TakingITGlobal X Canada Service Corps

Grant Applicant Self-reflection Guide
#RisingYouth X #JeunesEnAction

What's a self-reflection guide?

This self-reflection guide provides some helpful, easy tips to ensure that your project ideas can successfully and meaningfully access the community that you are trying to reach and serve.

We have compiled a few suggestions on how to approach your application and considerations for before engaging with communities. We hope to encourage reflection whenever engaging with at-risk, marginalized, underrepresented and minority groups. We understand that these groups, being that they are so often underfunded, require adequate and safe resources. We hope to support you in creating meaningful relationships with communities of all kinds!

Things to reflect on before applying...

Are you a member of the community that you are hoping to reach?

We understand that sometimes you don't identify with or belong to the communities that you work with or that you feel connected to. We don't discourage working with communities to which you do not belong. However, we do feel there are some safe and considerate ways to go about it. When entering into a space that is not yours with the intention of providing a service, it can happen that although you have the best intentions, the service you are attempting to provide is not actually what the community needs.

In order to avoid this, we encourage collaborative projects. If you are applying on behalf of a community to which you do not belong, make sure that you have the consent and support of that group, that they have expressed an explicit need for the ways in which you hope to serve/service you wish to offer, and that there is a collaborative, group approach to the project/activity.

Why should we be reflecting on this stuff?

When working with communities that experience adversity at high rates, it's really important to make sure that we enact care, respect and humility. This is especially important if you have chosen to engage a community that you do not identify as being a part of. Even though we might have the best intentions, we're not the experts on an experience that is not ours. It's important for us at #RisingYouth to ensure that all of the approved grants are used to promote community engagement, wellness and pride. We want to make sure that we can support you in delivering projects that align with this vision. In order for us to do this, we request that all applicants take some time to make use of this self-reflection tool.

Can't figure out how to reflect on your idea? Here are some questions that we ask ourselves that we think you might find helpful!

→ Do I belong to the community that I am trying to reach?

→ If I do not belong to the community that I am trying to reach, do I have the consent of the community and am I approaching this collaboratively?

→If I do not belong to the community I am trying to reach, what is my relationship to the people and why do I think I should be working with them? What can I offer that they don't already have?

→ If I do not belong to the community I am trying to reach, does this project/idea/dream benefit me in a tangible way or does it benefit the community who it is intended to serve?

→ If I do not belong to the community I am trying to reach, how will I ensure I approach people with humility and respect when/if the people reject my project/idea/dream?

→ If I do not belong to the community I am trying to reach, how can I enact allyship by supporting projects that were already envisioned or created by and for the people? Instead of starting my own project, how might I use #RisingYouth funds to support pre-existing youth-led efforts?

→ If I do not belong to the community I am trying to reach, am I trusted by members of this community? Are they asking for my help? Are they guiding and advising me on best practices while engaging them?

Here are some helpful tips and tricks:

→ If you are facilitating a project in a community that you do not belong to, make sure that you do some research before showing up. See if the group, community or cause has a Facebook, Instagram or a website and spend some time learning as much as you can!

→ Check in with yourself; make sure you are asking appropriate questions and conducting yourself in a way that is respectful to the community members you're engaging with. Are you comfortable with them and are they comfortable with you?

→ If you receive criticisms from the community, make sure that you are open to the discussion and that you actively listen to the suggestions being shared with you.

→ Make sure to always familiarize yourself with appropriate language, cultural protocols, people's pronouns, the history of the community and be honest about what you do not know.