



**Anchorage Youth
Development Coalition**
Housed at Center for Safe Alaskans

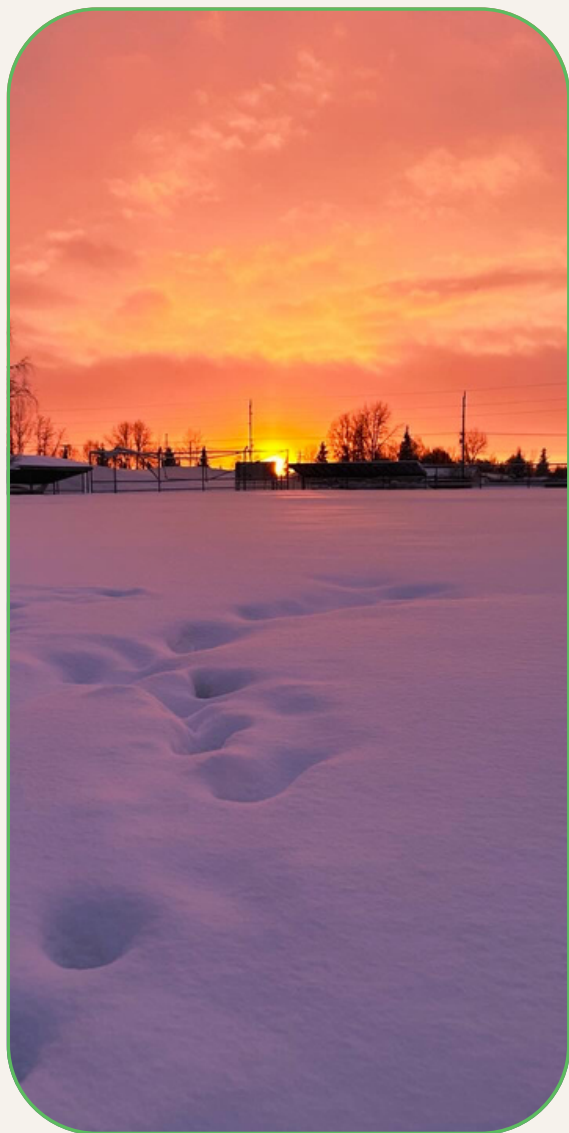
2026 Youth Matter Grant Guide

**Building Communities
Where Youth Know They Matter**

**GRANT APPLICATION DUE:
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2025 (11:59 PM)**

Introduction

Grant Application: 2026 Grant Application Link



Purpose of This Guide

This guide was made to help you bring your ideas to life! It walks you through how to plan, apply for, and carry out your Youth Matter Grant project. It also explains what support you can expect from the Anchorage Youth Development Coalition (AYDC)/Safe Alaskans Staff along the way.

How to Use This Guide

Here's how to make the most of it:

- Start with the **Overview** to understand what the grant is about.
- Use the **Application Section** when you're ready to apply.
- Check the **Timeline** to avoid missing key dates.
- Look at the **Rubric and Examples** to see what reviewers look for.
- Share this guide with your teammates and Project Advisor. It's meant to be used together.

How to Fill Out the Application OR Make a Multimedia Application

Online Written Application: Answer the questions in clear, simple sentences. Be specific about your ideas. Word Counts are included as a guide. If you can clearly answer the questions with fewer words, that is okay!

Multimedia Application: Instead of writing your answers in **section 2**, you can make a slideshow, a short video, or something creative! You don't need to show your face. Just make sure you answer all the questions on the application. You will still fill out sections 1, 3, and 4 on the application, but you can create a multimedia response for all questions in **section 2**.

If you have any questions not answered in this guide, please contact Rebekah Wilcox at rebekah@safealaskans.org

Welcome & Overview

Youth Matter Grants give Anchorage youth ages 12–24 the chance to design and lead projects that make a positive difference in their community. These grants support projects that build connection, safety, and wellbeing through youth leadership and teamwork with supportive adults.

