymnasium

De-Mystifying Data: Data Collection Doesn't Have to Be Hard

Room: Center Meeting Room 2 (Second Floor)

Volunteer Engagement

Room: North Meeting Room 7 (Second Floor)

Smart Simple Technical Assistance

Room: Conference Room (First Floor)

Beyond Grants: Creating Corporate/Sponsorship Funding Strategies

Room: Center Meeting Room 3 (Second Floor)