



Request for Expression of Interest: Youth Enabling Organization to Support in the Recruitment and Management of Youth-Led Organizations that will Accelerate Work Opportunities for Young People in Kenya.

BACKGROUND

In **Kenya**, Youth aged **15–34 years** constitute approximately **35% of the population**, yet the youth unemployment rate remains alarmingly high—estimated at **67%**, according to Statista. This crisis is fueled by a complex interplay of factors, including:

- A **mismatch between skills acquired and market needs**, particularly in sectors driving future employment such as agriculture, technology, and entrepreneurship.
- A shortage of **life skills, mentorship, and career guidance**, which limits young people's ability to navigate the transition from education to work.
- Limited access to **apprenticeship and practical training** opportunities that build real-world experience.
- Weak enabling environments for **youth entrepreneurship and innovation**, compounded by poor access to capital, networks, and business development support.

These structural barriers disproportionately affect **young women, refugees, and youth with disabilities**, making inclusive and youth-centred solutions essential. Addressing these challenges requires **targeted interventions that are led by young people themselves** and supported by partners with deep contextual understanding and technical expertise.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The Mastercard Foundation in Kenya, through its **Young Africa Works** strategy, aims to enable **7 million young people—5 million of whom are young women—to access dignified and fulfilling work by 2030**. A core part of this strategy is the Foundation's deep commitment to partnering with **youth-led organizations**, recognizing their vital role in reaching and empowering Kenya's most marginalized young women and men.

Youth-led organizations are uniquely positioned to drive **transformative change and innovation**. They bring firsthand insight into the challenges faced by young people and are critical in designing and delivering relevant, inclusive, and impactful solutions. By partnering with these organizations, the Foundation seeks to amplify youth voices, support locally driven innovation, and scale up efforts that unlock meaningful work opportunities for all young people. The partnership with youth-led organizations focuses on the following key areas:

1. **Education and Skills Development** – Providing young people with the knowledge and practical skills needed for employment and entrepreneurship.
2. **Financial Inclusion** – Expanding youth access to financial services and tools to support their economic empowerment.
3. **Youth Employment** – Promoting inclusive job creation in high-potential sectors such as agriculture, construction, and technology.
4. **Disability Inclusion** – Ensuring young people with disabilities have equal access to education, training, and work opportunities.
5. **Gender Equality** – Addressing systemic barriers faced by young women in accessing education, employment, and leadership opportunities.

Through these efforts, the Mastercard Foundation aims to foster a thriving ecosystem of youth-led organizations capable of driving long-term, inclusive growth across Kenya.

OBJECTIVE OF THIS CALL FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The Mastercard Foundation is seeking to contract a Youth Enabling Organization who will collaborate closely with the Youth Engagement team to manage Youth-Led Organizations in Kenya. This assignment will revolve around YLOs' mapping and recruitment, onboarding, contracting, MEL, and overall program management within the program period. Submissions are open from **June 16th to June 30th**.

SCOPE OF WORK

A Kenyan-based organization or a consultancy firm will support the Youth Engagement team in:

1. **Recruitment and Onboarding of Youth-Led Organizations (YLOs):** Identify, recruit, and onboard YLOs across Kenya, prioritizing those led by young women, refugees, and persons with disabilities. Selected YLOS should align with the strategic priorities of the Kenya Country Program, including Agrifood systems, Digital Economy, Entrepreneurship, Creatives, and Workforce Development with Gender, Youth, Refugee, and Persons with Disabilities.
2. **Contracting, Funds Disbursement and Management:** Assess, contract, and disburse approved funding to onboarded Youth-Led Organizations (YLOs). In addition, the selected organization will be responsible for **overseeing the utilization of program funds**, ensuring compliance with Mastercard Foundation's financial guidelines, policies, and reporting standards.
3. **Oversight and Support During Implementation:** The selected organization will be responsible for overseeing the **programmatic and financial management** of the Youth-Led Organizations (YLOs) throughout the implementation phase. While providing operational guidance and support, the organization must uphold the **independence, voice, and agency** of the YLOs, ensuring they lead and implement their programs autonomously.
4. **Facilitation of Learning Forums and Knowledge Sharing:** Design and lead youth-centred, participatory learning sessions, fostering continuous reflection and adaptive learning among Youth-Led Organizations (YLOS). It will also be responsible for **documenting key lessons, success stories, and challenges** throughout the implementation period. These insights will be regularly shared with the Foundation and relevant stakeholders, ensuring that **youth voice and agency remain central** to program learning and improvement.
5. Coordination of capacity building and strengthening to ensure the YLOs are more effective in delivering on their work and mandate and contribute to enabling young people into dignified and fulfilling work.

