



**Baltimore City Children and Youth Fund**  
**Report to Mayor and City Council**  
**(Report for Late May through June 30, 2018)**  
**(Submitted July 20, 2018)**

**Request for Proposals**

Frontline’s Planning and Design Team drafted a Request for Proposals (RFP) centered in the priority areas identified through the Community Design Sessions and Data Analysis Retreat. The RFP went through a Plain Language Review, supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, to ensure that applicants could easily find, understand and use the information provided. The RFP was also reviewed by UPD and ABC, and volunteer advisors from the philanthropic sector.

Proposals will be accepted in three priority areas determined by the community: Strengthening the Community; Fostering Authentic Youth Leadership, Empowerment, and Self-Actualization; and Building Permanent Bridges to Educational and Economic Advancement Opportunities, and to Business Ownership. The RFP was released on June 6 and applications must be submitted by 11:59 pm on July 9.

The RFP defines the following:

- Priority investment areas with granularity around the subcategories;
- Eligible organizations, as determined by the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Baltimore and Associated Black Charities, the BCYF Task Force, and in keeping with the values and principles of the Fund;
- Dates to apply, and grant cycle (September 1, 2018 – August 31, 2019);
- Background checks and insurance requirements, as determined by the Memorandum of Understanding between the City of Baltimore and Associated Black Charities; state, local and federal laws; and best practices;
- Funding levels and eligible expenses;
- Reporting requirements and expectations;
- Scoring rubric, which defines how proposals will be evaluated by the Proposal Review Panel, with the greatest emphasis placed on alignment with BCYF priorities.

Proposals will be submitted through the grantmaking tool, Submittable. This decision was made after Frontline and UPD reviewed multiple tools and determined that Submittable met the cost and utility requirements. The team also consulted a volunteer from the institutional foundation community for guidance on technical requirements. Submittable provides a fill-in-the-blank format for applicants, with a confirmation email once the proposal has been submitted. The Proposal Review Panel will be

able to score applications in the tool and grantees will be able to submit their reports through the same portal.

The user-friendly interface is important particularly for grassroots organizations whose staff may not have experience submitting grants. Frontline customized the tool with input from UPD and several members of the team tested it prior to release of the RFP. Almost 500 applications had been started by June 30.

The RFP was announced via a press release, email blast to more than 4,400 individuals registered via the BCYF site, social media, and an updated homepage on the BCYF website. Kinetics Strategies, the strategic communications partner, led this work.

### **Grant Informational Q&A/Community-Capacity Building Series**

Frontline's Planning and Design Team and UPD followed the release of the RFP with a Grant Informational Session on June 11 at the University of Maryland, BioPark Life Sciences Center to answer questions from the public, including which organizations qualify for funding, funding levels, and the types of programs the Fund will support. The event was held from 5-7:30pm and was standing room only. The majority of questions were answered immediately and those that were not answered were recorded and answered later through a Frequently Asked Questions document.

Frontline and UPD hosted a live webinar on June 13 from 4:30-6:30pm to repeat the same information and answer additional questions. Over 130 participants joined the live webinar. Participants were able to submit questions in real time. The event was recorded and made available online for applicants were not able to join. Kinetics Strategies announced both events via press release, email blast to more than 4,000 individuals registered via the BCYF site, social media, and on the BCYF website.

The first Community Capacity-Building Session was held on June 16 at Langston Hughes Community, Business and Resource Center from 12-4pm. The event included a convening space for people to meet one another and share information; resources to assist with writing the grant; and one-to-one sessions for applicants to ask volunteers specific questions about the RFP. Workshops were provided on the following topics, with information shared multiple times throughout the event:

- Developing outcome metrics/performance measures
- Selecting a fiscal sponsor
- Developing project timeline, description of activities and budget
- Submitting the application via the online portal, Submittable

Walk-ins were encouraged and 77 individuals pre-registered for the event. Frontline staffed the session and engaged volunteers. The 1:1 sessions were staffed with individuals experienced with grant writing and reviewing.

Two additional sessions were hosted in July and will be detailed in next month's report.

### **Proposal Review Panel**

The application to become a member of the Proposal Review Panel application was released on May 30, along with the dates and times the Panel would be required to convene. Frontline's Planning and

Design Team set a goal of 30 members and sought to have at least 40 percent of the panel be represented by

members under age 30, as recommended per the BCYF Task Force. The application was released via email blast to the BCYF mailing list and announced via social media. Individuals were encouraged to share the announcement and to recruit youth to apply. The Fund received 169 applications for the panel.

