



## CATALYZING A MOVEMENT OF YOUNG CHANGEMAKERS

### ABOUT YOUTH VENTURE

In 1996, Youth Venture® was launched with the vision of changing society such that everyone would have the freedom and societal support to take initiative and address social needs. An essential element of this vision is to enable young people to learn early on in life that they can lead social change. It is clear that any young person who has an idea for improving his or her community, leads a team, launches a Venture and contributes something lasting will emerge transformed from such an experience. Young “Venturers” will know that they are capable of leading and creating change, and it is likely that they will take initiative again and again over a lifetime.

Youth Venture inspires and invests in teams of young people aged 12-20 to start social Ventures, and is building a powerful global network of young *changemakers*. Since the organization was formed, Youth Venture has supported over 3,000 youth-led Venture teams, involving over 50,000 young people throughout 17 countries. The youth-led clubs, organizations or businesses address all areas of social need: health, environment, diversity, education, community and civic engagement. To illustrate:

- Jessica, a young girl in middle school, created Richard’s Rwanda. The organization’s focus is to provide educational opportunities for young girls in Rwanda who were affected by the genocide. Since the group’s inception it has raised over \$25,000 to help pay for the cost of schooling for some of these girls. The organization’s ultimate goal is to raise enough money to build a school in the Nyamata community. Richard’s Rwanda has not only created change in a community on the opposite side of the world, it has helped to educate and create cultural awareness among the people of Seattle.
- Determined to change the attitude that space exploration is not for girls, Becca decided to launch No Boundaries, a space camp that exposes girls to math and science. The camp features fun science-related experiments and crafts geared toward young children. The camp includes Astrotots, for young girls; Mad Female Scientist, geared towards learning about experiments; and Love Bugs, designed to teach children about beneficial bugs.
- Divine and his teammates, Deandra, Jamaal and Fernando, created Team Revolution, a youth center that provides recreation and leadership opportunities for teens in Brooklyn. Most recently, Divine has been named by Polo Jeans as one of 21 men and women who are “redefining volunteerism.” This year, Team Revolution performed in a post-game Super Bowl concert.
- Students United for Racial Equity, started by Nina, has created a syllabus-based 14-session seminar on race issues for high school students, demonstrated first in five California schools as a pilot for national replication.
- Members of the University of Washington’s Sigma Beta Rho Fraternity recognize the need to give back to their community. They have partnered with Seattle’s Downtown Emergency Service Center (DESC) to aid Seattle’s homeless population. The team is working with DESC to turn land owned by the organization into fertile garden spaces to aid homeless shelter residents. Sigma Beta Rho also creates awareness and inspires others by conducting seminars on homelessness for students and the University of Washington.

Youth Venture’s ultimate goal is a society-wide redefinition of the youth years. As more youth-led Ventures are formed throughout our communities, it will become the norm for young people to create positive social change. Once youth leadership becomes the norm, then society – young people and adults alike – will come to expect young people to be competent leaders of social change. (For more information please visit [www.genv.net](http://www.genv.net).)

**DREAM IT. DO IT.**

### YOUTH VENTURE SEATTLE

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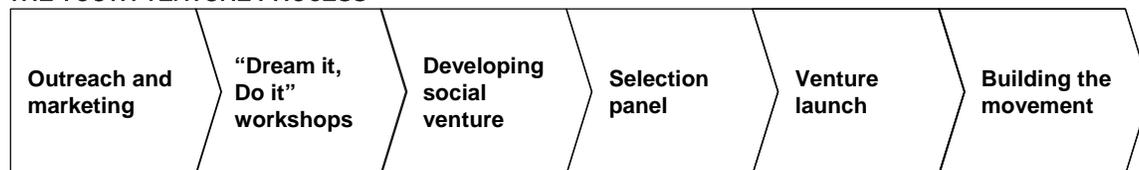
## ABOUT ASHOKA

Ashoka, the originator of Youth Venture, is a global association of leading social entrepreneurs – individuals with innovative and practical ideas for addressing social needs. Since 1981, Ashoka has elected over 2,000 leading social entrepreneurs as Ashoka “Fellows”, providing them with living stipends, professional support, and access to a global network of peers in more than 60 countries. In light of both the Fellows’ work and their own youth experiences, Ashoka realized how critical it is to give young people the tools and space to take initiative. Ashoka thus created Youth Venture to build a movement of *young* social entrepreneurs, realizing that in order to reach its vision of an “*Everyone a Changemaker™*” world we must work with young people to provide them with an experience that allows them to realize they are powerful. (For more information, please visit [www.ashoka.org](http://www.ashoka.org).)

## HOW YOUTH VENTURE WORKS

Youth Venture is building a global community of young people brought together by their common interest for social change. Youth Venture first engages young people through “Dream It. Do It.” workshops designed to help youth apply their passions to needs they see in their communities in order to develop their own ideas for clubs, organizations or businesses that provide a benefit to the community. After coming up with an idea, youth are supported as they complete an action plan for their idea. Once the Venture team finishes the plan, the team presents their action plan to a panel of peers and adults, who will determine whether the Venture is ready for launch.

### THE YOUTH VENTURE PROCESS



Youth Venture offers the following support for young Venturers:

- seed funding (up to \$1,000 per team)
- training for the “adult allies” to provide mentoring and support to the teams
- technical allies to provide additional advice and expertise
- ongoing tools and supports (e.g. workshops, online forums, how-to booklets)
- a supportive fellowship of fellow Youth Venturers, in the US and internationally
- an identity as part of the Youth Venture movement

After the team has launched, Youth Venture works to stay continually involved with the team. In the first year, the team is asked to provide reports at month 3 and month 12 on the progress of their Venture, and to complete a survey that assesses the impact of Youth Venture on the team. Moreover, Youth Venture connects the Venturers into a fellowship of like-minded young people, helping them see that they are part of something bigger and that they have support from people throughout the world.

## IMPACT

Youth Venture seeks to create impact on four levels: (1) on the individual through the transforming experience of starting a Venture, (2) on the Venture team as they learn important life skills and realize that they *can* create change, (3) on the community as growing numbers of Venture teams “tip” the local culture toward greater youth leadership, and (4) ultimately on society by fundamentally redefining the role of young people as leaders of social change.

## PARTNERSHIPS AND YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

If you are interested in establishing a partnership with Youth Venture or getting young people involved in our program please contact us. In addition to working with youth throughout the cities our Regional Offices are located (Seattle, Washington, DC, Minneapolis, New York, Concord, NH, Los Angeles) we also work virtually with youth interested in starting their own Venture!

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