•

KEY DELIVERABLES

1. A draft work Plan for the YLO program Period
2. Initial guidance on execution of the YLO program (exact deliverables to be agreed)
3. Mentorship and management of YLOs for Impact
4. Documentation of learnings
5. Submit a final program report
6. Other support as required with the time available.

DURATION OF ASSIGNMENT: The assignment will run for 3 years (June 2025-June 2028)

WHO ARE WE LOOKING FOR:

- A Kenyan-led organization/Firm experienced in leading innovative youth-centric programming in sectors including:-Financial inclusion, Agri-Food systems, Education and transitions, Creatives and Digital Economy.
- Demonstrated experience in working with young women and men as well as managing youth focused/ facing Programs.
- An organization with demonstrated experience in providing technical support to youth-based Community Organizations, Women's Rights Organizations, and Youth-Led Organizations.
- Have considerable national reach and coverage of the designated geographic areas and sectors of the Foundation's programs and partnership/investments.
- Have substantial proven experience mainstreaming and advocating for Youth Voices across the project cycle, including monitoring, evaluation, research, and learning.
- An organization with the ability to program with and for young people.
- Technical knowledge in the sectoral areas of work of the Foundation and a deep understanding of resilience concepts and sustainable development.
- Experience in conducting youth based learnings and providing technical expertise in project designs for different portfolios.
- Have a proven track record of working with young and marginalized populations, including refugees and persons with disabilities.

KEY SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS INCLUDE:

In selecting a suitable partner to manage Youth-Led Organizations (YLOs), the Mastercard Foundation will prioritize organizations that demonstrate strong, context-specific expertise and alignment with the Foundation's values and strategic priorities. The following capabilities are essential:

1. **Youth engagement, voice & agency:** Proven track record in co-designing with young people and embedding youth engagement, voice, leadership in governance and feedback loops.
2. **Alignment with charitable purpose & impact pathways:** Evidence that the partner has the capacity to support YLO programs, drive advancement of education, financial access to alleviate poverty and creation of dignified, fulfilling work, especially through entrepreneurship and workforce development, our core focus areas.
3. **Capacity Strengthening for Youth Led Organizations:** The partner must be capable of **building the YLOs capacity including their gender and inclusion capacity**. This includes delivering structured training, mentorship, and ongoing technical support to strengthen institutional knowledge and operationalization of their organizations.
4. **Proven Experience in Gender and Inclusion Integration:** The partner must have **demonstrated experience integrating gender and social inclusion**, with a strong track record in promoting **young women's economic**

empowerment. This includes the ability to contextualize and apply intersectional approaches that reflect the diverse realities of youth in Kenya.

5. **Youth- and Young Women-Centric Program Design:** The partner should possess a solid background in **youth-centered and young women-centric program design**, with an emphasis on **co-creation, participation, and agency**. This includes designing initiatives that are responsive to the unique barriers and aspirations of young women and girls.
6. **Safeguarding & youth protection capacity:** Demonstrated experience in child- and youth-safeguarding policies, staff training, and safe reporting mechanisms.
7. **Expertise in Disability, Diversity, and Inclusion (DDI):** A deep understanding of the **DDI landscape in Kenya**, including evolving trends, policy developments, and global best practices, is critical. The partner should be able to ensure inclusive program environments that effectively engage **youth with disabilities and those from marginalized communities**.
8. **Sector-Specific Technical Expertise:** The organization must have experience offering technical input in the design of inclusive programs across key sectors relevant to the Mastercard Foundation's work, such as **MSMEs, agrifood systems, digital economy, and workforce development**.

YOUR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST -WHAT TO SUBMIT

- A brief (1 page) institutional profile outlining the organization's relevant experience and qualifications.
- A detailed methodology proposal outlining how the organization will deliver on key tasks described above.
- Profiles and CVs (max3 pages) for key team members who will be involved in the project.
- Proposed line budget.