Grant Theme: Each grant offers up to \$5,000 for projects that promote **wellbeing**; supporting mental health, healthy relationships, and positive youth spaces designed by and for Anchorage youth.



At a Glance:

Who can apply: Anchorage youth ages 12–24 working with a supporting nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization or public sector organization.

- Funding: Up to \$5,000 per project
- Timeline: January 2026 – May 2026
- Application due: Sunday, December 7, 2025

What Does 'Mattering' Mean?

When youth feel that they matter, they feel seen, valued, and supported. Youth Matter Grants help Anchorage youth create spaces and experiences that show how every young person matters in their community.

Here's what local youth told us matters most:

- **Safety:** Physical and emotional safety that allows young people to be their authentic selves.
- **Support, Respect, and Fairness:** Positive relationships with adults who listen and treat youth as capable partners.
- **Making a Difference:** Opportunities to contribute, create, and lead positive change in their community.



Eligibility & Team Roles

- Projects must be youth-led, based in Anchorage, and connected to a school, nonprofit, or community group.
- Each project must have:
 - A Youth Lead (age 12–24): Designs and leads the project.
 - Project Advisor: The person at a school or organization who helps manage paperwork and invoices, and who provides guidance and support to the youth project team.

Not eligible: for-profit businesses, political or fundraising projects, or projects that exclude anyone based on background, identity, or beliefs.

How to Apply & What Happens Next

Follow these steps to apply and bring your project idea to life!

- Read this guide and draft your application answers
- Submit your application by **December 7, 2025(11:59 PM)**.
- AYDC/Safe Alaskans staff review applications using the scoring rubric.
- Selected grantees attend orientation and begin their projects.





Project Timeline Overview:

- **November 7, 2025:** Application opens
- **November 20, 2025, 4:30–5:30pm via Zoom:** YMG Info Session
- **December 7, 2025:** Applications due (11:59 pm AK)
- **December 17, 2025:** Grantees announced
- **January 12, 2026(4:30–5:30 PM):** Virtual Orientation for Youth & Adult Leads (Required)
- **Jan 2026:** Site visits and planning meetings (Required)
- **February(9–12)2026:** Impact Evaluation Workshop(Required)
- **April 2026:** Midpoint check-in (Required)
- **May 29, 2026:** Projects completed & final reports due
- **June 2026 (June 8–12):** Celebration Event (Required)



YOU'RE ALMOST THERE
— TAKE TIME TO BREATHE —



WHAT TO EXPECT IF YOU'RE SELECTED

AYDC/Safe Alaskans staff will help you every step of the way! Once selected, you'll participate in:

- **Orientation:** Meet other grantees, review goals, and set up your plan.
- **Site Visits:** AYDC/Safe Alaskans Staff meet with your team to support your planning and success.
- **Evaluation Workshop:** Learn how to evaluate your work and build your survey
- **Midpoint Check-In:** Share updates and get feedback.
- **Celebration Event:** Present your project and celebrate your achievements with the community!

MEASURING & SHARING IMPACT

Every team will measure how their project made a difference. AYDC/Safe Alaskans staff will help you create a simple evaluation plan. You will decide how to show your impact through surveys, photos, reflections, or other creative ways.

CELEBRATION

All projects will share their stories at the celebration event, using any format that fits their style (presentations, performances, displays, videos, or art).



