

2010 Social Innovation Fund

Awarded to the Mayor's Fund to Advance New York City, in collaboration with the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity, MDRC, and seven partner cities

A Unique Opportunity

The federal Social Innovation Fund provides a unique opportunity for cities to work together to expand and test innovative anti-poverty programs piloted by the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity. Through this \$110 million project, the eight cities plan to further refine and test program models, building multi-site body of evidence in support of promising, cost-effective interventions.

- **Social Innovation Fund (SIF).** Established by the 2009 Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act, the Social Innovation Fund is a new public-private investment vehicle designed to identify effective solutions to critical social challenges, and support the replication and expansion of these programs by non-profit organizations. Managed by the Corporation for National and Community Service, approximately \$50 million has been awarded to 11 intermediary organizations nationwide, to be matched 1:3 by private funds.
- **Center for Economic Opportunity (CEO) & Mayor's Fund to Advance NYC.** Created in December 2006, the NYC Center for Economic Opportunity has piloted and evaluated dozens of innovative anti-poverty programs in support of the working poor, disconnected youth, and families with young children. These programs have been designed, implemented, and tested in partnership with leading experts, City agencies, and more than one hundred non-profits. The Mayor's Fund, a not-for-profit organization that facilitates public-private partnerships, will work with CEO and all project partners to raise the \$82.5 million match over five years.

Innovative Pilots

This SIF award recognizes not only the strength of CEO's pilots, but also demonstrates that government can successfully innovate and develop new program models. The SIF has awarded New York and the partner cities with a grant of \$5.7 million for the first year.

- **Jobs-Plus.** The place-based Jobs-Plus program addresses entrenched poverty amongst public housing residents by saturating developments with job and career support, community building, and rent incentives. In previous experimental pilots, residents' earnings continued to rise for three years after the program ended, greatly outpacing the income of a comparison group.
- **Family Rewards.** Built on the success of programs in more than 20 countries worldwide, Family Rewards provides cash incentives to families for achieving milestones that lead to better health, education, and employment outcomes, while improving human capital. Building on preliminary results from the New York pilot, the SIF-supported program will focus on the most promising incentives.
- **\$aveUSA.** First piloted by the City's Office of Financial Empowerment, the \$aveNYC program, which will now be called \$aveUSA, offers a matched savings account to low-income tax filers. Although nearly half of New York City participants reported no history of savings, 80% saved for at least one year to receive the match and 75% continue to save today.
- **Young Adult Internship Program.** Multiple CEO programs have successfully reengaged young adults that have dropped out of school or work by offering short-term paid internships as a hook for returning to school or work. This method is beneficial in the short and long term – by reconnecting these individuals as they enter adulthood, their futures will be greatly improved.
- **WorkAdvance.** CEO built upon national best practices to create workforce programs that employ sector-focused and skills-building strategies. The result has been programs that work better than any other government program in New York State. The cities will combine the best practices from these programs to create a single, cost-effective, and easy to replicate workforce intervention.

Building a National Body of Evidence

- **Evaluation of Programs.** MDRC, a non-profit education and social research organization, will advise in the design of these second-generation pilots and act as the lead evaluator for all programs. By testing and evaluating programs in multiple locations, and using randomized controlled trials where appropriate, the partner can better determine what will succeed nationwide.
- **Partner Cities.** Partners include Kansas City, MO; Memphis, TN; Newark, NJ; Northeastern Ohio, including greater Cleveland, Youngstown, and Akron; Savannah, GA; San Antonio, TX; and Tulsa, OK.