*The above should be submitted in one (1) PDF file. The electronic copies of the technical and financial proposals should be submitted on or before 6 pm EAT on the deadline date (**30th June**). The technical proposal should NOT exceed 7 pages.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

No.	Criteria	Weighting
1	Organizational relevancy, experience, appropriateness, expertise and experience of the proposed team.	20
2	Experience in youth-centric programming, initiatives and Fund management with marginalized and financially disadvantaged youth lens.	40
3	Quality, Agile and appropriateness of the proposed approach and work plan	30
4	Suitability and feasibility of the proposed budget	10
Total		100

ANNEX A: TERMS & CONDITIONS - DISCLAIMER

While the information and supporting material provided (the 'Information') have been prepared in good faith, the information does not purport to be exact or comprehensive. Neither the Mastercard Foundation nor its advisors, board members, directors, partners, employees, consultants, or other staff members, and agents; and those who specifically contributed to the preparation of this REOI, make any representation as to the accuracy or completeness of Information, nor shall any individuals at the Foundation be liable for any loss or damage arising as a result of reliance on such information. Any person planning to submit Phase A documents (Expression of Interest Template, High-Level Budget, and High-Level Organizational Questionnaire) following receipt of these Terms of Reference (TOR) should make an independent assessment of the Mastercard Foundation and documented requirements.

The Foundation will not be liable or responsible to any person in relation to any inaccuracy, error, omission or misleading statements contained in this Information, will not be liable or responsible to any person in relation to any failure to inform any person of any inaccuracy, error, omission or misleading statement contained in such Information of which it becomes aware after the date of release of that Information. The Foundation shall not be liable to any person for any damages, losses, costs, liabilities, or expenses of any kind which it may suffer as a consequence of relying upon such Information. Any person considering the making of a decision to enter into contractual relationships with the Foundation and/or any other person on the basis of the Information provided to (or otherwise received by) Applicants (whether prior to this REOI or at any point during the selection process) in relation to the selection process should make their own investigations and form their own opinion.

Specifically, the distribution or receipt of this REOI shall not constitute or be construed as the giving of investment advice or a recommendation of any kind by the Foundation Only the express terms of any written contract (as and when it is executed) shall have any contractual effect.

All Applicants are solely responsible for the costs and expenses they shall incur in connection with this selection process including the preparation and submission of applications and participation in all future stages of this process. Under no circumstances will the Foundation be liable for any costs or expenses borne by the Applicants or any of their partners or advisors in this process. For the purposes of the selection process, all advisors of the Foundation are acting exclusively as the advisors to the Foundation and will not be responsible or owe any duty of care to anyone other than the Foundation in respect of the selection process.

The Mastercard Foundation shall not be committed to any course of action as a result of:

- Issuing this (REOI) or any invitation to participate.
- Communicating with an organization in respect of this REOI; or
- Any other communication between the Mastercard Foundation (whether directly or by its agents or representatives) and any other party.

Queries during the Process

The applicants will use the contextual information in the TOR to support Phase A submission documents). It is the responsibility of the applicants to obtain clarification of any terms, conditions, or technical requirements contained in the TOR. The Foundation will compile all questions received and answers provided and circulate them to all applicants as per the timeline outlined above. **Kindly direct all questions and enquiries to** the Program Lead, Youth Engagement, with the email address sowiti@mastercardfdn.org copied to jmburu@mastercardfdn.org . The Foundation cannot guarantee responses after the deadline indicated.

Amendments

The Mastercard Foundation reserves the right to amend, revise, add to, or withdraw all or any part of this TOR at any time. Organizations will remain responsible for all costs and expenses incurred by them, their staff, and their advisors or by any third party acting under their instructions in connection with any amendments.

Confidentiality, Intellectual Property and Use of Documents

The contents of this EOI and any supporting documents that may be made available by the Foundation from time to time throughout this EOI process, are confidential and proprietary to the Foundation, and protected by intellectual property rights. This EOI and such other documents are being made available to applicants on the condition that each applicant shall always keep the contents of this EOI and such other documents confidential and shall not reproduce, distribute or disclose the contents for any purpose, except: (i) to the applicant's own employees that have a need-to-know in order to facilitate the applicant's participation in this EOI process; and (ii) where required by applicable laws or regulations.