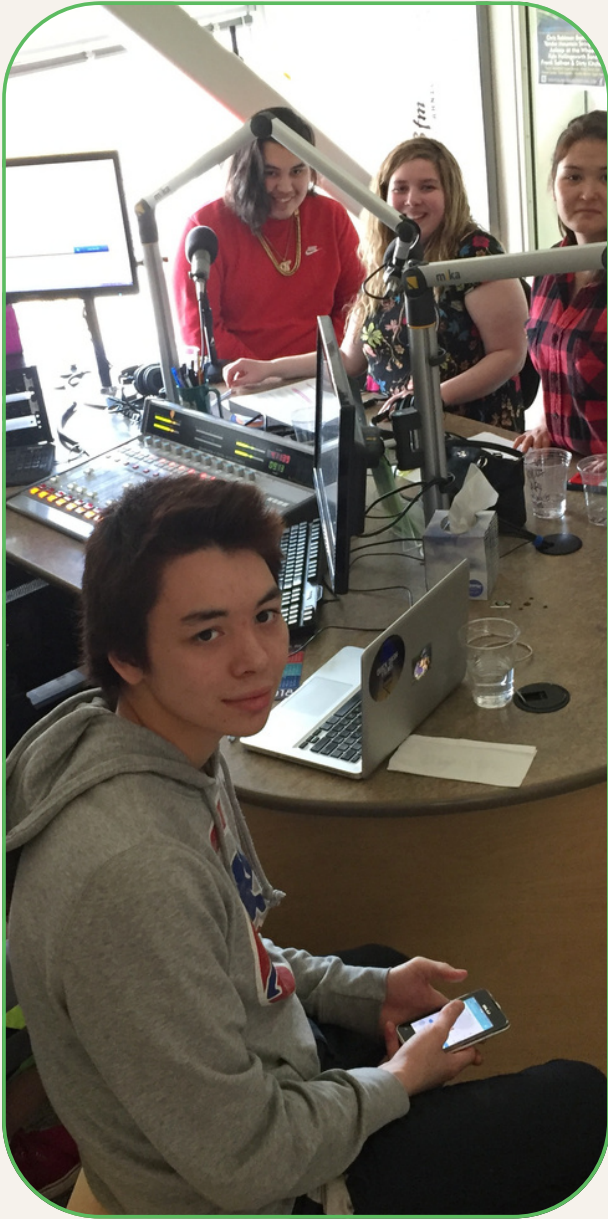
Appendix A: Scoring Rubric

How Applications Are Scored (Total = 100 points + up to 5 bonus points)

Criteria	Description	Points
Clear Project Idea	The project's goal and purpose are explained clearly and feel realistic.	15
Anchorage Community Need	The team identifies a meaningful local issue or opportunity their project addresses.	15
Impact and Outcomes	The plan describes how the project will make a difference and how success will be shown.	15
Youth Leadership	Youth are leading decision-making, with adults serving as mentors and supporters.	25
Team Planning & Feasibility	Timeline, roles, and budget are realistic and well thought out.	10
Application includes some or all of the following:	a. The project promotes connection and fairness across different groups of youth in the community. b. The team includes youth with a range of experiences, identities, and perspectives. c. The project helps remove barriers or expand access for youth who may not always feel included or supported. d. The team ensures that youth with less voice or visibility in community spaces are actively involved and represented.	20
Creativity Bonus	Up to 5 points for creativity, innovation, or exceptional storytelling.	+5

Appendix B: Example Projects

Examples of past YMG projects that supported wellbeing in Anchorage:



- **Voting Advocacy Podcast:** Youth shared how to register and vote, interviewing community leaders from different political parties.
- **“The Lightning Thief” Production:** Teens directed and produced a live performance of The Lightning Thief, leading every part of the show.
- **Environmental Awareness Fair:** Youth organized a community event to teach about protecting Alaska’s environment and living sustainably.
- **Mental Health Fair:** A youth team hosted a community fair to share resources and spark conversations about mental health and wellbeing.
- **Mental Health Workshop Series:** Youth leaders offered workshops to teach coping skills and promote open dialogue around mental health as part of the creation of a new youth advisory group.
- **Sugpiaq Mask-Making Workshop:** Youth worked with Elders to teach traditional mask-making and share Alaska Native culture with the community.
- **“Untaught Histories” Podcast:** Youth created a podcast advocating for Native history and culture to be included in public school curriculum.

