Violence Prevention Campaigns Initiative
2017 Application Feedback

The following document reflects feedback provided by the inter-ministerial selection committee for the Ontario Black Youth Action Plan – Violence Prevention Campaigns Initiative in Fall 2017.

The inter-ministerial selection committee was made up of Ontario Public Service staff with specific expertise in communications, community work and youth justice, who also self-identified as members of the Black community. Note: Applications submitted in French were reviewed by French-speaking committee members.

Their feedback has been summarized to support organizations in improving their applications for future initiatives.

1. Overall Feedback

1.1 Read the Application Package Closely
Every program under the Ontario Black Youth Action Plan has a separate application package posted on the website: Ontario.ca/BlackYouthActionPlan. The application package was critical to completing a successful application. It contained information such as: campaign goals and outcomes, scoring criteria and timelines.

1.2 Use the Application Template
At the end of each package is an application template. Each section of the application template was assigned a weight, and scoring criteria indicated in the application was linked to each section. Using the application template ensures your responses answer every element of the application.

1.3 Answer the Application Questions Clearly
Selection committee members can only review what you input in the application, and the reference letters. Selection committee members may not be familiar with the work of your organization, so it's important for applicants to clearly answer all the questions.

2. Section One: Organizational Overview

2.1 Indicate Your Campaign Partners and Their Role
The organizational overview section asked applicants to identify the lead organization and campaign partners.

- High scoring applications were specific about both who campaign partners are and the role that they will play in campaign execution. In particular, high scoring applications working in more than one community had partners from those communities. For example, a Toronto-based organization wanting to deliver campaign elements in Ottawa had community partners in Ottawa. High scoring applications also had cross-sector partnerships (i.e. industry partners, schools or school boards, universities etc.).
- Low scoring applications did not include any partnerships or listed partners the lead organization had worked with in the past on unrelated initiatives.
2.2 Emphasize Black Leadership
The organizational overview asked applicants to indicate their connection to the community.

- **High scoring applications** clearly indicated in their application that the lead organization was Black-led or Black-focused (i.e. there are Black community members at the leadership table, the organizational mandate is to serve Black Ontarians etc.).

- **Low scoring applications** did not indicate that the lead organization or partners were Black-led or Black-focused in the application. Low scoring applications may have indicated that they had Black beneficiaries, but Black identity was not at the core of their individual organization, partners or collaborative.

3. Section Two: Organizational Experience

3.1 Clearly Demonstrate Experience Related to the Initiative
The application asked applicants to indicate their experience delivering public awareness campaigns or violence prevention initiatives. This question helps selection committee members determine the applicant’s capability to deliver the campaign they are proposing.

- **High scoring applications** clearly linked their experience to the initiative. For example, if the campaign being proposed relies on community events, high scoring applicants listed their experience hosting community events. High scoring applicants also clearly indicated their experience working specifically with the Black community.

- **Low scoring applications** may have provided experience delivering youth programs unrelated to violence prevention (i.e. sports programs or homework clubs). Low scoring applications did not indicate their experience serving the Black community.

3.2 Don’t Forget to Indicate Your Partner’s Experience
Many applications focused on the experience of the lead organization, but there was an opportunity to identify the experience of partners as well.

- **High scoring applications** leveraged the experience of their partners to bolster their application. Collective Impact relies on partnerships that help maximize the impact of the campaign.

- **Low scoring applications** did not indicate their partner’s experience.

4. Section Three: Initiative Proposal

4.1 Make Sure to Address All Elements of the Campaign Proposal
The application asked applicants to identify seven (7) elements of their campaign (see below). Applicants needed to respond to every single element.

- **High scoring applications** used bullets, charts or subheadings to reflect each element and present a clear description of the campaign. Key areas that marked high scoring applications were:
  - **Campaign Goals:** It was clear how the campaign goal was linked to the root causes of violence listed in the application, and would reduce instances of violence for Black children, youth and families.
  - **Campaign Approach:** The campaign approach had a strong emphasis on the Collective Impact and Cultural Identity (CI²) guiding principles. In particular, youth were leading the campaign design and implementation.
- **Target Audience**: The target audience is clearly indicated in the application, and linked to the campaign goal. Recognition and understanding of cultural identity is clearly articulated. Note: The target audience did not have to be the same as the beneficiary audience (Section 1.6 of the application).

- **Implementation Plan**: Implementation plan was feasible and scalable based on the timelines. Since campaign funds must be spent by March 2018, high scoring campaigns had limited start up times, and could be delivered in a short time period.

- **Budget**: Budget was detailed and considered all elements of the campaign. For example, if applicants indicated they would build a website, realistic costs for website design, hosting and maintenance were included.

- **Low scoring applications** did not address all seven (7) elements clearly, or missed the mark in the following areas:
  - **Campaign Goals**: The outcome or goal of the campaign was unclear, or not clearly linked to the outcomes in the application. For example, some applications focused on goals such as increasing employment. The Violence Prevention Campaigns Initiative was focused on reducing a negative concept of self and low self-esteem, a sense of powerlessness and a sense of exclusion from the broader community (Section 1.3).
  - **Campaign Approach**: Collective Impact and Cultural Identity (CI2) guiding principles were either not mentioned or not integral to campaign design and implementation.
  - **Target Audience**: The target audience was not clearly defined. For example, many campaigns were targeted at the Black community broadly. The specific cultural identity of the community, including elements such as nationality, ethnicity, religion, social class, generation, locality or any kind of social group that has its own distinct culture was not defined or considered in campaign design.
  - **Implementation Plan**: Implementation required a great deal of startup time or wasn’t scalable.
  - **Budget**: Budget was missing some elements of the campaign, or did not maximize the investment in program implementation.