**Sprockets YPQA External Assessor Cohort RFQ**

Sprockets Quality Advancement Division (SQUAD)August 2019 – August 2020

**Sprockets Commitment to Quality:**

Because high-quality programs lead to better outcomes for youth, Sprockets elevates youth program quality in Saint Paul by providing professional development for youth workers and helping programs continuously improve. Network partners commit to improvement by participating in the Activator Improvement Cycle, an annual cycle of collecting data, reflection and developing goals for improvement. One foundational piece of this work has been the early adoption of the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) tool as a shared language and understanding of quality best practices.

**Project Background**

Over the past nine years the Sprockets network, through partnerships with local organizations and funders, has committed to supporting youth serving organizations through continuous program improvement that impacts the experiences and outcomes of young people in Saint Paul.

The foundation of the quality work in Saint Paul is the Youth Program Quality Assessment (YPQA) framework and observational tools. Sprockets committed early to invest in developing the capacity of individual youth workers in Saint Paul as a strategy to meet the needs of the network rather than relying on outside consultants. We have also developed a robust Activator cycle that supports programs in collecting and analyzing multiple types of data to inform program improvement.

This year Sprockets is excited to build on our recent structuring of our External Assessor model to create a richer learning experience and increased support for External Assessors. Sprockets has also made a commitment to increase the number of quality assessments completed within the network.

Sprockets is seeking 10 youth workers working in Saint Paul to complete training and become External Assessors/Coaches. External Assessors are trained and certified by the David P. Weikart Center to assess the quality of a program using the YPQA tool. Coaches are experienced youth development professionals who work with the staff of a program to review the program’s assessment results and identify improvements that align with the staff’s and organization’s priorities.

**Background**

We are excited to offer this opportunity to youth workers working in the Sprockets network that are ready to deepen their understanding, practice and skills around quality youth work practices, assessment and coaching skills.

Sprockets External Assessors will join other youth work professionals (mentors, facilitators, etc) in a professional learning community known as the **Sprockets Quality Advancement Division (SQUAD)**. This learning community will meet throughout the year to build skills and dive deeper into quality, coaching and improvement strategies. This professional learning community is a targeted professional development strategy for youth work professionals looking to grow in the field.

**Sprockets will provide:**

* External Assessor Reliability training with the David P. Weikart Center for Youth Program Quality (Weikart Center). Endorsement as a reliable assessor with test out of 80%. \*Annual refresher provided with continued participation. This training is valued at $500
* Professional learning community (PLC) with a focus on observational assessment, coaching and facilitation. Learning alongside other youth work professionals deepens learning from a variety of perspective and experiences.
* Scheduling and coordination support of required trainings and observations (see key dates below). Rich learning happens for assessors through the opportunity to observe other programs in action.

**Desired Qualities of an External Assessor/Coach**

* Excellent verbal and written communication skills
* Excellent observer and listener
* Commitment to high-quality programming for all young people
* Commitment to ongoing learning and development
* Attention to detail
* Ability to multi-task
* Experience delivering youth development programming
* Invested in the continued sustainability of the Sprocket Network and Activator Cycle
* Reliable transportation
* Experience with the YPQA observation tool and pyramid of quality preferred

**External Assessor Commitment**

(specific dates for SQUAD meetings will be set with group)

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Timeline** | **Activities – Observations and Professional Learning Communities (PLC)** | **Commitment** |
| Two day TBD 9am- 5pm | External Assessor Training | 16 hours |
| TBD | **SQUAD PLC** | 2 hours |
| TBD | **SQUAD PLC** | 2 hours |
| October - December | **Complete observation and reflection session #1**   * Observation at site (2-4 hr) * Enter into scores reporter (2 hr)   Follow up coaching session if desired by site (1hr) | 5-7 hours |
| October– May 2020 | **Complete observation #2**   * Observation at site (2-4 hr) * Enter into scores reporter (2 hr)   Follow up coaching session if desired by site (1hr) | 5-7 hours |
| TBD | **SQUAD PLC** | 2 hours |
| TBD | **SQUAD PLC** | 2 hours |
|  | **Estimated total PD commitment for 2018-19 34 – 38 hrs** | |

**APPLICATION AND COMMITMENT STATEMENT**

Please submit the application online at <https://tinyurl.com/Sprocketsea2019> and email the Commitment Statement to Jocelyn Wiedow at [jwiedow@ywcastpaul.org](mailto:jwiedow@ywcastpaul.org) by Friday, July 19th.

The following questions are included the application.

* Please describe your previous experience or knowledge with the YPQA.
* How have you worked within your organization or other programs on quality improvement?
* Describe how you have worked collaboratively within community before.
* How will participating as an External Assessor/Coach and in the SQUAD support your personal and professional growth?
* Have you attended YPQA as a Self-Assessment Training in the past? Y N When?
* How many, if any and what types (YPQA, SA-PQA, ASB-PQA, etc.) of observations have you completed in the past?

**Commitment Statement**

***Applicant:*** I agree to complete both days of YPQA External Assessor Reliability Training and have reviewed the timeline, activities and commitments and understand all of the expectations. I understand that I will be asked to complete two observations/coaching sessions and I will not receive financial compensation for completing the external observations or coaching sessions.

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Applicant Signature and Date

***Supervisor:*** By signing, I, the supervisors or above-mentioned applicant, understand the time commitment of this agreement and will provide the applicant with the time necessary to complete the requirements outlined in this document.

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Signature Date