Appendix C: Application Preparation Checklist

You can use this checklist to take all the steps needed to complete the application process.

Before You Apply

- ☐ Attend the virtual YMG Info Session on November 20, 2025 (4:30–5:30 PM).
- ☐ Read the 2026 Youth Matter Grant Guide.
- ☐ Choose your project idea and team (youth + Project Advisor).
- ☐ Make sure your project can be finished by May 29, 2026.
- ☐ Confirm youth are leading project decisions, with a Project Advisor providing guidance.

During Application

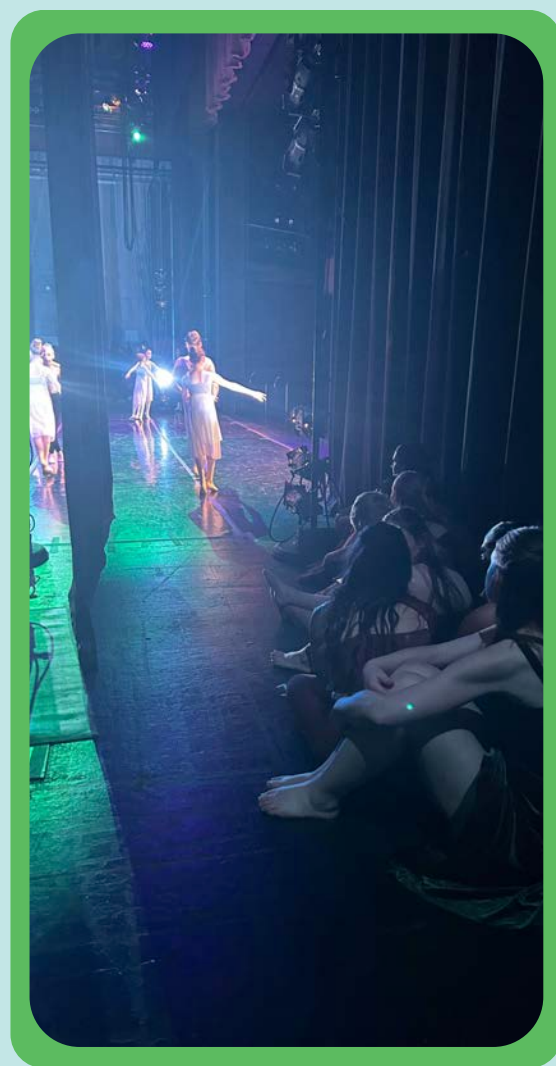
- ☐ Write or record your answers in a separate document.
- ☐ Check all contact info for accuracy.

For Section 2: If submitting a multimedia response for Section 2 (details below and in Grant Guide)

- ☐ You do not need to appear on camera.
- ☐ Use voice narration, slides, music, photos, or artwork to tell your story.
- ☐ Create an accessible link to your multimedia response
- ☐ Make sure the link works and has view access.
- ☐ Enter all contact information in this form (section 1), then:
 - Enter the link to Multimedia in the response section of the first question in section 2.
 - Write "MR" in each of the other questions in section 2. This will ensure you are answering each question.
 - Complete sections 3 and 4 on the form.
 - Submit form.

After Submitting

- ☐ Watch for an email confirmation. **If you do not receive one, we did not receive your application.**
- ☐ Be ready to meet with AYDC staff if selected for follow-up.



About AYDC and Safe Alaskans

Anchorage Youth Development Coalition (AYDC) is housed at Center Safe Alaskans. The Anchorage Youth Development Coalition (AYDC) supports youth-serving organizations through advocacy, resources, networking, and training so all Anchorage youth thrive. We're a broad and inclusive coalition of youth-serving organizations, businesses, and individuals working to create shared community practices around professional youth work.

Safe Alaskans' mission is to promote well-being, improve safety, and prevent injuries in Alaska.



Click Below to start your application.

2026 YMG APPLICATION

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www.AYDC.org

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