



SIF Classic Grantee: Jobs for the Future, Inc. – Opportunity Works

FAST FACTS

Award Year
2014

Total SIF Investment
\$6,000,000

Focus Area
Youth Development

Outcome Category
Education and
Employment

**Committed Match
Funding to Date**
James Irvine
Foundation, Prudential
Foundation, Hartford
Foundation

**Intermediary Match
Commitment to Date**
\$6,000,000

SIF Portfolio Summary

Across the United States, approximately 6.7 million young people between the ages of 16-24 are neither in school nor participating in the labor market—a population known as “opportunity youth.” These young people—disproportionately youth of color—face a range of challenges that limit their connection to work and education. The impact of this disconnection is felt not only by the youth and their families, but also by their communities and the nation as a whole, with this population representing an estimated \$250 billion annually in lost revenue, earnings, and costs of social services.

Jobs for the Future and The Aspen Forum for Community Solutions seek to improve education and career outcomes for opportunity youth by bringing together local stakeholders—K-12 and other public youth-serving systems, colleges, employers, and community organizations—to collaborate across systems and build education and career pathways for unemployed or underemployed young people.

Through the SIF grant award, JFF and the Aspen Forum are engaging with partners in seven communities across the country, accelerating efforts to address systemic barriers to opportunity with community-based strategies to scale career and education pathways. Along with technical assistance from JFF and The Aspen Forum, a local sub-grantee in each community drives the implementation and scaling of one or more evidence-based interventions, including academic preparation, postsecondary bridging, and career pathways support. Over three years, this effort will build the evidence base for interventions that significantly improve credential attainment and employment prospects for opportunity youth, especially boys and men of color.



Getting to Know Jobs for the Future, Inc. Opportunity Works Project

How has your involvement with SIF, including the evaluation component, enabled you and/or your subgrantees to speak with funders that you previously had not approached?

We have reached out to several foundations that are new to JFF to support the SIF match, including Andrus Family Funds (secured) and USA Funds (not yet secured). The SIF has offered us a way to reach several funders that had not been on our radar screen. We made an excellent selection in our evaluation partners, Urban Institute, which has significant experience in the evaluation of programs serving opportunity youth. Their work has allowed us to engage potential funders with a particular interest in evaluation. The evaluation is set to launch this fall and as we gather initial data we look forward to additional opportunities to engage funders by sharing emerging data and potential impact on OY population.

How has your involvement with Social Innovation Fund enabled your organization to scale your program/intervention?

We are thrilled at the opportunity to scale our interventions but we have not yet begun to do so; our sites are just beginning their implementation. Through their annual implementation plans, sites have provided their goals and strategies for scale up. Our phase one support to our provider network through technical assistance and capacity building launched in July 2015. We look forward to facilitating the expansion and growth of the Back on Track model in our seven communities.



**Subgrantee Match
Commitment to Date**
\$1,860,000

Subgrantees
Bay Area Community Resources, Boston Private Industry Council, Capital Workforce Partners, Philadelphia Youth Network, Kids in Common, The Cowen Institute at Tulane University, United Way of King County

To learn more:
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