Nothing in these Terms and Conditions shall convey to the applicant any right, title, interest or license in, or to, any trademark, trade name, or any other intellectual property rights of the Foundation. The applicant shall not issue any news release, public announcement, advertisement, or any other form of publicity, in any form or content, in connection with this EOI and/or referring to the Foundation without first obtaining the written approval of the Foundation.

To support the Foundation in the evaluation and analysis of proposals, all documentation submitted in connection with this EOI process will become the property of the Foundation, may be subject to external review, and otherwise may be used by the Foundation in its sole discretion. If applicants have any doubts about the disclosure of confidential or proprietary information, the Foundation recommends that they consult with their legal counsel and take steps necessary to protect their confidential information and intellectual property.

Privacy and Data Protection

Throughout this EOI process, applicants shall refrain from providing the Foundation with any information that identifies or can be used to identify any individual, other than (i) business contact information that is necessary for the Foundation to contact representatives of applicants about matters relating to this EOI process; or (ii) information specifically requested by the Foundation and for which the interested party has a legal basis to disclose to the Foundation under applicable privacy and data protection laws.

Conflict of Interest

Applicants shall exercise reasonable care and diligence to prevent any actions or conditions that could result in a potential conflict. This obligation shall apply to the applicant and third parties associated with the submission of the EOI.

Applicants must disclose in the Organizational Questionnaire any circumstances/information, including but not limited to personal, institutional, financial, and business, which will or might result in actual or perceived conflict of interest by taking part in the submission of the REOI. This disclosure also applies to any implementing partners proposed by the applicant. During the REOI process, the Foundation may request for additional information to be uploaded/submitted to further assess actual or perceived conflict of interest. The Foundation reserves the right to reject any organization which, in the sole opinion of the Foundation, poses actual or perceived conflict of interest.

The Foundation requires all actual or potential conflicts of interest to be resolved to the Foundation's satisfaction prior to the delivery of an applicant's submission. Failure to declare such conflicts and/or failure to address such conflicts to the reasonable satisfaction of the Foundation could result in an applicant being disqualified at the sole discretion of the Foundation.

If in the course of preparing, submitting and reviewing the EOI any actual or potential conflict of interest arises, the Applicant shall immediately inform the Foundation in writing of such conflict.

Canvassing and non-collusion

The Foundation reserves the right to disqualify any applicant who, in connection with this REOI: (i) offers any inducement, fee or reward to any Board member, employee or officer of the Foundation; (ii) contacts any Board member, employee or officer of the Foundation about any aspect of this REOI in a manner not permitted by this REOI; (iii) fixes or adjusts the amount of its REOI by or in accordance with any agreement or arrangement with any other applicant; (iv) enters into any agreement or arrangement with any other Applicant or potential Applicant to the effect that it shall refrain from making a submission or as to the amount of any submission; (v) causes or induces any person to enter into such agreement as is mentioned above or to inform the Applicant of the amount or approximate amount of any rival submission; (vi) canvasses any person in connection with this REOI who is not one of its own team members; (vii) offers or agrees to pay or give or does pay or give any sum of money, inducement or valuable consideration directly or indirectly to any person for doing or having done or causing or having caused to be done in relation to any other submission or proposed submission; or (viii) communicates to any person other than the Foundation amount or approximate amount of its proposed submission (except where such disclosure is made in confidence in order to obtain quotations necessary for the preparation of a submission).

ANNEX B: MASTERCARD FOUNDATION GUIDELINES/POLICIES

1. [Child and Youth Safeguarding Guidelines](#)
2. [Conflict of Interest Policy](#)

ANNEX C: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

As indicated, the Mastercard Foundation is a Canadian registered charity and, as such, is subject to varying legal obligations that it must comply within the delivery of its charitable programs. Organizations with selected EOI responses will be invited and required to negotiate a contract with the Foundation that satisfies the Foundation's legal requirements. The Foundation requires all contracting organizations to comply with its standard terms and conditions, which can be viewed at: <https://mastercardfdn.org/terms><https://mastercardfdn.org/terms-and-conditions-services/>. Notable obligations include:

- The avoidance of illegal and criminal activities, including without limitation fraud, corruption, bribery, money laundering, and terrorist financing; and
- The avoidance of partisan political activities.

Selected organizations must also ensure that all proposed activities directly further one or both the Foundation's charitable purposes, noted above.

-End of ToR document-