

TOP 10 BEST PRACTICES FOR YOUTH-LED INNOVATION AND CHANGE

LESSONS LEARNED FROM FUNDERS SUPPORTING AND INTEGRATING YOUTH-LED INNOVATIONS AND TECHNOLOGIES.

- 01** Provide flexible, accessible funds for each phase of the work, including implementation.
- 02** Be ready to engage non-traditional partners, resources and facilitators, as well as organizations with specific expertise in youth-led projects. Take their advice about timelines and approach. (Remember that young people don't always identify or align with traditional human rights or social justice groups. Be ready to find and engage with young people in different places and to blur boundaries between sectors.)
- 03** Assume and plan for some degree of risk.
- 04** Anticipate and welcome unexpected solutions – don't go in with predefined ideas and solutions.
- 05** Create space for knowledge share and dialogue, both physically and virtually. Physical and virtual spaces foster more innovation and create spaces for new ideas to emerge.
- 06** Involve young people in development, design or implementation – not just idea generation. Young people deserve to be at the table from idea (including defining the problem) to design and implementation. Their presence throughout the process changes the conversation, from articulating the problem through to building a solution.
- 07** Be open to teaching and learning between generations. A horizontal flow of learning will grow more effective intergenerational social change. Each generation has something it wants to learn from the other, but it needs to be two-way.
- 08** Be ready to flex and ask tough questions about how your own organization works. Engaging young people fully may require different processes, protocols and ways of doing business.
- 09** Embrace social and digital media. Lack of tech and social media savvy is often one of young people's main critiques of established organizations. Engage young people in using new technology in different ways to empower marginalized voices and groups and bring "private" issues into "public" political space.
- 10** Be ready to act – and empower young people to act – quickly. Young people prioritize speed and action and can be frustrated by what they perceive as excessive time coordinating and planning. Find a way to strike the right balance.