A team of Frontline staff members and advisors scored each application using the same rubric, which was drafted considering the values and principles of the Fund. The team set a cumulative score threshold of 18 out of 20 for adult applicants and 16 out of 20 for youth applicants. In instances where the scores varied significantly among reviewers, the team discussed the reasons behind their individual scores and made adjustments accordingly. Diversity – including geography, age, race and gender – were also considered.

Thirty panel members and eight alternates were selected and contacted. Ultimately, 24 individuals confirmed acceptance and attended the first onboarding session. The remaining panelists and alternates were either disqualified due to their indication they intended to submit a grant – a direct conflict of interest – or they did not respond to repeated outreach attempts. The Planning and Design Team, and all individuals engaged in the BCYF, used multiple methods to contact unresponsive panel finalists.

The names of the panelists will be released after decisions are made about grantees. This decision was made to preserve the integrity of the process, and to reduce the likelihood of interference by individuals seeking to learn information about deliberations.

Panelists were onboarded during two sessions at Baltimore City Community College, on June 30 from 10am-4pm and July 3 from 5:30-9pm. Frontline and UPD shared the following:

- History of the BCYF
- Values and principles of the Fund
- Partnerships and team structure
- Priority areas of the BCYF
- Roles and responsibilities of the panel
- Explanation of conflict of interest
- Scoring rubric and review process

Panelists were invited to share the reasons they wanted to be involved in the BCYF and establish their own rules and values for the working together on behalf on the Fund.

### **Documentation and Press**

Kinetics Strategies and other partners have visually documented the Community Capacity Sessions and other events through photography and murals. Kinetics built out the BCYF website and established a visual brand for all materials distributed by the Fund. The website garnered 24,471-page views and 11,229 browsing sessions of a single user to the site between launch and June 30. Kinetics sent nine email campaigns to over 4,400 subscribers with the following results:

**BCYFUND Average Email Open Rate: 31.8%**  
Nonprofit Average Email Open Rate 24.11%

Government Average Email Open Rate 26.52%

**BCYFUND Click Rate: 5.83%**

Nonprofit Average Click Rate: 2.57%

Government Average Click Rate: 3.65%

Kinetics also manages the Fund’s social media sites on Twitter and Facebook. On Twitter, BCYF has had 72,000 organic impressions, which is the number of times the Fund’s content was displayed in a user's News Feed, ticker or page, and 1,224 engagements, which is the total number of times a user interacted with a Tweet. This includes retweets, replies, follows, likes, links, cards, hashtags, embedded media, username, profile photo, or Tweet expansion. On Facebook, there have been 35,700 organic impressions, which is the number of times content was displayed in a user's News Feed, ticker or page, and 527 engagements, which includes “liking” a post, clicking on a link or posting a comment.

**Website**

Since June 6, 2018

Page views - 24,471

Sessions - 11,229 (browsing session of a single user to the site)

The Fund’s activities were covered in The Baltimore Sun, Daily Record and other media outlets during this reporting period. Several media outlets also posted dates of the Community Capacity-Building Sessions.

**Associated Black Charities to Offer Grant Proposal Help, June 25, 2018**

<https://thedailyrecord.com/2018/06/25/associated-black-charities-to-offer-grant-proposal-help/>

**Baltimore Seeks Applications for \$12 Million Youth Fund, June 9, 2018**

<http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/baltimore-city/bs-md-ci-youth-fund-rfp-20180609-story.html>

**Additional Activities**

The majority of activity in late May and June focused on releasing the RFP, supporting applicants, and releasing the application, selecting, and seating the Proposal Review Panel. Frontline, UPD, ABC and Kinetics also engaged in the following activities during this time period:

- Presented to the Association of Baltimore Area Grantmakers (ABAG) on June 12. This 90-minute gathering was at full capacity, with additional members dialing in, and ABAG has requested another meeting in July to continue the conversation.
- Presented to Mayor Catherine Pugh and City Council on June 18.
- Responded to 79 questions asked by the public after the RFP was released. The answers were provided via a Frequently Asked Questions document sent via email blast to all individuals registered through the BCYF website and was posted on BCYF homepage. This ensures that applicants, regardless of whether they attended one of the Grant Informational Q&A session, receive the same information.

- Engaged with Kingslow Associates, the evaluation partner, to begin the process of documenting and assessing specific activities, inputs to and outcomes resulting from planning and decision-making.
- Continually listened to feedback from the public and made changes to the process as a result.
- Determined IT requirements for the permanent intermediary.