

Ford Foundation, MacArthur Foundation partner to empower Nigerian youth

Ford Foundation and MacArthur Foundation have launched the Nigeria Youth Futures Fund (NYFF) to provide a fresh \$5 million fund aimed at supporting and strengthening the youth leadership ecosystem in Nigeria.



Source: Supplied

The funds will be managed by Leadership, Effectiveness, Accountability and Professionalism (Leap) Africa, a non profit organisation focused on youth development. The NYFF aims to build on momentum in the region inspired by the youth-led #EndSARS movement.

70% of Nigeria's population comprises youth that are under the age of 30 and this figure is projected to continue growing in the next decades. Given the significant number of youths, researchers have suggested that the future progress of Nigeria is based on the level to which the youth are skilled and trained in various aspects.

"We're excited about this launch because over the last decade, several analyses have shown that there is likely to be a great return on investment in youth across the economic, social, political and technological domains of Nigeria's development," said Dabesaki Mac-Ikemenjima, program officer in the office of West Africa, Ford Foundation.



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HOT 102.7FM 8 Sep 2021



Mac-Ikemenjima added that he believes that the fund is a critical part of efforts to empower Nigerian youth and enhance their leadership capabilities..

Objectives of the NYFF

NYFF is aimed at developing young people's leadership and civic engagement in Nigeria.

It is a five-year collaborative fund seeded by the Ford Foundation with \$3 million and the MacArthur Foundation with \$2 million. NYFF has a goal of raising an additional \$15 million from other partners and Foundations.

Building on the momentum gained from the youth-led #EndSARS protest in 2020 against police brutality and over a decade old movement, NYFF will:

- Unite a goal driven group of young people within the age of 35 and below at both national and state level to explore, discuss and share challenging visions and opportunities for Nigeria in 2025, 2030 and 2050 as part of official government vision strategy efforts;
- Support innovation hubs to advance the development of ideas including economic, civic and social enterprises for and by young people;
- Create a fund that will provide small and medium action grants for youth activist and anchor organisations at national and sub-national level; and,
- Give youth the opportunity to take advantage of economic and social opportunities given by government and international agencies online.



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Kole Shettima, MacArthur Foundation on Nigeria program co-director and director of the Nigeria office said: "There is no better time to invest in the civic engagement and participation of our young people, and the Nigeria Youth Futures Fund will sustain their work locally and amplify their voices in the halls of power."

NYFF will launch an online competition for youths to design a logo for the new Nigeria Youth Futures Fund as a way of engaging the youths.

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