

#12. Soup Ottawa Project Application

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Project Title: YouthCanSlam Festival 2014

Describe your project (max. 200 words):

YouthCanSlam 2014, the second annual Canadian youth poetry festival, will take place in Ottawa, Ontario from August 18-23, 2014. Building off of the success of last year's inaugural festival, this event will again gather youth poets from across the country to connect in a spirit of friendship and camaraderie, develop as writers and performers and create dialogue with the public at-large. At YouthCanSlam 2014, youth may further explore the written and spoken word art form, benefit from a wider exposure of their work and grow through the opportunity to workshop with more experienced and established poet mentors.

The festival will feature the following:

- Group sessions with the youth on opening and closing days, to help build community, share information and hear feedback;
- Daytime schedules dominated by workshops, showcases and open-mic sessions;
- Scheduled activities between 11:00am and 10:30pm each day;
- Sponsored showcase events with featured performers;
- A final Saturday evening performance by an artist/group of national or international following.

Tell us this project's story (max. 100 words):

Interest in spoken word poetry for youth has been growing for a few years across Canada and professional poets have been interacting with youth for many years. In January 2013, members from the Ottawa spoken word community, led by Ikenna Onyegbula, formed a collective of accomplished locally based poets with significant youth mentorship background to seize upon the hunger for a Canada wide youth poetry festival. The inaugural YouthCanSlam Festival took place in Ottawa from August 20-24, 2013 and was deemed a success by the Spoken Word Canada community, receiving press coverage from media outlets like CBC and Metro Newspaper.

Each project needs to be connected to this events' theme - "Giving Voice" (max. 100 words):

We believe that helping our youth gain an ever growing confidence in their voices helps ease their introductions into the larger Canadian spoken word dialogue in a more organic way. Additionally, a thriving national youth poetry program is fundamental to the artistic development of burgeoning young writers and paramount to the successful sustenance and longevity of Canadian spoken word as a whole. The name "YouthCanSlam" is a statement of the empowerment of Canada's youth that affirms their voices and supports their participation in a major oral literature event at the national level catering

to their experiences.

How will you use Soup Ottawa money for this particular project? (be specific - people will ask) (max. 100 words):

One of the festival's core objectives is to provide a program of mentorship and professional development for youth poets through workshop engagement and information sharing with adult poet mentors from across the country. The Soup Ottawa grant will aid in remunerating the festival's workshop mentors and facilitators and also go into feature performance fees: paying the festival's feature artists and performers for their work. Last year, there were five workshop facilitators and eleven feature artists from across the country. Once scheduling is complete, we expect a similar number for this year's festival.

What non-monetary needs does your project have (ie. volunteers, tech support, etc.)? (max. 100 words):

The YouthCanSlam Festival is completely volunteer run. In addition to the unpaid work of the seven members of the Canadian Youth Poetry Collective, the group in charge of putting on the YouthCanSlam Festival, and the four other members added to form the YouthCanSlam Festival Organizing Committee, the festival utilizes approximately twenty other volunteers who oversee everything from posterage to hospitality for the youth participants of the festival. In addition to this, the festival also makes use of two to three tech support people who handle microphone setup and sound, venue sound and lighting, slideshow operation and so on.